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RIPPLES FROM CARCOSA

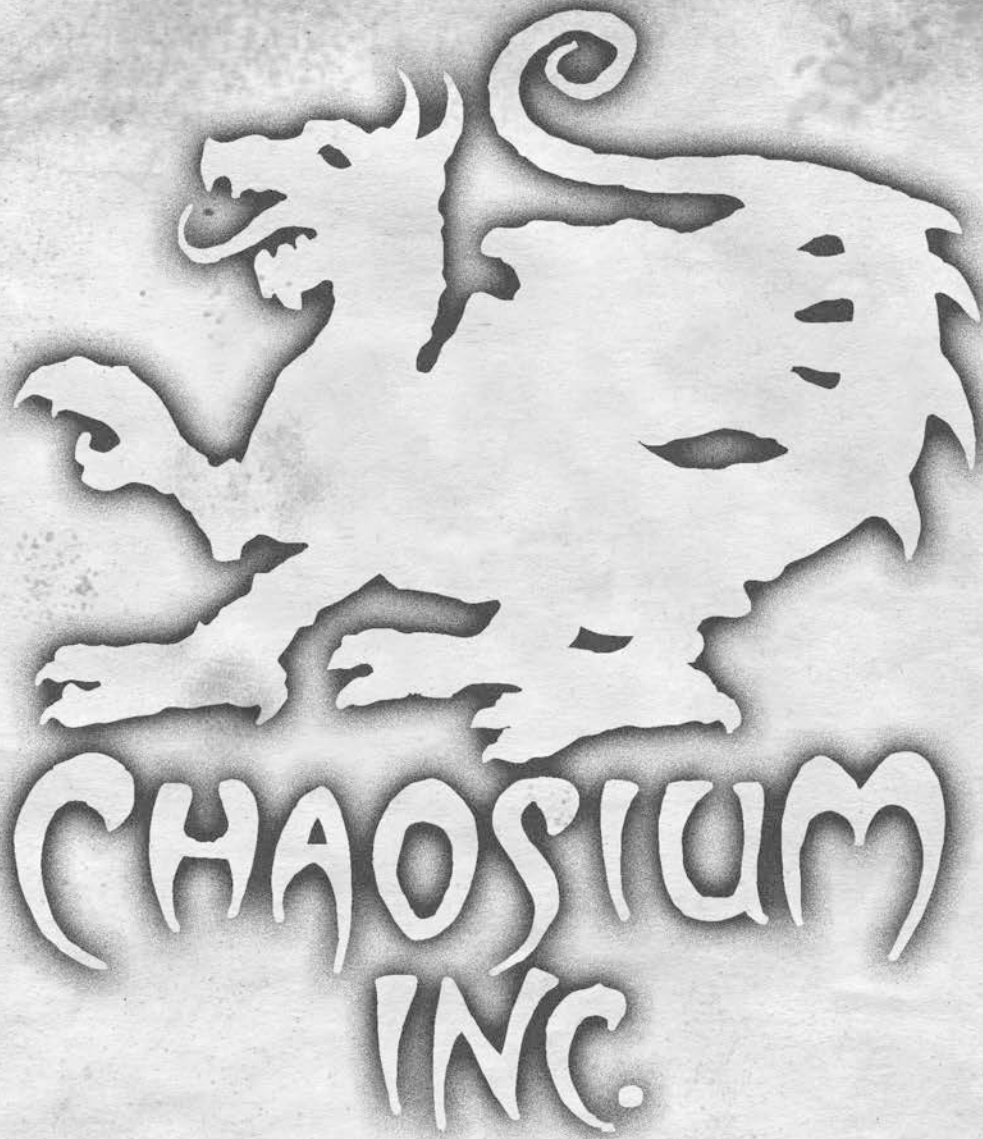
THREE SCENARIOS EXPLORING HASTUR, CARCOSA, & THE KING IN YELLOW

OSCAR RIOS

WITH CALEB CLEVELAND, LEE SIMPSON

AND FRIENDS





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Introduction

“O do not seek to learn or even ask,
What horror hides behind... *The Pallid Mask!*”

~Lin Carter, “Litany to Hastur”

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Of all the varied and mysterious Great Old Ones of the Cthulhu Mythos, few ensnare the imagination as easily as Hastur. The image of the silent, deserted city beside a dark, foreboding lake where sinister things lurk is one that stays with the reader. Many of us have walked the twisting streets of that dead alien city in our minds, finding our way into the tall towers to stand before an ancient throne. There sits the King in Yellow, the Lord of Carcosa, who gazes at us from behind his Pallid Mask. It is a journey many of us have taken, whether alone in our dreams or around a table rolling dice with our friends. It is a journey we are about to take again.

Many of us have a favorite writer or musician who spiraled into insanity before taking their own life; artists, poets, dreamers, and madmen feel the hand of the Great Old Ones most clearly. The line between creative genius and abject madness is a thin one. Hastur is the gray area where those two spheres overlap. His play, *The King in Yellow*, has long been one of the most popular of all Mythos Tomes. His triskelion Yellow Sign is a symbol nearly as recognizable as the Elder Sign.

Ripples from Carcosa seeks to expand upon the mythology of “He Who Should Not Be Named” and it gathers much of the varied material on Hastur into one place. The first chapter reviews The Great Old One Hastur and his various avatar forms. It examines the Yellow Sign, the play *The King in Yellow*, the Mythos tome of the same name, and the effects these things have on the human mind. While far from being a comprehensive archive of all that is written on the topic, it should answer the most common questions and provide keepers with a central resource.

Next within these pages is a trio of adventures pitting investigators against Hastur and his human worshippers. These scenarios can be played as stand-alone adventures or as a linked campaign

called “Ripples from Carcosa.” Investigators are provided for each scenario, but keepers should feel free to allow their players to use their own investigators if they so choose.

The first scenario, entitled “Adventus Regis,” takes place during the time of the Roman Empire and uses the *Cthulhu Invictus* setting. The second scenario is called “Herald to the Yellow King;” its events occur during the Dark Ages. This scenario, naturally, utilizes the *Cthulhu Dark Ages* setting. The keeper may find it useful to access these Chaosium titles. The final chapter of the trilogy is called “Heir to Carcosa;” it’s set in mankind’s near future. It uses a possible “End Time” setting (one as detailed in the Chaosium monograph of the same name).

Following the first two scenarios is information on the Great Old One Hastur and his cults during the *Cthulhu Invictus* and *Cthulhu Dark Ages* eras. Keepers who wish to expand upon those scenarios can make use of this source material to present further investigation of He Who Should Not Be Named during those historical periods. “The Servants of the Yellow Sign,” the cult of Hastur within Herculaneum, is presented for the *Cthulhu Invictus* setting. Likewise a cult group called the “Court of the Last King,” is a 10th century Hastur Cult operating in France, and detailed for the *Cthulhu Dark Ages* setting. Before the final scenario, material is included detailing a futuristic society: a coalition of humans and aliens living and hiding in our solar system’s asteroid belt. This is for use during the “End Time” setting, a period set in a future where mankind has lost the Earth to the forces of the Mythos. This last secretive group is not a cult worshipping Hastur but one dedicated to fighting against such forces.

RIPPLES FROM CARCOSA

Playing the scenarios as a campaign:

“Every Christmas it’s the same.
I always end up playing a shepherd.”

~ Shermie, *A Charlie Brown Christmas*

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Together Again and Again

As each scenario takes place roughly one thousand years apart, one might wonder how they can be played as a linked campaign. The eighteen pre-generated investigators included across the trilogy are reincarnations of the same six sets of consciousness. On their first encounter with Hastur in the Roman Era they are marked, branded somehow, and forever after tied to the Great Old One throughout eternity. Once every millennium they are drawn together and once again forced to confront the horror and madness of He Who Should Not Be Named.

From era to era the reincarnated investigators share certain similarities. From lifetime to lifetime these consciousnesses fall back into the patterns and the professions they are best suited for. This should help promote the feeling that they are somehow trapped by fate. The fact that these investigators are continually drawn together into conflict with the various manifestations of Hastur should also reinforce this.

The players may view their investigators as cursed, being doomed to lead the same life over and over, trapped and drawn into encounters with The Great Old One Hastur. They might view themselves as chosen defenders of humanity, heroes who band together, lifetime after lifetime, to thwart the aims of He Who Should Not Be Named. The reason for this, if any, is left up to the individual keeper.

Hastur Lore

All Mythos-related events in *Ripples from Carcosa* are directly tied to Hastur. Therefore, investigators learn little about the overall Cthulhu Mythos but a great deal of specific information about He Who Should Not Be Named. To reflect this knowledge keepers are encouraged to use a skill called Hastur Lore.

The Hastur Lore skill is much like the Cthulhu Mythos skill and directly tied to it. It can be used to uncover information about Hastur, his avatar forms, Carcosa, the Yellow Sign, the Mythos races connected with the Great Old One, etc. For every single percentile point of Cthulhu Mythos tradi-

tionally earned in *Ripples from Carcosa*, investigators gain +3% in their Hastur Lore skill. For example: An investigator reads a copy of *The King In Yellow* in its original French. The investigator gains 6 percentiles of Cthulhu Mythos and also 18 percentiles of Hastur Lore.

Unlike Cthulhu Mythos, an investigator’s Hastur Lore skill has no effect on their maximum Sanity value. The Cthulhu Mythos skill remains unchanged with regards to an investigator’s possible Sanity loss. Hastur Lore doesn’t get checked for advancement after a successful use. The only way for an investigator to gain points in Hastur Lore is by increasing their knowledge of and exposure to Hastur.

Certain encounters also earn the investigators Cthulhu Mythos and Hastur Lore skill points in this campaign. Not all knowledge comes from research; some is gained from experience. Below is a list of things that increase an investigator’s Hastur Lore skill. Keepers are encouraged to create new ones on the fly as investigators learn more and more about their powerful and mysterious nemesis.

Experience	Cthulhu Mythos %/ Hastur Lore %
Seeing the Yellow Sign for the first time.	1% / 3%
Encountering a servitor race of Hastur.	2% / 6%
View city of Carcosa or the Lake of Hali.	2% / 6%
Encountering a creature native to Carcosa.	3% / 9%
Visit and explore city of Carcosa.	4% / 12%
Viewing an avatar form of Hastur.	5% / 15%

Déjà Vu, the Yellow Sign, and Past Life Recollections

In the second and third scenarios of *Ripples from Carcosa* the investigators can draw upon past-life experiences. The trigger for this ability is an investigator’s initial exposure to the Yellow Sign. While a potent tool for causing and spreading insanity, the Sign also unlocks a psychic echo within the investigator’s consciousness. The trauma this powerful and malevolent symbol causes to the investigators creates a scar upon them, which transcends the limits of their individual lifetimes.

What this means is that the points of Cthulhu Mythos and Hastur Lore investigators acquire in one scenario can be accessed and improved on during the following adventures. Thus an investigator's Cthulhu Mythos skill grows and is carried over throughout each reincarnation. For example: Videric, a woodsman in "Herald of the Yellow King," sees the Yellow Sign for the first time. After making his Sanity check he suddenly gains 9% in Cthulhu Mythos and 27% of Hastur Lore. These are points he acquired in his previous life as Marcius, a thief who encountered Hastur in the time of the Roman Empire during the scenario "Adventis Regis." Investigators only have access to these points after, and only if, they view the Yellow Sign. Otherwise these memories remain forever locked away.

In "Herald of the Yellow King" these past-life memories manifest as moments of déjà vu or powerful intuitive feelings. The investigators "know" things without any logical way of determining precisely how. They also possess vague feelings of a certain familiarity, as if all this has somehow happened before.

"HERALD OF THE YELLOW KING," DARK AGES EXAMPLE:

Lady Charlotte: "What, I ask thee, is that?"

Redwald, after making a successful Hastur Lore roll: "'Tis the 'Yellow Sign,' my Lady. It bringeth the curse of madness, and 'tis mark of a demon prince of madness."

Lady Charlotte: "How is it that you know this, good sir?"

Redwald: "I have no idea how I know this thing, my lady. But I assure you from the depths of my immortal soul that is the truth!"

Investigators who meet horrible ends, experienced powerful personal loss, or are driven insane during "Adventis Regis" feel these impulses more strongly, as their trauma is more profound. For Example: An

investigator is driven insane by the Yellow Sign in "Adventis Regis." They are then reincarnated and see the Yellow Sign again, during the Dark Ages, in "Herald of the Yellow King." The player of this investigator makes a successful Hastur Lore roll and not only knows what the Yellow Sign is but also receives intuitive feelings that the symbol is very dangerous. They realize something bad happened to them the last time they encountered this symbol, but exactly what occurred and when that was is a mystery to them.

In "Heir to Carcosa" such feelings are intensified. This reflects the greater number of points so far accumulated from two separate investigations. Instead of feeling déjà vu and flashes of intuition, investigators receive visions of their past lives racing through their minds. After seeing the Yellow Sign, investigators in this era universally feel that not only have they all been together and through something similar before, but that it may have happened more than once.

Keepers should play such flashbacks as if they are attacks of post-traumatic stress disorder. The visions should be vivid and realistic memories of terrifying past events. Investigators who experience this should be momentarily stunned, lost in the memory for a moment before snapping back to reality. Each such "memory flash" causes the loss of 1 Sanity point.

"HEIR TO CARCOSA," END TIMES EXAMPLE:

Martin Smith: "What the hell was that thing?"

Andrew Fisk, after making a successful Hastur Lore roll and losing 1 point of Sanity: "It's a byakhee. They can survive in a vacuum and fly through space. They're very dangerous up close."

Martin Smith: "Yeah... okay...and you know this how?"



Andrew Fisk: “Cause one of them almost killed me once. Not now, but once, a long time ago. You’re gonna think I’m crazy, but I think you were there too.”

Damien Gunn, after overhearing this and making a successful Hastur Lore roll and also losing 1 point of Sanity: “Was I there too, maybe in Roman-style armor with a sword?”

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Andrew Fisk: “Yeah, you were! What the hell is going on?”

Keepers can have investigators experience nightmares with two or more of them experiencing the very same dream. This is actually a shared past-life experience, which their unconscious minds are recollecting while they slumber. Such a shared dream could possibly give some clue to a problem the investigators are struggling with.

HEIR TO CARCOSA, SHARED DREAMS, END TIMES EXAMPLE:

Diana Everett: “You didn’t sleep well either?”

Lola Voight: “No, I had a nightmare. We were all on Earth and it was snowing. Real snow, like on the old vids. It was cold; we were trying to get somewhere and this bridge...”

Diana Everett, interrupting: “It just kept stretching on and on! I had the same dream!”

Vincent Delgado, joining in after overhearing the exchange: “And then tentacles came out of the water. Yeah, I had the same dream too.”

Diana Everett: “Okay, we can’t all be going crazy.”

And so we are ready to begin. The star Aldebaran is above the horizon, the mists are rising off the Lake of Hali, and He Who Should Not Be Named is lurking just offstage. I give you *Ripples From Carcosa*.

A Guide to Hastur, The Yellow Sign, and “The King In Yellow”

5

This chapter contains a compilation of various materials from several different sources. It is included here as an overview for keepers, who may be unfamiliar with the mythos surrounding Hastur. Think of this as a crash course in Hastur’s fundamentals. It is far from complete, as the mythology surrounding He Who Should Not Be Named is both vast and complex. Three areas presented here are as follows:

- Hastur the Unspeakable and three of his avatar forms.
- The Yellow Sign and the effects it has upon the human mind.
- The book entitled *The King in Yellow* and the play of the same name.

The Lake of Hali, the dead city of Carcosa, and the various ways investigators can travel to and from these locations is not covered here. Such information, while interesting and important to Hastur’s mythology, does not come into play in the three scenarios that make up the *Ripples from Carcosa* trilogy. Should keepers wish to learn more about the home domain of Hastur, some classic scenarios are strongly recommended. “Have You Seen the Yellow Sign” by Kevin A. Ross, from the book *The Great Old Ones*, and “Tatterdemalion” by Richard Watts and Penelope Love, from *Fatal Experiments* are both excellent scenarios for anyone interested in the Great Old One, Hastur. Additionally, the campaign *Tatters of the King* by Tim Wiseman provides a wealth of information concerning Carcosa.

The Great Old One, Hastur The Unspeakable

The four entries here are the statistics for and description of Hastur and three of his avatar forms: The King In Yellow, The Feaster From Afar, and The Boneless One. These are taken directly from Chaosium’s *Malleus Monstrorum*. The Boneless One is a manifestation of Hastur, however specific statistics

for it were never provided. As this particular avatar plays heavily in the climax of “Adventus Regis” game statistics have been created.

HASTUR THE UNSPEAKABLE, GREAT OLD ONE

“Utterly alien landscape... Foreground: a deep lake. Hali. In five minutes the water began to ripple where something rose. Facing inwards. A titanic aquatic being, tentacled. Octopoid, but far, far larger twenty times larger than the giant Octopus apollyon of the west coast. What was its neck alone easily fifteen rods in diameter. Could not risk chance of seeing its face.”

~August Derleth, “The Gable Window”

Hastur the Unspeakable dwells near the star Aldebaran in the constellation Taurus. He is connected with the mystic Lake of Hali, the Yellow Sign, and Carcosa, as well as the things that dwell therein. He may be connected in some way with the power of flight through space. His appearance is disputed. In a reported instance of possession by Hastur, a corpse took on a bloated, scaly look, and the limbs became boneless and fluid. The things in the Lake of Hali look octopoid from a rear view and are related to Hastur. They also have unbearably horrible faces. Still, Hastur’s appearance is largely up to the individual keeper. Hastur is served by the byakhee, an interstellar flying race.

CULT: The cult of Hastur is moderately common on Earth, and the abominable Tcho-Tcho people are reputedly among his worshipers, as are the Brothers of the Yellow Sign. Hastur’s cult is particularly loathsome, and is more widely known of than belonged to. Worshipers refer to Hastur as “He Who Should



The King in Yellow Avatar

Not Be Named.” This may be a misapprehension, stemming from his title, “The Unspeakable.”

OTHER CHARACTERISTICS: Hastur is summonable only at night. When Hastur is present, each round three individuals within 20 yards of the horror must successfully Dodge or be grasped by Hastur and destroyed on the following round. Hastur does not normally attack friends or worshipers. He must always leave that portion of the Earth where the star Aldebaran has fallen below the horizon.

Hastur, He Who Should Not Be Named

STR 600 CON 1000 SIZ 500 INT 75
 POW 175 DEX 150 APP -- EDU --
 HP: 150 DB: +13D6 Build 14 Move 16 / 25 flying

Magic Points: 30

Attacks: 2

Whatever he is, Hastur has tentacles and claws among his appendages.

Fighting 100% (50/20), damage: death

Armor: 30-point thick, scaly, rubbery, baggy hide.

Spells: Brew Space Mead, All Contact and Call spells, Summon/Bind Byakhee, and others the keeper finds appropriate.

Sanity Loss: 1D10/1D100 Sanity points to see Hastur.

KING IN YELLOW, AVATAR OF HASTUR

“He stands in state upon the balcony. He has no face, and is twice as tall as a man. He wears pointed shoes under his tattered, fantastically colored robes, and a streamer of silk appears to fall from the pointed tip of his hood... At times he appears to be winged; at others, haloed.”

– James Blish, “More Light”

The King in Yellow might also be human-seeming, clad in tattered yellow or parti-colored rags and wearing the Pallid Mask. The rags are extensions of the entity’s flesh, while the mask covers horrible pseudopods that can attach to a target and drain the very life from them (POW). Above all, it possesses a loathsome plasticity of shape, able to stretch and change at will. This is the most frequently encountered avatar of Hastur.

CULT: Worshipers often are solitary madmen, artists, and poets, driven mad by reading the haunting play *The King In Yellow*, and inspired by its cruel beauty to create art that renders human experience meaningless. A special symbol, the Yellow Sign, is often stamped on surreptitious editions of the evil book. The Sign is a focus for madness, helping to warp the dreams of those who see it.

Gaze Of The Yellow King—Induces paroxysms of fear by staring at the target, costing the unfortunate 1D6 Sanity points per round while the King in Yellow focuses upon them (costing the King 3 magic points per round). To avoid the gaze for a round, the target must make an Extreme POW roll.

The King In Yellow, Throne Form

STR 125 CON 530 SIZ 70 INT 250
 POW 175 DEX 135 APP -- EDU --
 HP: 60 DB: +1D6 Build 2 Move 15*

*Or can appear/disappear at will.

Magic Points: 35

Attacks: 1 gaze, 6 razor sharp tatters, or 1 face tentacle

Some say the King has a strange facial tentacle hidden behind his pallid mask with which he kisses his worshipers. Others say when he dances his tattered robes extend as pseudopodia, cutting those around him like razors.

Fighting 100% (50/20), damage by razor sharp tatters is 1D6 + DB +1D6 POW, or by face tentacle is 1D10 + DB + 1D10 POW per round while attached.

Gaze: Target must make Extreme POW roll to resist, special (see above).

Armor: None.

Spells: All Call, Contact spells, and others as the keeper desires.

Sanity Loss: With the Pallid Mask upon its 'face' there is no Sanity loss; however in any other form, or with the mask removed, it costs 1D3/1D10 Sanity points to see the King in Yellow.

FEASTER FROM AFAR, AVATAR OF HASTUR

"He felt it coming. The air grew frigid, as if it blew out of the black interstices of interstellar space..."

It glided down out of the icy sky like the final concentrated essence of all nonhuman horror. It was black, infinitely old, shriveled and humped like some kind of enormous air-borne monkey. A kind of iridescence played about it and its fixed blazing eyes were of no color known on earth... As it grew close to the knoll, it extended appendages, which resembled tentacles, tipped with knifelike talons."

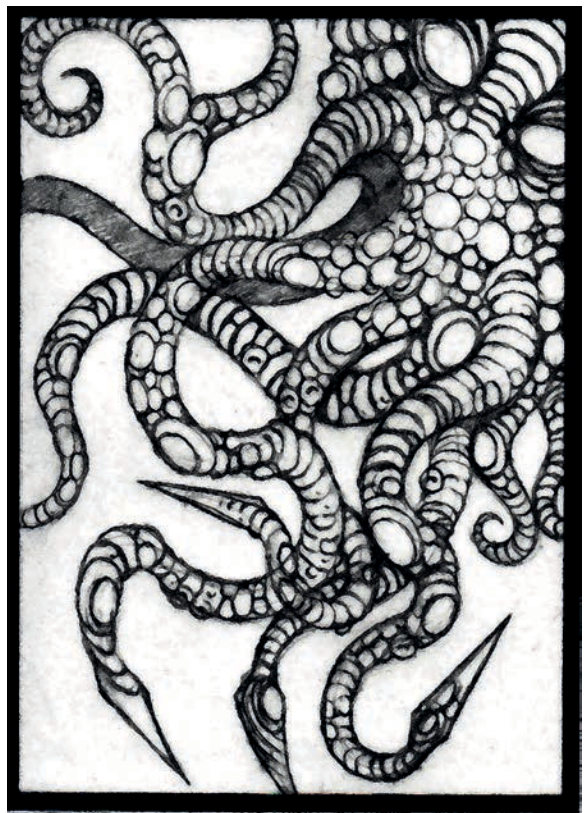
—Joseph Payne Brennan,
"The Feaster from Afar"

CULT: This strange avatar of Hastur is little worshiped on Earth.

OTHER CHARACTERISTICS: Once called to Earth, The Feaster from Afar can return to the area of its summoning at will as long as Aldebaran is above the horizon and it is dark. Anyone with one or more points of Cthulhu Mythos in the area experiences vivid nightmares of being chased over an alien landscape by an unseen pursuer. The terror in these dreams is so intense that 0/1D2 Sanity points are lost each time the investigator has the nightmare.

The Feaster's approach is signaled by an icy wind that blows out of the night sky. This form of Hastur appears to be independent of attendant byakhee.

The Feaster attacks by puncturing holes in its victim's skull with its knife-like talons and draining out his or her brain. The bodies are left otherwise unharmed. Each round the Feaster can attack a single target with 2D10 talons. Each talon inflicts 1 hit point of damage and drains 5 points of INT. When a victim's INT is reduced to zero the Feaster turns its attention to another victim or departs. If a victim has any hit points left after his INT has reached zero, he or she does not immediately die; if the mindless individual is attached to life support devices within an hour or so of the attack, they may live. Such



The Feaster from Afar Avatar

mindless individuals live out their lives as vegetables, incapable of thought, movement, or sound.

The Feaster From Afar, Devourer of Brains.

STR 245 CON 525 SIZ 165 INT 50
POW 125 DEX 165 APP -- EDU --
HP: 69 DB: +4D6 Build 5 Move 16 / 30 Flying

Magic Points: 25

Attacks: 1 (4 talons on one target)

Fighting 90% (45/18), damage 1 point + 5 INT drain per talon.

Armor: 20 points of thick, wrinkled hide.

Spells: Any the keeper desires.

Sanity Loss: 1D8/1D20 Sanity points to see The Feaster from Afar.

THE BONELESS ONE, AVATAR OF HASTUR

"His appearance is disputed. In a reported instance of possession by Hastur, a corpse took on a bloated scaly look, and the limbs became boneless and fluid."

This manifestation of Hastur requires a living or recently-sacrificed human body to act as a vessel for

the Great Old One's consciousness. The Boneless One is one of the most loathsome of all of Hastur's avatar forms. Slow and almost completely immobile, the Boneless One usually manifests on Earth for short times while the star Aldebaran is above the horizon. The corpse possessed by Hastur undergoes a startling physical change. It becomes elastic and boneless, bloating grotesquely while its skin becomes thicker and scaly. There is a 70% chance 3–8 (1D6+2) byakhee arrive 1–3 rounds after the avatar manifests, flying out of the cold depths of space ready to serve their master.

OTHER CHARACTERISTICS: The Boneless One is immune to fire, electricity, acid, and non-magical weapons. While this avatar form is the Great Old One's least powerful physically, it commands potent magical and psychic abilities. At will, the Boneless One can unleash a psychic wave of madness. This wave travels 50 feet per magic point expended, causing those within range to make a Sanity roll for 1D6/1D20.

The Boneless One, Avatar of Hastur

STR 75 CON 470 SIZ 80 INT 250
 POW 175 DEX 75 APP -- EDU --
 HP: 50 DB: 0 Build 0 Move 2

Magic Points: 35

Attacks: 1

Psychic wave (automatic), 1D6/1D20 Sanity check.

Armor: 4 points of leathery skin; immune to fire, cold, electricity, acid, and non-magical weapons.

Spells: All Call, Contact, and Summon/Bind spells, plus any others the keeper wishes.

Sanity Loss: 1D6/1D10 Sanity points to see The Boneless One.

THE YELLOW SIGN

Purported to be the great seal of He Who Is Not To Be Named in his form as the King in Yellow, the Yellow Sign holds great interest and power to those learned in the ways of the occult. No one single pattern can be agreed upon as to the Sign's actual shape and design, with many claiming the Sign somehow changes in aspect whenever its master or His servants are near. For years the innocent and ignorant may pass the sign daily without re-

gard or knowledge of its significance; perhaps only in nightmares does the Sign register. However, once the Sign becomes 'active' the same person will see it where first they did not, and many times thereafter in places unsuspected. Any who has seen the Yellow Sign is considered blessed and chosen.

Perhaps working subliminally, the Yellow Sign is a focus for evil and madness, and essentially a token of high worship for Hastur's cults. Viewing the Yellow Sign causes 0/1D6 Sanity point loss. The Sign seems to swirl, shimmer and squirm, as if reaching for the onlooker. This effect takes but a moment; however, to the person affected it feels as if time has stood still. Those who lose sanity points from seeing the Yellow Sign are cursed; the next time they sleep they should make another Sanity roll and if failed, they suffer terrible nightmares concerning the King in Yellow, Carcosa and Hastur costing a further point of Sanity. Each time thereafter the person sleeps they should make a Sanity roll (0/1) and this is repeated each night until either they succeed in the Sanity roll or madness overtakes them.

THE KING IN YELLOW (THE BOOK)

One of the central themes of the Mythos connected with Hastur is the play *The King In Yellow*. The basic information on this book, in some of its numerous forms, is included for quick reference. Three new forms of this work appear in *Ripples from Carcosa*; a brief description of these works is also listed here. Greater details on these new incarnations of *The King In Yellow* are listed in the individual scenarios.

The Original French—This original edition was seized and destroyed by the Third Republic just after publication. The text is an ambiguous, dream-like play, which opens readers to madness. Sanity loss 1D10; Cthulhu Mythos +2/+4 percentiles; Mythos Rating 18; average 1 week to study. Spells: None.

The King In Yellow English translation—The English edition is a thin black octavo volume across the front cover of which is embossed a large Yellow Sign. Sanity loss 1D10; Cthulhu Mythos +1/+4 percentiles; Mythos Rating 15; average 1 week to study. Spells: None.

Xanthic Folio—A set of ancient tablets found in China, said to be Elder Thing glyphs. This pre-



The Boneless One Avatar

human artifact details the King in Yellow and his court. Sanity loss 1D10; Cthulhu Mythos +3/+7 percentiles; Mythos Rating 30; average 7 weeks to study and comprehend. Spells: Create Time Warp.

Yellow Codices—A translation of the *Xanthic Folio*, often found in English and French. A French copy of the *Yellow Codices* was thought to be the inspiration for *The King In Yellow*. Copies of this work have circulated among groups of jaded artists and writers for years. Sanity Loss 1D8; Cthulhu Mythos +2/+6 percentiles; Mythos Rating 24; average 1 week to study and comprehend. Spells: None.

Alternate forms of The King In Yellow—In the three scenarios that make up *Ripples from Carcosa* the investigators won't encounter any of the above books. The story of The King In Yellow is presented in three new forms across each scenario of the trilogy:

- **“Adventus Regis”**—Here, during the time of the Roman Empire, an early version of the play *The King In Yellow* has just been written. It is entitled “Adventus Regis” (Arrival of the King), and the investigators have the opportunity to obtain a hastily-revised edition of the play.
- **“Herald of the Yellow King”**—In the Dark Ages chapter of the trilogy the investigators might listen to story of *The King In Yellow* as told by a wizened bard or read a brief version of the tale from an old priest's journal.
- **“Heir to Carcosa”**—In the far future, the investigators may discover a newly-translated sequel to *The King In Yellow*, a play called *Heir to Carcosa*. This play is not available for review in a written form, but rather has been rendered into a virtual Computer Generated Holographic (CGH) animated work.

THE KING IN YELLOW (THE PLAY)

Various Mythos authors have made attempts at creating version of this play. While details of these different attempts vary greatly, its central themes remain consistent. For our purposes I have included the summary of the play originally written by Kevin Ross in the classic 1920s scenario “Have You Seen The Yellow Sign?” from Chasoiium's *The Great Old Ones*. It is this version of the play which *Ripples from Carcosa* follows most closely.

A Summary of the Play *The King In Yellow*

The work deals with the inhabitants of a decadent alien city, apparently called Yhtill, adjacent to Aldeb-

aran, which is prominent in the night skies. The main characters belong to the royal family of this city (the Queen, Cassilda, Camilla, Uoht, Thale, Aldones and Alar), and most of the play deals with their squabbles over the line of succession to the throne of Yhtill.

During one such squabble the royal folk hear of a stranger in a Pallid Mask who openly wears the abhorred Yellow Sign and who, carried by winged demons, recently arrived in the city (a successful Cthulhu Mythos roll infers that these creatures are byakhee). Coinciding with the stranger's arrival are visions of an illusionary ghost-city on the opposite shore of the lake of Hali, a city whose uppermost towers appear to be obscured by one of the planet's twin moons.

The Queen and her children summon the stranger before them, and their haughty questioning of the masked being elicits much confusing allegory but few coherent answers. He claims to be an emissary of the dreaded mythical entity called The King In Yellow, or Last King. Later, at a masked ball honoring the royal family, everyone un.masks except the stranger, who reveals that his Pallid Mask is no mask at all. The offended queen and her high priest Naotalba imprison and torture the Pallid Mask, who also calls himself the Phantom of Truth, to no avail.

As the Pallid Mask dies, the true King in Yellow arrives from across the lake of Hali. Those who aren't immediately driven mad with fear notice that the dead city across the lake is no longer there. The hoary, tattered Yellow King informs them that only one city now exists on the shores of Hali, and that city is Carcosa, once known as Yhtill.

The Play ends with The King in Yellow having settled the problem of succession and with everyone fearfully awaiting their imminent demise.

Paradoxically, Hastur is referred to separately as a character and as a place.

Each reader invariably singles out a character in the play as representative of himself or herself, usually to the reader's horror when that character's doom becomes apparent.

Adventus Regis

“ARRIVAL OF THE KING,” A SCENARIO FOR CTHULHU INVICTUS
PART ONE OF RIPPLES FROM CARCOSA

10

BACKGROUND

The investigators begin play as a group of Roman citizens vacationing at a resort town and enjoying a relaxing escape from the pressures of life. They arrive just as a cult of Hastur is in the final stages of launching a major ritual. This dark rite takes the form of a new play which ultimately leads to madness, chaos, and the destruction of the town. The investigators must survive the insanity that grips the town, confront the core group members of the cult, and thwart their further aims. For the cult this is just the beginning, as they plan to improve the ritual, making the play more powerful, and perform it again soon to a much larger audience.

KEEPER INFORMATION

Livius Carbo was once a very successful playwright, however when his young wife died five years previously he suffered a nervous breakdown. Concerned friends and relatives suggested that he go spend some time in Herculaneum, a resort town known for its ability to soothe troubled minds. Carbo traveled there and soon made friends with a number of local artists and poets. It was through these new friends that he became involved with the Cult of Hastur.

Joining the cult, he quickly became its most gifted member. After only a year of involvement, he began dreaming of a dead city on a lakeshore, a trio of doomed nobles, and the coming of a king dressed all in yellow. Carbo recorded his dreams and eventually formed them into a play. The cult was thrilled with Carbo's creation, seeing it as a powerful tool for spreading the message of their faith. The goal of bringing this work to the stage became the chief aim of the entire cult.

For the last year the Cult of Hastur has pursued this goal vigorously. They've rented out the arena in Vestalantium to showcase the sanity-shattering drama. They have also had hundreds of bronze pendants minted, all emblazoned with the Yellow Sign, and plan to give one to each and every person attending the play.

Finding a cast was the hardest part. As slaves were commonly used as actors, the cultists purchased dozens before finding the ones right for each role. Many slaves were sold after reading only a few lines and others were driven mad before properly learning their lines. Several of these dismissed slaves were sold in Vestalantium, a few of them mentally affected by the lines they were forced to learn. Now the cult has a full cast of skilled enslaved actors, each of whom is now hopelessly insane. Their minds are filled only with the horrible play and their role within it.

The investigators arrive the night before the play is to be performed. The whole town is buzzing with excitement over the return to public life of the once-famous Carbo. Everyone is speaking about the incredible expense of the production and speculating on topic of the play. There is also much interest in the novelty of a play being performed in an arena as opposed to a traditional theater. The promise of a free gift to each attendee has everyone eager to secure a ticket to the performance.

The play is scheduled to begin as the sun begins to set. The arena will be lit by hundreds of oil lamps for the final act. This alone is enough to make people curious, as plays normally end well before sundown because of lighting. The reason for this is that Hastur cannot be summoned unless the star Aldebaran is visible above the horizon. The play is part of a ritual that the cult hopes will open the way for their god, the Great Old One Hastur, to manifest.

PART ONE— SILENTIUM SERENITATIS

“The Silence of Serenity”

Introduction

Rome, center of the empire and the most exciting city in the known world. Even so, it is good to get away from the hustle and bustle, the daily grind of life. This is going to be a wonderful vacation.

After sailing up the Arno River on a luxurious barge you all arrive at the town of Vestalanium. Known for being one of the most exclusive of all resort towns in the province of Italia, Vestalanium is nestled amid rolling green hills, dotted with date and olive orchards.

You arrive after dark; slaves and servants of the resort villa of Ravulus meet you at the docks. There you climb onto litters and are carried, along with your luggage, to the resort. You are shown to your beautiful rooms and given glasses of fine wine, then you sleep upon marvelously comfortable beds. The next morning you awake well-rested and hungry, eager to see the town and what it has to offer in the way of shopping and distractions. It's wonderful to get away somewhere peaceful and relax; after all, you are on vacation.

Starting Play

The investigators are summoned to breakfast by Tula, a slave. She is owned by Gaius Phillipus, the owner of the resort, who orders her to bring the guests down to the dining area. She is instructed to keep the guests happy and to encourage them to spend as much coin as possible during their stay.

Once downstairs, a breakfast of dates, bread, oil, and honeyed wine is served. Two musicians play the flute and the kithara, a larger variant of the lyre, while a lovely dark-haired woman sings softly in Greek. The music is low, as the performers do not wish to drown out the guests' conversation. At the close of the meal, the trio performs a set of three songs, the vocalist joining the musicians by playing the *tympani*, a form of tambourine.

A side table, attended by a matronly woman, has been set up for the investigators' children. The children enjoy each other's company, leaving the investigators to their conversation. The resort has a full schedule of activities planned for the children of their guests, so their parents can better en-

THE CHILDREN

Four children accompany the investigators on their vacation in Vestalanium. Descriptions and personalities are left up to the whim of the individual keeper. It is recommended that they should be portrayed as loving, carefree, respectful, and innocent. They play an important role in later parts of the scenario. They are:

- Avinina, a seven-year-old girl, who is the daughter of Tullius Varro, the artisan
- Cinna, a six-year-old boy, who is the son of Atilius Blasio, the merchant
- Philo, a ten-year-old boy
- Falta, a three-year-old girl, who are the children of Hirtia Nasia, the patrician.

joy their vacations. The older woman watching over the children politely informs the investigators that the children are going horseback riding later today, with little Falta to be led on a gentle pony.

Keepers should describe the air being perfumed by the scent of the flowers growing in the gardens. The décor of the villa is both colorful and tasteful. Well-dressed, attractive slaves serve quickly and quietly. The food is of the finest quality and the couches are large and generously cushioned. Keepers should try to convey a sense of comfort and tranquility to better contrast the chaos and madness which will soon grip all of Vestalanium. The cult's performance is tonight as the star Aldebaran is rising.

The Host Enters

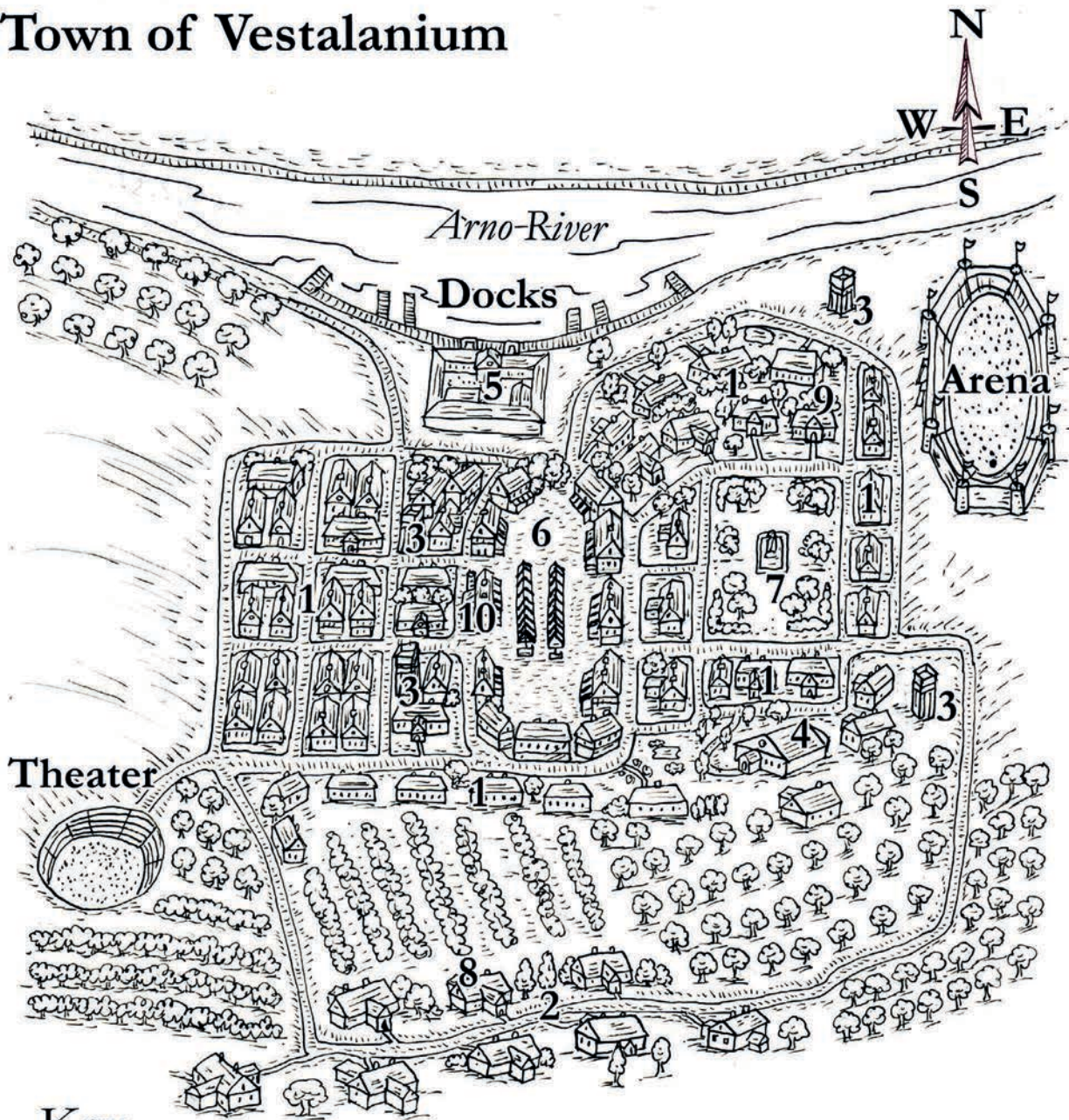
During breakfast, the investigators may exchange any rumors and gossip they know. Gaius Phillipus is the owner of the resort. He is a shrewd man who earns a comfortable living keeping visitors happy. After breakfast Gaius will arrive to welcome the investigators. Read aloud or paraphrase the following:

A well-dressed man with short grey hair enters the room. His eyes are sharp and his smile seems comfortable upon his face. “Honored guests, welcome to Ravulus, my humble home. I am Gaius Phillipus, your host during your stay in Vestalanium. I hope the food and music were pleasing?”

Gaius then greets each of you by name. His handshake is firm, his tone friendly. You notice a legionary tattoo is worn proudly on his forearm.

Town of Vestalanium

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Key

- | | |
|---------------------|---------------------|
| 1. Residential Area | 6. Shops |
| 2. Villas | 7. Public Gardens |
| 3. Guard Posts | A. Villa of Ravulus |
| 4. Bathhouse | B. Town Augur |
| 5. Dockhouse | C. Metalworker |

"I have taken the liberty of arranging a full day of amusement and indulgences for you all. Tula will be your guide about Vestalanium. She knows the town very well and is at your service for the duration of your stay here." He opens a scroll and consults it as he speaks.

"Now then, to start your day off she shall guide you about town. We have many fine shops and a wonderful public garden, and our bathhouse is second to none. You have a reservation at the bathhouse at the sixth hour. Tula will make sure you are not late, because you may not get in

otherwise. They are usually booked for days in advance. If you should become hungry, there are many fine eateries across Vestalanium; Tula can guide you to any of them.

“But do not fill your bellies completely, because I have a wonderful dinner planned. At the eighth hour we shall all board my private barge and enjoy an evening feast upon the river. There is much entertainment planned for us. From Gallia, the magician Coelius will astound you. Then you will laugh to the antics of Dives and Muffin, a man and his amazing trained dog. I have imported the two of the finest dancers from Arabia, dark beauties sure to steal your heart. Then, to finish out the evening, a matched pair of gladiators to entertain us with a fighting display. Not bad for your first day in Vestalanium? But what of tomorrow, you wonder?”

“Surely you have heard of the new play debuting tonight, the work of the famous Livius Carbo and his troop. This will be play like no other, a first in the empire. Fully reserved for weeks... but I have secured a spot for all of you to attend tomorrow night.

“After the play we will have wine and a poetry reading here in the dining room. But, before you begin your day of activities, our players have prepared a special set to welcome you to Vestalanium. I give you the players of Ravulus.”

At this point the musicians and singer begin their final set of the morning as Gaius Phillipus departs quietly. The investigators are now on their own until the eighth hour, when the resort's pleasure barge departs for the evening cruise. Investigators may explore the villa if they wish. It is spacious and well-appointed; there is nothing out of the ordinary to be found.

Activities are provided here for the investigators' four children, who have little interest in joining their parents for a dull day shopping and visiting the bathhouse. Slaves perform puppet shows and play games with the children. Dives and his trained dog, Muffin, also provide diversions for the children. Once the investiga-

tors leave the villa under the guidance of Tula, they begin to notice the workings of the Cult of Hastur.

PART TWO— FREMITUS INSANIAE

“The Murmurs of Madness”

In Vestalanium there is much to see and do. Most buildings in town are constructed of fine white marble. Columns abound and street traffic is light as Vestalanium is too exclusive to attract large, noisy crowds. The weather is perfect, with blue skies and a picturesque view of the Arno River never far from sight.

The Cult's Criers

The investigators are highly likely to come across members of the Cult of Hastur, as several of them are wandering about Vestalanium to spread word of the play and to issue wooden tokens. The tokens are circular, about twice the size of a sestertius, with the Yellow Sign carved and painted on both sides.

Those promoting the play are attractive (APP 75) and dressed in yellow tunics. Investigators making either a successful **Insight** or **Spot Hidden** roll notice something is a little off with each of these promoters. Their hand might tremble, or they could have a wide, staring gaze, a nervous tic, or an odd, unnerving smile.

Token commemorating the play



The Message

The criers wander about, approaching groups of people to hand out tokens and spread word of the new play. They cry out a scripted message as they distribute their tokens, “A play like none before! Come see the story unfold for yourself. A noble family plots and plans, the true king arrives! It is tale of wonder and mystery. Who will prevail? The story unfolds under the stars! Come see one thousand lamps illuminate the final act! Beautiful actresses! Handsome actors! Costumes like none on Earth! Come see Adventus Regis.”

Initial Exposure to the Yellow Sign

The Yellow Sign is a potent emblem for spreading madness. Investigators seeing the Yellow Sign for the first time must make a **Sanity** check (0/1D6 loss), and feel dizzy and nauseous, with those failing their Sanity checks also seeing the arms of the symbol twisting and reaching out for them. Unlucky investigators may be driven insane by seeing the Sign, as some in Vestalantium are already discovering.

Rumors and Gossip

In a small town of wealthy vacationing Romans, news spreads quickly. Rumors and gossip are the main source of information in this scenario. Not all of them are pertinent and some are outright false. Each investigator begins the game with one rumor, listed upon their character sheet.

Rumors and Gossip around Town

The investigators can pick up the following rumors and gossip from the people they encounter in town. They must actively seek out gossip by engaging people in conversation and encouraging them to speak freely. A good method is offering up a rumor they've already learned in the hope that an unknown one might be shared. A successful **Luck** roll is required for an investigator to encounter person who actually knows 1D3 rumors. While the people in Vestalantium enjoy gossip and easily share what they have heard, the keeper may wish to call for **Charm**, **Fast Talk**, **Intimidate** or **Persuade** roll depending on the investigator's approach.

In Vestalantium there are no public libraries. All records are kept in the local prefect's home and gaining access to them is not possible. Most public records about Carbo, the play, and his new troupe are in Herculaneum, which is too far away to research. The only information investigators can obtain is through the local gossip and rumor mill.

Rumors and Gossip in Vestalantium (1D20)

1) The public games are being postponed for two weeks because that play is taking over the arena. All four thousand seats are reserved for tonight's performance. I couldn't get an invitation tonight; I'll be going to tomorrow's performance.

2) Octavius, the local prefect, threatened to shut down the production when he was not granted a

private performance before the public opening. He claimed it was because he thought the play might be treasonous; Republican sympathizers or something. He'll be there tonight, in his usual box.

3) The play must be costing a fortune to produce. Renting out the arena, promoting the play, and using a thousand oil lamps to light the venue...the number of sesterces being spent on this must be astronomical. How the producers hope to make back their investment is beyond me.

4) Carbo, the author, has been a recluse since he fell in with some artsy crowd in Herculaneum. He was mourning his wife when he got there and hasn't left the city until now.

5) I hear they are giving out free pendants tonight, you know, at the play. Some sort of token to commemorate the opening. Just giving them away. They hired the best metalworker in town to run them off; he's been at it for weeks. Four thousand pendants at least, just to give away.

6) I heard Carbo went insane when his wife died. That's why they sent him to Herculaneum, to "get away and sort things out." Now he's back to writing plays. I really hope he's back to his old self; I loved his last two productions.

7) A thousand oil lamps, did you hear? My cousin works at the arena and helped set them up. They have some sort of augur with the production; he had a map of where every last lamp should be placed.

8) Almost all details of this play are being kept secret. The costumes, the sets, the actors. No one can get anywhere near them. I'm betting the play is going to be some sort of political statement that gets everyone arrested.

9) No one knows where Carbo is staying in town. He's been seen a few times with a shorter, fat man and a tall, beautiful woman. I think they are the play's financiers from Herculaneum. Those three keep to themselves.

10) Did you see the weird sign on the fliers and invitations for the play? No one knows what it is. I own slaves from Egypt, Britannia, Germania, and Sarmatia, and none of them know what it means. It's funny, when you look at it close, you feel dizzy.

11) – 20) These rumors are mundane matters that have little or nothing to do with the investigations

Ripples from Carcosa

and keepers are invited to make up suitable gossip. Topics could include romantic affairs, questionable merchants, society positioning, recent births, and who was at which lavish party.

Sightseeing

There are three areas the city takes pride in: the Public Gardens, the Bathhouse, and the Shopping Square. Investigators touring Vestalanium will likely stumble upon these places or be led to them by Tula.

Public Gardens

Here are rows of beautiful flowering plants, fruit trees, and numerous fountains depicting all manner of mythical creatures. The paths are twisting and lined with white gravel. Benches are plentiful, as are vendors of fruit and wine. The theme of the gardens is the Trials of Heracles, with statuary, frescos, and mosaics commemorating the tale as one follows the path through the gardens. Musicians are placed out of earshot of one another, playing upon flute or lyre. Two things occur here:

A) While entering the main gate to the gardens investigators encounter a local vigilis (policeman/fireman). He is questioning everyone who enters, including the investigators:

The man comes forward—the club and whip on his belt, as well as his uniform—marking him as one of the local vigili. He gives a half-smile and a nod in greeting before asking, “Have you seen a little girl? She’s six years old, dressed in a white tunica. She has blond hair and hazel eyes. Her name is Nelaria. She ran off from her father earlier today and we’re trying to locate her. If you find her, please alert a member of the guard.”

B) While investigators tour the gardens, keepers should have them each make a **Spot Hidden** roll. If successful, they notice a splatter of blood on the white gravel stones of the park path. Searching the area, the investigators find a little girl.

You see a little girl sitting on the ground off the main path; she’s blocked from casual view by a bench and a rosebush. With tangled blond hair and hazel eyes, she matches the description of the lost child, Nelaria. You notice that her white tunica is splattered with blood. In her hands is a dead kitten, its head bashed in against the side of the stone bench. Her arms slowly swing out, strik-

ing the body of the dead animal against the bench over and over. She mutters in a trancelike voice, “Mother, there is a stranger in the city... Mother, there is a stranger in the city...”

Investigators witnessing this scene must roll a **Sanity** check (1/1D3). The little girl releases the dead kitten if someone attempts to take it from her. She offers no resistance and is easily led away. If queried, she says only that her name is Camilla, explaining that she is a princess. The child answers no other questions, her eyes wandering into space when questioned.

Once the vigilis are alerted, Nelaria’s father, Nelor, arrives within minutes. He embraces her and thanks the investigators for locating her. He is both relieved that she is apparently unharmed and terrified once he sees her and learns what she has done. He quickly rushes her home, cradling her to him as her limp limbs hang. Even with the arrival of her father, Nelaria’s condition remains unchanged and she continues to replete her mantra, “Mother, there is a stranger in the city.”

If questioned, the father explains that he was working at the arena setting up the lamps for tonight’s play. His daughter was with him, playing with her kitten in the stands while he was work-



“Mother, there is a stranger in the city...”

ing. He remembers that sometime after the troupe started rehearsing the play he lost sight of Nelaria. He frantically searched for an hour before seeking the help of the city guard. The girl's father did not watch the rehearsals, as he was hard at work placing lamps in the arena.

The Bathhouse of Vestalantium

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The lavish bathhouse is staffed by an army of attractive (APP 70+) slaves. Separate bathing areas are available for men and women. The bathhouse also has a well-supplied shop full of lotions, oils, sponges, soft robes, sandals, snacks, wines, and health tonics. The investigators should arrive here at the hottest part of the day.

Reservations for the investigators, as guests of Gaius, have already been made. Male and female investigators are taken to separate areas for bathing. They are each given the option of having a slave attendant to serve them. These attendants offer investigators grooming and massages in addition to bathing. Tula, who is a slave herself, is allowed to bathe as well unless the character Hirtia Nasia, the Patrician, objects. Investigators should enjoy the baths and services, relaxing until near the end of their visit.

Each male investigator is offered an attendant, who later offers them a massage to relax their muscles. The investigator with the lowest Luck who accepts the massage will select the mad slave Samara. She, like the little girl Nelaria, has already succumbed to the power of Hastur and the Yellow Sign.

Slave Gossip

If Tula chats with the other slaves in the bathhouse, many of whom she knows quite well, they complain that some of the new girls are not working out. A few have nightmares, moaning and thrashing in their sleep. No one wants to sleep close to them in their barracks. During the day they are clumsy and easily distracted. If asked, they confirm that these slaves were sell-offs from Carbo's acting troupe. They all were prospective members of his troop who auditioned and acted parts of the play "Adventus Regis" but were rejected and sold to the bathhouse.

The Mad Slave

Samara was owned by the Cult of Hastur. She read extensively for the role of Cassilda, the Queen. Her mind began to weaken and the quality of her per-

formance wavered, so she was sold off to the bathhouse and a different slave was selected for the final casting. If Tula is observant (**Spot Hidden**), she recognizes Samara from her time auditioning for the play's production. Tula is not allowed to speak Samara, who is currently working.

Samara performs her duties well, however a **Spot Hidden** roll allows an investigator to notice that her mind seems to wander at times. She can be seen mouthing words soundlessly to herself as the male investigators enjoy the baths. Later, when giving an investigator a massage, her fragile grip on sanity fails.

During the massage, patrons are rubbed down with oils, and are then buffed off with a rough stone. This leaves the skin tender. Next they are massaged with thicker, heated oil that is then scraped off with a blade-like object called a strigil. This also serves to remove body hair. Lastly, a soothing final layer of lotion is applied to the body.

Samara becomes unhinged during the second stage of the massage. While the investigator is lying on his belly, she drags the strigil sideways across her arm, opening a long, deep cut. She takes turns scraping the oil off the investigator and opening another deep gash in her arm. After several minutes of this keepers should have the investigator make a **Spot Hidden** roll. If successful, the investigator smells a coppery scent. If he fails his roll, he begins to feel the girl growing less attentive, and hears her breathing become uneven. As he turns his head to look at his masseuse, this is what he sees:

The beautiful slave girl stands beside the table, her eyes appearing full of loss and hopelessness. The wide, flat blade she holds is drenched with blood, which drips onto the tile floor, the massage table, and your back. Her left arm is held outward and upon the bare forearm are six very deep cuts, all evenly placed. She lifts the strigil to her arm again, pushing it bone-deep into her flesh without so much as a flinch. Before you can react she begins to slice, carving a seventh deep gouge into her flesh.

The investigator must make a **Sanity** check (1/1D3) for witnessing this. They are free to react however they wish. The girl does not defend herself and is easily disarmed and overpowered. If an alarm is raised, the bathhouse owner, along with his bodyguard, rushes in to remove the insane Samara. A successful **Listen** roll means the other investigators becomes aware of the commotion.

The girl does not resist or react until her wounds are being bound, at which, she becomes frantic, fighting against those attempting to administer first aid. She thrashes around, swinging wildly, blood spraying everywhere. Those within 20 feet must make a **Luck** roll or be splattered by it. Samara has STR 65 and 5 hit points, should investigators attempt to subdue her.

Once subdued by a pair of burly male bathhouse attendants (unless investigators have done so already), she begins howling and screaming. Her wounds are hastily bound and she is carried away to the slave quarters of the bathhouse.

As she screams, investigators hear her begging, “Let me die! Just let me die! It’ll be better this way! I beg you, show pity. I didn’t hurt the man, only myself. Please let me die! Not upon us, oh King, not upon us!”—at which point she is dragged away by the owners, who are horrified at the scene. Investigators witnessing this should make a **Sanity** roll (1/1D2). A successful **Intelligence** roll, means Tula recalls that, “Not upon us, oh King, not upon us!” is a line from the play.

The Shopping Square

Dozens of shops line the spacious square. All the varied goods of the empire are offered here, but without the crushing crowds so common in larger cities. Food and drink are offered from numerous carts. Musicians and performers offer entertainment at every corner. Members of the local vigiles wander silently about, maintaining order for the vacationing citizens. The shops are well staffed, with helpful, charming shopkeepers. There are shops selling wine, clothing, jewelry, housewares, statuary, leather goods, fresh fish, produce, and pottery.

The Metalworker’s Shop

If the investigators’ heard the gossip about the metalworker making pendants for the play, they may wish to visit his shop. However, by the time they arrive at the metalworker’s shop, they find it closed. It is the only shop not open in the entire market area. Outside are tied a small wagon and a horse.

If the employees or owners of neighboring shops are questioned as to why the metalworking shop is closed, they claim not to know. A successful **Insight** roll lets the investigators realize that this is a lie and that the person they are speaking to is reluctant to talk about the topic. If pressed (with a successful **Charm**, **Fast Talk**, **Intimidate** or **Per-**



The mad slave gives an unforgettable massage

suade roll), those being questioned confess what they know. They inform the investigators that the owner of the shop hung himself early that morning. They know little else but do say that the man had a large family and never seemed the least bit odd or unhappy.

Inside the shop there are four teenaged boys, busily cleaning up the shop. A successful **Luck** roll while lingering outside the closed shop results in the oldest boy exiting the shop. He loads three large baskets onto the wagon. It’s obvious he’s distracted and upset and, unless interrupted by the investigators, he ignores them.

If approached, and a successful **Charm**, **Fast Talk** or **Persuasion** roll is made, the boy talks to them for a few minutes. His name is Sevius, son of the shop’s owner Selvius. Investigators may learn the following information from him:

- His father, Selvius, was hired to create the pendants for Carbo’s new production.
- The baskets he’s loaded onto the wagon are the last of four batches of pendants; the first three shipments have already been delivered to the play’s organizers.
- Carbo supplied the molds for the pendant himself and they have already been returned.

- His father was the only one to cast the pendants. He and his brothers only stoked the fires, ran the bellows, cleaned up the finished pendants, and tied them onto leather cords.
- His father hadn't been sleeping well and his work was becoming sloppy.
- After dinner last night, his father seemed nervous and paranoid.
- His father hung himself just before dawn.
- He, his four brothers, and their mother have no idea why Selvius would do such a thing.

If asked to show what is in the baskets, Sevius reaches in and hands the investigator a handful (1D4+1) of the pendants. "Keep them," he says, "the vile things have caused my family enough sorrow." He then departs to make this final delivery to the cultists.

Each basket contains hundreds of bronze pendants cast with the Yellow Sign. Somehow the pendants have a sickly feel to them, as if the metal is not only cold but damp as well. The yellow sign upon the bronze is actually yellow even though no paint appears to have been applied. Examining a pendant calls for a **Sanity** check (1/1D2).

If the investigators follow Sevius they witness him delivering the baskets to the arena. He is met at the gates and paid by a tall, beautiful woman—Colia Thalna, the play's promoter and the second-highest-ranking Hastur cultist currently in Vestalantium. Three burly men carry the baskets inside and the woman follows them. If approached, they do not speak to anyone, however the woman will explain briskly that everyone is busy preparing for opening night.

The Arena

Vestalantium's arena seats four thousand, and is primarily used for exotic beast hunts. While there is some gladiatorial combat held here, it's secondary to the display of wild animals fighting one another or *bestiarii*. The arena is currently closed to the public, having been rented out by Livius Carbo's troupe. The local theater proved inadequate, as it seated far too few spectators at only nine hundred. It also wasn't in the right geographic position for the ritual, as hills blocked a clear view of the star Aldebaran. Renting out the local arena for the play solved both of these issues.

The Town Augur

By now, the investigators might be feeling uneasy and wondering what is going on. They may seek out the town augur to have him read the signs, in order to get some idea what the fates might have in store. The town augur, a tall thin man named Vettius, has grown wealthy in Vestalantium by interpreting the flight patterns of birds along the Arno River. His home is one of the larger along the river's shores.

Investigators are greeted by one of his servants, an attractive young Germanic slave, at the entrance to his villa. She asks why they have come to the home of her master, explaining that Vettius only sees visitors who have an appointment. The slave, named Erna, knows the investigators do not have one and turns them away. If pressed, she calls on a few guards to escort the investigators off the property.

If the investigators ask for an appointment, she gives them one for tomorrow, just after the 6th hour (noon). She explains that a donation of 100 sesterces is customary and that they are required to leave a deposit of 20 sesterces. If the deposit is given over, she records the investigators' names on a wax tablet. With a smile she dismisses them, saying that she looks forward to their visit tomorrow. Such a visit will never take place.

With a successful **Charm**, **Persuade** or **Status** roll, investigators can get in to see Vettius today. Erna explains that a same-day appointment can be made, but the standard donation is usually tripled. If they turn over three hundred sesterces she admits them into the villa's garden. There they are asked to sit and wait while she tells her master that he has "important visitors." The investigators wait about a half an hour, during which time another servant serves them wine and olives.

Vettius enters the gardens with a flourish, gaudily dressed and speaking overly loud, accented by many dramatic gestures. The augur greets the investigators and asks if they wish to know what the signs told him at this morning's viewing. Vettius then launches into a story about how the birds made some unusual movements, which seem like nothing more than the normal flights of birds to investigators. He proclaims that the signs are very favorable and that all will be well. Vettius reassures the investigators that they have nothing to worry about and that only good things are in store for them, Vestalantium, and the Empire in the coming days.

A successful **Augur** or **Insight** roll reveals Vettius to be a complete and utter fraud. He is an unskilled augur who tells patrons only what they wish

to hear. If confronted, Vettius becomes outraged, making a grand scene where he accuses the investigators of slandering his reputation. He proclaims the investigators to be the rudest people he has ever met. The vigiles quickly arrive and Vettius has the investigators thrown out.

The Town Militia

The investigator Fulvius Geta, a centurion, may wish to seek out other military personnel who may be retired or on active duty in Vestalium. The average militia soldier in town is a veteran of foreign campaigns who enjoys the quiet and uneventful duties in Vestalium. Soldiers comment on the fine bathhouse, comforts, and available companionship. They might even tell tales of the occasional wealthy widow mourning her loss in the arms of a brave militiaman. The main thing, they stress, is not to cause problems that might ruin a “good thing.”

If questioned about anything out of the ordinary, they claim that nothing unusual is going on. If specifically questioned about an increase in bizarre or crazy behavior, they comment, “People lose their minds here sometimes, it happens. Folks come here because there are already one or two cracks in the vase. Do you know what I mean? It’s nothing to worry about, you get used to it.”

If more friendly conversation is pursued, the local militiamen invite Fulvius to a local tavern on the outskirts of town. There they gather while off duty to eat, drink heavily, and shoot dice. Depending on what time Fulvius arrives here, he might have several hours to relax in familiar company.

The 8th Hour Draws Near

Soon the day draws to a close and the eighth hour approaches. It is time for the investigators to return to the villa to prepare for the dinner cruise upon Gaius Phillipus’s private barge. Tula knows her master will punish her if the investigators are not back at the resort before half past the seventh hour.

The investigators may have lost some sanity by now. Seeing the Yellow Sign for the first time, encountering those already insane, and handling the loathsome pendants could easily tax the investigators’ sanity. Keepers are advised to make certain that each encounter in town happens long enough apart that the loss happens gradually, in order to avoid investigators slipping into insanity at this early stage of the adventure.

PART THREE— FREMITUS SUSURRI FIUNT

“The Murmurs Become Whispers”

Keepers should allow the pace to slow for the start of this section of the scenario. Investigators should relax a bit, discuss what they’ve witnessed, and share their suspicions about what is happening in Vestalium. The investigators are encouraged by servants to wash up, change their clothing, and ready themselves for the dinner cruise. When the guests are ready to depart, waiting litters carry them to the town’s dock.

The ride is smooth, quick, and free of incident. Investigators see people dressed in their finest clothing moving through town toward the arena. The first performance of “Adventus Regis” will soon begin.

BREAKING INTO THE ARENA

Investigators might try to stop or disrupt the play by breaking into the arena beforehand. The local vigiles are currently watching the arena, stopping and questioning anyone they see snooping around the area. There are many rumors about the play’s political, possibly pro-Republican, message; so the guards are ready to arrest anyone suspicious.

The watch captain of the vigiles, a sturdy looking man named Marius Martinius, is in charge of the security surrounding the arena. He gives investigators a single warning, telling them to be clear of this area at once. After that he’ll have any offending investigators arrested, along with any that come to their aid. Attempts to **Charm**, **Fast Talk**, **Intimidate** or **Persuade** Captain Marius are at a Hard difficulty level. Those Pushing the roll, perhaps trying to use a bribe, are instantly arrested as well. The captain has strict orders and warned that his career in Vestalium depends on this play not turning into some sort of political mess.

Investigators caught trying to enter the arena are hauled away and arrested. They’ll spend several quiet hours imprisoned within vigiles barracks until Gaius arrives and secures their release. No charges are filed and investigators are released with a stern warning.

The Children

Keepers should try to reassure those investigators with children that they are safe and well protected at Ravulus. Gaius assures his guests that the walls and gates of the villa are strong. He also informs them that the villa is within earshot of a vigiles' watch station.

A Briton freedman, who is a masterful storyteller, entertains the children at the villa during the dinner cruise. Named Bran, the freedman is fifty years old, with gray hair and a multi-colored cloak. The children are looking forward to listening to his stories. They are also excited because they've been promised a special dinner with desert. It should become apparent that the children are having a wonderful time and the madness which seems to be lurking in Vestalanium is totally absent here. Servants promise to put the children into their beds well before the 9th hour.

You arrive at the dock and behold a wondrous sight. Here is moored a barge like no other you have ever seen. The decks are all polished wood, artistically carved handrails, posts, and columns. A canopy of bright colors covers nearly a third of the vast deck. There are five marble couches, piled high with pillows and cushions. Beside each is a table with a bowl of fruit and a glass of wine. A slave stands near each couch with a large fan of ostrich feathers. A dozen black oars jut out into the water from the lower decks. A voice calls out, "Welcome! Welcome to my ship. Come aboard my friends. Come now, we have a whole evening of feasting, entertainment, and excitement planned." It is Gaius, your host, leaning over the rail, well dressed as always, and sporting his well-practiced smile.

The Barge

This lavish craft is large and slow-moving. Originally built for hauling the lumber and marble used in the building of Vestalanium, it has been converted to host feasts and parties upon the river. It can comfortably carry more than fifty passengers.

Upper Level

The deck of the barge is wide and flat, covered by a colorful linen canopy. The woodwork is well polished and braziers are set about the deck to provide light for the dining area. Five comfortable couches are arranged here, each with its own servant atten-

dant. The attendants keep the guests' glasses and plates full during the entire evening.

Lower Level

Down below is a bank of rowers, a vast kitchen, a dozen wine-filled amphorae, changing rooms for performers, and Gaius' office. The feast is prepared here and brought up to the investigators in five courses.

FUN WHILE IT LASTED

Investigators enjoy the cruise for about an hour. During this time they are fanned as they relax upon the couches, sipping wine and nibbling on the appetizers. The musical trio that played at breakfast performs for the investigators during this course. The barge travels up river, offering views of olive orchards and prosperous farms amid the countryside. At the end of the hour the first dinner course is served as the Magician Coelius make his entrance. Just as he begins his act, the barge lurches violently. Investigators with a successful **Listen** roll, hear the sound of timber groaning and snapping. The barge twists in the water, as if snagged upon something, then shudders violently. A few moments later Gaius arrives from below deck.

Gaius Speaks

"My friends," he begins, "we've had a bit of trouble below decks. It seems our clumsy pilot has steered onto some rocks near shore and knocked a hole in our hull. There is no danger, but we must stop to make repairs. Our captain knows a flat field just around the next bend where we can stop. We shall simply move the dinner and show onto shore. I promise you will hardly notice the interruption. To apologize for this embarrassment, your stay at Ravulus is extended an additional day—without charge, of course."

What Really Happened: A successful **Insight** roll reveals that Gaius is nervous, lying, and hiding something. Those making a successful **Spot Hidden** roll notice a splatter of blood upon the bottom of his tunic. The following is what actually took place below:

- A large, male slave went mad below deck after getting hold of a bronze pendant emblazoned with the yellow sign.
- He knocked the crewman manning the tiller unconscious and then intentionally steered the barge onto the rocks.

- Panicked crewmembers tried to stop him but the slave wouldn't release the tiller.
- Gaius was forced to kill him by bludgeoning him to death with a nearby pail.
- The barge is taking on water and must be repaired. The repairs made here, on the shore of the river, can only be a patch job.
- With these simple repairs the barge can manage to return to town tonight. However, more extensive repairs must be made in the coming days.

The Show Must Go On

The crew of the barge skillfully ground the vessel. In moments a small army of slaves and servants pour out from below deck. The investigators are helped onto the riverbank and led to the nearby field. Gaius's men hastily erect a pavilion in the field and move the heavy couches inside. Braziers for lighting are set up and furs lain out to cover the ground. Torches are set along the path between the tent and the barge.

With a successful **Spot Hidden** roll, investigators notice some of the slaves and servants frantically setting up the camp appear wet. If these workers are questioned and a successful **Fast Talk** or **Persuade** Check is made, they explain what actually happened. The investigator Tula, who is a slave herself, need only ask one of them to learn what really happened without making any rolls.

From here dinner proceeds normally:

1. The Magician, Coelius, performs astounding feats of sleight of hand while the first course of bread and soup is served. The investigator Marcus, who is himself a thief, recognizes all of his techniques, but is still impressed with his skills.
2. Dives and his trained dog Muffin perform tricks and a comedy routine. The second course is served: boiled crab stuffed with bread crumbs and cheese with raw vegetables.
3. Two beautiful Arabian dancers perform as the third course of oysters and vegetables is served. They are dark-haired siblings; slight and alluring. A random male investigator is approached by Gaius while the pair are dancing, whispering that the pair of dancers could be sent to his room for the night upon their return to the villa. "It would only be a small additional fee of, let's say, 800 sesterces? Have we a deal?" If the offer is refused, he presents the

same offer to a different investigator. Gaius will accept 400 sesterces with a successful **Bargain** roll.

4. A pair of gladiators battle. The investigators are given the choice of armed or unarmed combat. The match is only to the death if the investigators demand it (and would cost the investigator an additional fee of 10,000 sesterces). Dessert is served; chilled berries with cream and slices of honeyed cake.

During the show the crew repairs the damaged boat, bailing water out of the hull, and getting the barge off the riverbank. By the time dessert and the gladiators are finished, all is ready for the return trip to Vestalium. The camp is struck and everyone is moved back onboard. The efficiency of the workers impresses even the investigator Fulvius Geta. The barge sets off for Vestalium and several hours after nightfall the town comes into sight.

PART FOUR— SUSURRI ULULATI FIUNT “The Whispers Become Screams”

The investigators return to find the town in the midst of a riot. Nearly half of Vestalium is on fire and packs of lunatics are rampaging everywhere. The final act of *Adventus Regis* ended about an hour ago. The cultists attempt at summoning Hastur succeeded, in a way. The Unspeakable's consciousness took possession of Octavius, the local prefect, killing him in the process but using his body as an avatar. Hastur immediately unleashed a wave of psychic chaos, creating a wave of madness in everyone attending the performance.

The combination of watching the disturbing play and the wave of psychic disruption was like the breaking of a dam. Four thousand people, including the bulk of the town's vigiles and militia forces, went stark raving mad. The audience went on a rampage of murder, suicide, and an unquenchable desire to spread the Yellow Sign. Now they are everywhere, causing the chaos and destruction the investigators now face.

Only three cultists resisted the madness. They had long ago been driven insane and corrupted by their devotion and service to Hastur. The trio remains within the arena, celebrating and basking in the glory of their success. The Boneless One, an avatar form of Hastur, now holds court with them inside the prefect's suite.

ENCOUNTER 1, INSANE CITIZENS OF VESTALANIUM

22

	#1	#2	#3	#4	#5	#6	#7	#8
STR	65	75	50	70	65	60	50	55
CON	60	65	70	60	55	55	55	55
SIZ	60	70	65	75	65	60	70	50
INT	70	60	55	50	60	65	70	50
POW	55	75	65	60	55	65	55	60
DEX	65	50	55	55	50	65	65	60
HP	6	10	5	9	8	6	5	7
DB	+1D4	+1D4	--	+1D4	+1D4	--	--	--
Build	1	1	0	1	1	0	0	0
Weapon	Axe	Gladius	Club	Knife	Chain	Club	Scythe	Knife
Skill	35% (17/7)	50% (25/10)	35% (17/7)	40% (20/8)	45% (22/9)	35% (17/7)	35% (17/7)	40% (20/8)
Damage	1D6	1D6+1	1D6	1D4	1D4	1D6	1D6	1D4
Armor	None	1D3	None	None	None	1	None	None

Returning to Vestalanium

The smell of smoke is the first thing you notice. Turning your gaze towards Vestalanium, you see a strange, orange glow illuminating the night sky. The barge drifts slowly towards a turn in the river that blocks the view of the town. The deck is filling with people looking towards where the city will appear around the bend. The wind suddenly shifts and carries a long, shrill scream. Soon more screams can be heard as you slowly drift further down river.

If the investigators ask for basic weapons and equipment, such items are provided to them. If they request armor, the only suits available are four suits of leather (Armor 1D3) and a single set of gladiator Samnite armor (Armor 1D3).

Rounding the bend in the river, you see that much of Vestalanium is in flames. Boats moored at the docks are on fire. People are running everywhere, carrying torches and makeshift weapons. Screams fill the night air and blood stains the white marble of many buildings. You catch sight of a woman jumping to her death from a rooftop; an old man douses himself in lamp oil then leaps onto a burning cart, and a gang of people with knives rush howling after a handful of fleeing women and children. Madness grips the town and death is everywhere.

“Turn her about!” shouts Gaius to the crew of the barge, “We are not landing. Take us back upriver, now!”

Seeing the madness, investigators must make a **Sanity** check (1/1D3). Investigators with children back at the villa are sure to raise objections upon hearing Gaius’s commands to his crew. If a **Status**, **Intimidate**, **Fast Talk**, or **Persuade** roll is successfully made he will agree to pull close enough to shore to land the investigators just outside of the town. Landing at the docks is not possible, as they are engulfed in flames.

As soon as the investigators are off-loaded, Gaius orders the barge to depart. If ordered to remain and wait for the investigators, he reluctantly agrees. This is a lie; he intends to depart with all haste—successful **Insight** rolls detect this deception. Any attempt to physically harm Gaius is met by his numerous loyal servants and crew, who will defend him (an **Intelligence** roll confirms that moving against Gaius is a waste of very precious time).

Once ashore, the investigators find themselves about a half-mile outside of Vestalanium, roughly two miles away from the villa. The path will not be an easy one.

Crossing Vestalanium

Investigators moving through Vestalanium witness sights of madness and horror. While crossing the

Ripples from Carcosa

two miles to the villa, investigators face four separate encounters.

Encounter One: Hope is Lost!

Approximately two dozen people have either leapt from the rooftops or hung themselves from the upper story windows of several three- and four-story buildings (none of which are yet on fire). It is slow going, as investigators must carefully maneuver around the shattered bodies that litter the walkway. Several unfortunate people survived their falls and now lie moaning, reaching out towards the passing investigators. Call for **Luck** rolls; if failed, one of the dying people grasps an investigator's leg or ankle. A **Dodge** roll helps to avoid this; otherwise the unlucky investigator must pull away by making a **STR** roll. When the investigators have almost cleared their way through this area, a well-dressed man stands on the edge of a nearby rooftop. "Hope is lost!" he screams before leaping to his death, crashing through a cart full of grapes. A **Sanity** check (1/1D2) is required while moving past this area.

Encounter Two: We Have Seen Him!

A group of twenty crazed men and women rush the investigators. They howl and scream like rabid beasts as they charge around the street corner. All are armed, bloody, and injured. The buildings in the area are all on fire, so escaping into one of them is not possible. Twelve of these people rush past the investigators, totally ignoring them. Eight others stop with murderous intent, crying out, "We have seen him! We have seen him!" The investigators must fend off or escape attack (see the mob's characteristics, page 24).

Encounter Three: He Is Here!

The investigators come upon a group of maniacs pitching torches into a doorway. The group has filled the entryway with broken chairs and a table, and are setting light to the building. People inside are screaming as the flames fill their barricaded apartments.

On the other side of the street four people with brushes and ladders are painting a huge Yellow Sign upon the side of building. Each of these men has a Yellow Sign painted on their tunica. When the investigators are almost clear of this area,

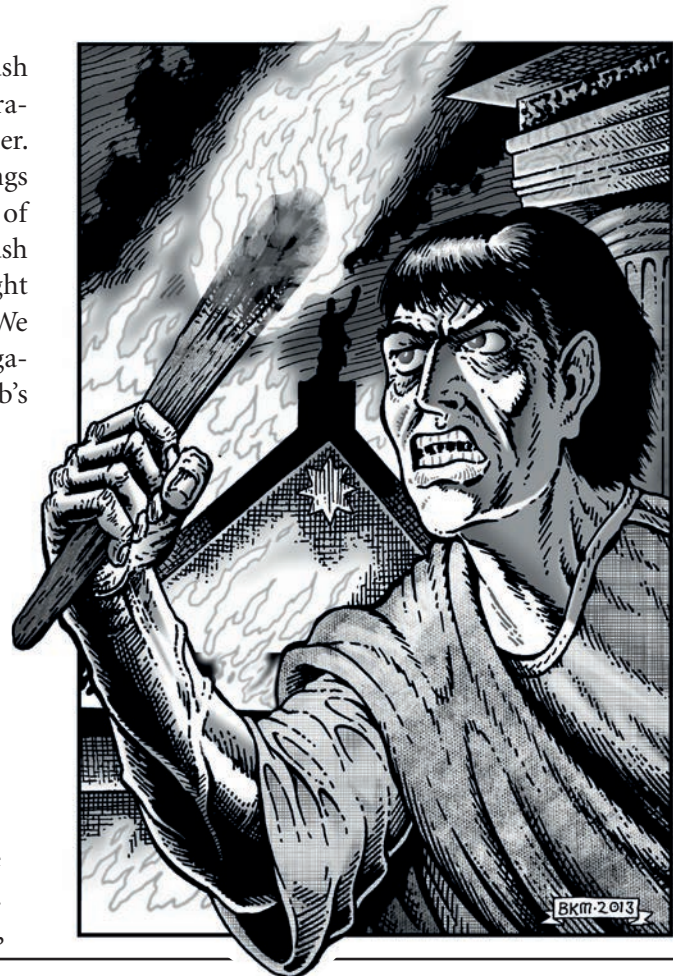
a screaming man rushes out, screaming, "He is here! He is here!"

The man is naked, covered in blood, cuts, and gashes. A layer of broken glass clings to his flesh. Investigators spot a bed of broken bottles, carefully prepared, covered in blood nearby. Beside the pile is the man's carefully folded tunic and discarded sandals. Unless stopped the man rushes away. A **Sanity** check (0/1D2) is required while moving past this area.

Encounter Four: Give Us Your Children!

The investigators have reached the hills where the more well-appointed villas are located. They see a crowd of crazed townspeople battering down the barricaded door to a villa. Servants are throwing out furniture from the second story windows onto the mob in a vain attempt to drive them off.

The mob is armed and many carry torches. Most of them are gathered around a wagon filled with barrels of lamp oil. It's clear that the mob intends to set the villa on fire. The lunatics scream, "Give us your children and they shall be spared! The Last King demands your children!" It is clear that the mob will soon overcome the barricade. A



ENCOUNTER 2, THE MOB

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	#1	#2	#3	#4	#5	#6	#7	#8
STR	60	65	50	65	70	75	40	75
CON	70	60	75	65	60	75	45	50
SIZ	55	60	70	80	60	75	45	90
INT	55	50	50	45	55	45	70	40
POW	65	45	60	55	50	60	50	40
DEX	75	55	60	60	55	50	75	60
HP	9	6	5	3	6	8	4	10
DB	--	+1D4	--	+1D4	+1D4	+1D4	--	+1D6
Build	0	1	0	1	1	1	0	2
Weapon	Club	Knife	Axe	Rock	Knife	Gladius	Club	Hammer
Skill	50% (25/10)	35% (17/7)	40% (20/8)	35% (17/7)	35% (17/7)	40% (20/8)	35% (17/7)	40% (20/8)
Damage	1D6	1D4	1D6	1D3	1D4	1D6+1	1D6	1D4
Armor	None	None	None	None	None	1D3	None	1

successful **Listen** roll detects that, from inside the villa, cries for help and the panicked screams of terrified children can be heard.

Investigators can move to help this family or they can rush past undetected. If they choose to move on without helping the trapped family, they soon hear the door beaten down followed by the roar of the mob. Screams of terror and death then fill the night, requiring a **Sanity** check (1/1D2+1).

If the investigators attack the mob, they may make surprise attacks on the first round (unopposed rolls), and gain a bonus die for each of their attacks in the first three rounds (attacks). With a successful **Tactics** roll, investigators see that the best course of action is to set the wagon holding the oil on fire. This can be accomplished easily and sets several of the maniacs on fire; they flail about, spreading the flames among their tightly-packed fellows. The entire group then rushes off, down the hill towards the far-off river. None manage to reach it before succumbing to the flames. Investigators causing such burning death should make **Sanity** checks (0/1D2+1).

Inside the villa are a wealthy couple, their six children, and more than a dozen servants and slaves. All are sane, unharmed, and eternally grateful. The servants gather horses and a wagon so that the family can flee the town. The family gives each investigator a horse from their stable which, mercifully, the attacking madmen had not yet found.

Reaching the Villa

Whether on foot or horseback, after successfully crossing the town, the investigators arrive at the Villa of Ravulus. They find the gates thrown open, the front doors smashed in and the grounds in disarray. Several servants lie dead outside of the villa; however, inside there is movement in the shadows.

PART FIVE— ULULATI SILENTIUM FIUNT “The Screams Become Silence”

Investigators arrive at Ravulus too late; the mob has beaten them there. Ten servants and slaves survived the attack by the madmen. Most are battered and bruised. The survivors relate the following story:

We saw the first fires just after dark and then started hearing screams. We closed the gates and barred the doors but it wasn't enough. The lunatics came into the hills, storming villa after villa. They were looking for children! We hid them, we did. We tried to stop the mob but there were just too many of them. They dragged them out of the hiding place and outside to the woman.

She was tall and thin, dressed in white robes. On her breast was a large pendant with that sign, the yellow one from the play. She wore a pale mask and rode in upon a horse like some Amazon fiend.

Ripples from Carcosa

When the children were gathered before her she spoke with them for a few minutes before blowing a conch horn.

That was when the monster appeared! It dropped out of the sky like a hawk. It was like a cursed union of bat and man's corpse, with horns like a ram. The thing grabbed the children and flew off into the night. We could hear the woman saying one of them might be chosen by the Nameless King for a great honor, and that they were being taken before him for judgment. Then she rode back into town towards the arena. Please forgive us, we are so sorry, we could not protect the children.

The slaves and servants are very afraid, both of what they have witnessed and the possible wrath of the investigators and their master. If threatened or subjected to enraged outbursts, they quickly scatter and flee into the night. If calmly questioned, they offer further details about the creatures and the woman:

- She had an accent from Herculaneum.
- She was well dressed and wore gold bangles.
- There was a fine dagger on her hip and her horse was a tan mare.
- She kept talking about her master, the “Last King of Carcosa.”
- She said her master was a god greater than Jupiter and all the Olympians combined.
- The monster had a thick coat of shaggy, black fur and long claws.
- It had a reptile-like face and a tail!
- It followed the woman's orders.

The Villa After the Attack

Inside, the villa is ransacked. **Luck** rolls are required to find any equipment the investigators have left here. If items were well hidden allow a bonus die. Failed rolls mean that either the item has been stolen or broken.

If investigators have not yet obtained horses, they may recall that their children said they were taken horseback riding in the hills today, which mean the horses may still be in the stables. Indeed, the horses are there, safe and sound.

To the Arena

It is roughly a mile from the villa to the arena. The route moves through the hills outside of

town, so the investigators need not cross the town again. The main road leads through the hilltop villas toward the arena on the east side of town. Those who make a successful **Listen** roll notice that the town below seems to be quieting down as dawn grows closer. Most people by now are in hiding, have escaped the town, or are already dead.

While the investigators ride through the hills, two separate groups of rioters rush out to attack them. However, they are on foot and easily out-run and avoided. If investigators wish to engage the mob, keepers can use the stats from either of the two previous groups of lunatics. These groups of madmen could number anywhere from six to thirty insane townspeople. However, the drawback to being mounted is that it draws the attention of one of Hastur's minions, a byakhee.

As you ride along the western road out of the hills you hear a scream of terror. It comes from above you, out of the inky night sky. Looking up, you first see a boy of perhaps five years moving through the air, matching the pace of your horses.

What a horridly pallid mask she wears!



He flails about frantically, crying out for help. As your eyes focus you see that he is not moving of his own accord but is being carried. There, matching the night with its midnight-black fur, is the creature described by the servants of the villa. With huge wings, long claws, and curved ram's horns, the creature stares down at you all. It tilts its head, its eyes filled with intelligence and curiosity, quietly flapping its wings.

A **Sanity** check is required for seeing the byakhee. The creature has been ordered to take this child to the arena, so it will not attack. If no actions are made against the creature, it follows the investigators along the road for three rounds, and then flies off on a more direct route to the arena. If any investigator draws a weapon, the creature flies higher, vanishing into the night.

Entering the Arena

The area outside the arena is mostly deserted. It was here that the ripple of madness and death started. Currently, the three main cultists—Dulius, Colia, and Livius Carbo—are the only living humans in the arena. They are basking in the glory of the Boneless One in the prefect's box. The avatar is speaking with them at length. It is informing them how to revise the play to make it more effective. Carbo is frantically making notes, while Dulius and Colia kneel before their master, chanting softly. If allowed to continue these revisions, the edited version of *Adventus Regis* becomes an even more potent tool for spreading madness and chaos. Worse still, the

A byakhee has nabbed a boy!



improved play will be capable of summoning a more powerful avatar form of Hastur. The destruction such a work might cause is unimaginable.

An uneasy quiet has fallen over the ruins of Vestalanium. The fires are starting to burn themselves out as you look down from the road. Few people are moving along the streets. Only the occasional howl or scream sounds out. Soon the road leads to a large circular stone building, the arena. Debris is everywhere, as well as a large number of corpses. The gates are open; above them hangs an enormous banner. It reads “Adventus Regis,” and the three-armed symbol of this Last King seems to glow in the darkness. Flags and banners flutter in the night wind, but something else draws your attention as you look upward. It is a huge winged creature flying in the night air. It vanishes, diving down into the arena, almost as quickly as it appears.

No **Sanity** checks are required as the investigators approach the arena, as they are, by now, desensitized to the aftermath of the rampage. Although call for **Sanity** rolls if this is the first time they see the byakhee.

Investigators entering the arena find it to be completely deserted. Blood, debris, and scattered corpses litter the place. Signs of the madness-induced riot are everywhere. Graffiti—mostly written in blood—is smeared everywhere. It reads such things as “Hastur!,” “The Last King,” and “Carcosa is now!”

The investigators may head to the stands to view the stage. They may attempt **Stealth** rolls to reach the senator's box from the stands instead of using the inner hallways if they so choose. Whichever way they travel they are sure to run into a pair of byakhee.

Upon reaching the sands of the arena, you are struck by the number of bodies. They are everywhere, littering the benches, lying in the aisles, and trampled flat upon the staircases. The air is thick with the stench of death. Many of the dead wear the tunic and cloaks of the vigiles. More than a few seem to have thrown themselves on their swords, while others appear to have turned upon one another.

Ripples from Carcosa

Down in the center of what is usually the gladiatorial arena is a stage, which seems untouched. The set appears to be furnished as a throne room. Numerous figures, all dressed in strange costume, lay dead. They look as if they are dropped rag dolls, with no signs of violence whatsoever. If it were not for the looks of profound sorrow and terror frozen on the faces of the actors, one might assume they were sleeping.

Within the Arena

Many of the lamps around the arena are still lit, filling the vast open space with dim light and deep shadows. If the investigators examine the bodies of the actors they can find obvious causes of death.

If investigators wish to climb into the senator's box from here, they require **Climb** rolls (using rope and some kind of grappling hook, and a successful **Throw** roll, provides a bonus die to the **Climb** roll). However, those attempting to do so are set upon by two byakhee. The byakhee lurk high above, near the upper rim of the arena and watch the investigators until the time seems right to attack.

If pressed, they begin making snatch-and-grab attacks. During these attacks they swoop in to pick up an investigator, only to drop them from a height. On the next round the byakhee flies off with any investigator snatched to further attack them in mid air or to drop them. A successful opposed **STR** roll allows the investigator to break the hold. If dropped, an investigators suffer 1D6 damage for every 10 feet they fall, which is typically between 10 and 40 feet (1D4 x 10).

Byakhee (2)

STR 85 CON 50 SIZ 85 INT 55
POW 50 DEX 65 APP -- EDU --
HP: 14 DB: +1D6 Build 2 Move: 5/16 Flying

Magic Points: 10

Attacks: 2

Bite & hold (maneuver), damage 1D6 + 3D10 blood drain

Dodge 33% (16/6)

Bite & hold (maneuver): If the bite strikes home, the byakhee remains attached to the victim and begins to drain his or her blood. Each round the byakhee remains attached, including the first, the blood drain subtracts 3D10 points of STR from the victim, until death occurs (at STR 0). The byakhee characteristically remains attached until the victim is drained of blood, unless the victim can make a successful opposed **STR** roll. Escaping death, let

the victim rest and regain blood at up to 1D10+5 STR per day. A Byakhee may hold only one victim at a time.

Armor: 2 points of fur and tough hide.

Sanity loss: 1/1D6.

The Senator's Box

If the investigators approach the Senator's box using the interior hallways, a byakhee ambushed them. The creature has somehow managed to enter a large room off the main hallway in order to guard the prefect's box. When the investigators pass, the byakhee rushes out, viciously attacking. Kindly keepers may ask the investigators to make **Listen** rolls to forewarn them of the attack to come. In the cramped confines of the hallway it is unable to fly but is still a formidable opponent. Keepers should use identical statistics to those listed nearby.

The prefect's box is lined in heavy drapes. Those within are busy celebrating their apparent victory. There is a 75% chance that any battles with the byakhee go unnoticed by the humans within. The Boneless One, of course, knows the investigators are approaching, but disregards such events as of little consequence.

From the Sands

An ornately-carved balcony in the arena hangs above. The seal of Rome is carved into its surface. Heavy drapes hang at the back, while twin bronze braziers burn brightly. Behind the drapes stand a pair of stout inward-opening doors. They are unlocked and lead into the main prefect's suite.

From the Hallway

Two skillfully-worked columns flank this stout oak door. The seal of Rome is carved into its surface. Upon the seal is painted the symbol of the King of Carcosa. The paint appears wet, glowing and pulsing as if it were alive. A single red rose hangs above the seal, secured to the door. This door is unlocked and opens outward, leading to the main senatorial suite.

The Suite

In this room the final confrontation occurs. Here can be found the play's author, Livius Carbo, along with two other high-ranking cultists, Dulus Decula and Colia Thalna. They are gathered around the dead body of the local prefect, a rubbery, bloated,

misshapen thing. This corpse is now the Boneless One, an avatar of Hastur.

Entering this richly-appointed and dimly-lit room, you see four figures. A short, heavy-set man and a tall, beautiful woman kneel on the floor. They are richly dressed in robes of white, embroidered with the Yellow Sign. Pale masks lie beside them upon the carpet. A third man is seated at a desk beside a large padded settee, busily scratching notes into a pile of wax tablets. His hands move quickly, making notes and corrections; he often glances toward the couch for further guidance. All three appear to be in a sort of religious rapture.

Draped over the couch is the dead body of the prefect Octavius. It oozes and flows over the settee, one foot spilling onto the carpet. It appears boneless and unnatural, like an octopus hauled onto the deck of a boat. Slowly the eyes,—set into drooping sockets—turn towards you. Its tongue twitches as you hear a wheeze from the thing lying upon the padded couch. You realize it's alive! It draws breath and speaks in a groaning, deep voice, "It seems we are interrupted. Welcome to my court."

Seeing the Boneless One calls for a **Sanity** check (1D6/1D10).

The Boneless One, Avatar of Hastur.

STR 75 CON 470 SIZ 80 INT 250
 POW 175 DEX 75 APP -- EDU --
 HP: 55 DB: 0 Build: 0 Move: 2

Magic Points: 35

Attacks: 1

Psychic wave (automatic), 1D6/1D20 Sanity check.

Armor: 4 points of leathery skin; immune to fire, cold, electricity, acid, and non-magical weapons.

Spells: All Call, Contact, and Summon/Bind spells, plus any others the keeper wishes.

Sanity Loss: 1D6/1D10 Sanity points to see the Boneless One.

See page 07 for further details about the Boneless One.

Dulius Decula, Worshipper of Hastur, Financier of Adventus Regis

STR 75 CON 40 SIZ 80 INT 60
 POW 55 DEX 45 APP 50 EDU 60
 HP: 12 DB: +1D4 Build: 1 Move: 7

Sanity: 0

Attacks: 1

Large Knife 65% (32/13), damage 1D6+DB

Dodge 22% (11/4)

Armor: None.

Skills: Accounting 70%, Persuade 65%, Status 60%, Spot Hidden 40%.

Spells: Summon/Bind Byakhee, Evil Eye.

Dulius Decula is a wealthy and powerful patrician from Herculanium. Overweight, insane, and fanatically dedicated to the cult of Hastur. He is the play's chief financier. Decula first casts the Evil Eye spell at an opponent before combating them. A large man, he attacks fearlessly with a large knife until killed or incapacitated.

Colia Thalna, Worshipper of Hastur, Promoter of Adventus Regis

STR 55 CON 70 SIZ 75 INT 70
 POW 65 DEX 60 APP 80 EDU 70
 HP: 14 DB: +1D4 Build: 1 Move: 7

Sanity: 0

Attacks: 1

Small Knife 55% (27/11), damage 1D4+DB

Dodge 30% (15/6)

Armor: None.

Skills: Charm 65%, Persuade 65%, Status 50%, Spot Hidden 40%.

Spells: Summon/Bind Byakhee, Contact Hastur, Implant Fear.

This tall and beautiful former courtesan is a cunning, silver-tongued promoter for the Cult of Hastur. Colia can usually charm anyone into doing nearly anything. Colia attempts to cast the Implant Fear spell upon the investigator who appears to be the most skilled fighter.

Livius Carbo, Author of Adventus Regis

STR 50 CON 55 SIZ 65 INT 80
 POW 80 DEX 65 APP 60 EDU 80
 HP: 12 DB: 0 Build: 0 Move: 8

Sanity: 0

Attacks: 1

Small Knife 40% (20/8), damage 1D4

Dodge 35% (17/7)

Armor: None.

Skills: Art/Craft (Writing) 75%, Status 70%, Insight 50%, Stealth 40%.

Ripples from Carcosa

The Boneless One oozes and flows over the settee



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Spells: Summon/Bind Byakhee, Contact Hastur, Summon Hastur.

Livius Carbo was never the same after the loss of his wife. Going to Herculaneum to recover, he only sank further into madness and despair. Joining the cult of Hastur gave him a new focus in his life, filling a void he could not bear. With his keen mind and artistic gift, Livius is now a powerful messenger for the Great Old One.

Combating the Cultists

Dulius and Colia leap to their feet, fearlessly engaging the investigators. They attempt to slay the investigators with their daggers, using their spells when possible. They fight until killed or incapacitated, refusing to surrender before their god. Dulius and Colia have worked together for years and support one another whenever possible during melee.

Carbo, on the other hand, attempts to flee. He spends the first two combat rounds frantically gathering his notes. He then rushes either onto the balcony or into the hallway. Carbo then passes the notes

to a waiting byakhee and orders the creature to take them to the Hastur cultists back in Herculaneum. These revised notes are the basis for the future work, "The King In Yellow." Once the notes are safely away, Carbo summons another byakhee to carry him to safety, only fighting if cornered. Unless stopped, both the manuscript and Carbo manage to escape five rounds after the investigators enter the suite.

Fighting The Boneless One

The avatar of Hastur is content to simply watch the conflict. If attacked, it uses spells to retaliate against any who dared attempt to harm him. Otherwise it takes no action until the last of its followers either escape or die. At that point it unleashes its powerful psychic wave, engulfing the area in a field of madness. After doing so, Hastur abandons the body of Octavius and returns to Carcosa. Either way, once the sun rises and the star Aldebaran sinks below the horizon, Hastur leaves Earth and returns home. What is left of Octavius's body will turn into a thick, oozing, and foul-smelling slime.

The Children

With the cultists dispatched and Hastur returned to Carcosa, the sun rises on a new day. Searching behind a side door in the suite, the investigators find forty-two children of various ages, lying upon the floor of a large dining area. While appearing dead at first, they are, in fact, alive. The children have been drugged and cannot be awakened for several hours. Investigators easily locate their own children among them.

Once conscious, it becomes clear that many of the children are now insane from their ordeal. Being carried by a byakhee and then brought before the Avatar of Hastur proved too much for the majority of them. A successful **Luck** check determines whether an investigator's own children have avoided this fate.

Adventus Regis

What happens to the hastily-revised script of "Adventus Regis" is up to the investigators if they managed to stop Livius Carbo from sending it to safety or escaping with it. Should they possess the script they can destroy it, hide it away, or study it. If studied, the work consists of about 20 wax tablets and four long scrolls of notes in Latin. There are many revisions made to the work, making it difficult to understand at first.

Adventus Regis, Sanity Loss 1D8, Cthulhu Mythos +2/+6 percentiles, Mythos Rating 24; 2 weeks to study, 3 days to skim. Contains a variant of the Call/Dismiss Hastur spell.

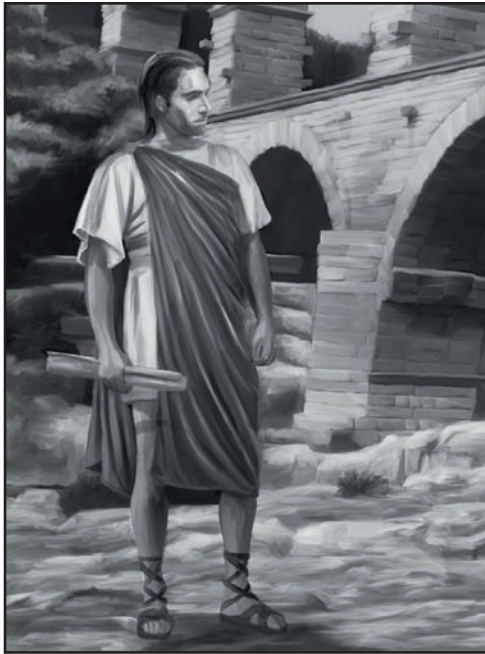
In Conclusion

If the investigators saved lives, prevented the mobs from causing further trouble, and so on, the authorities richly reward their bravery. Many of the rescued children are returned to their families while others are forever orphaned. A detachment of Roman auxiliaries is dispatched to the area and spend weeks hunting down roving bands of murderous lunatics. Once the countryside is secured, word comes from Rome that Vestalantium is to never be rebuilt. What remains of the town is demolished and the site is abandoned. All records of the incident are destroyed and what happened here becomes lost to history.

SANITY AWARDS

- For each byakhee killed: +1D6
- For each cultist killed or captured (double for Carbo): +1D2
- For preventing the revised version play from being carried away: +1D4
- If all three cult members are killed or captured: +1D6
- For recovering the children: +1D4+1
- Rescuing the besieged family in Encounter Four: +1D6

ADVENTUS REGIS PLAYER CHARACTERS



Caeso Tullius Varro, Age 27, Male

Profession: Artisan

Birthplace: Rome

Social Class: Equestrian

STR 40	CON 50	SIZ 65	INT 85
POW 50	DEX 55	APP 55	EDU 90
Luck 50	Sanity 50	Build 0	Move 7

Hit Points: 11

Damage Bonus: 0

Magic Points: 10

Armor: Hardened leather construction apron (1D2, roll to determine armor effectiveness each time a hit is taken).

Weapons: Bow, quiver with two-dozen arrows, small knife.

Skills: Accounting 60%, Art/Craft (Sculpture) 65%, Art/Craft (Mosaic) 65%, Art/Craft (Waterclock) 40%, Charm 30%, Empire 60%, Fast Talk 45%, Natural World 40%, Science (Architecture) 40%, Science (Engineering) 40%, Persuade 50%, Track 40%, Write (Latin) 50%.

Languages: Latin 95%.

Brawl	50% (25/10), damage 1D
Knife	50% (25/10), damage 1D4
Bow	50% (25/10), damage 1D8, range 60 yds
Dodge	30% (15/6)

Equipment: Water clock, blank scrolls, quills, ink, backpack, tunic with narrow stripes, sandals, spare bowstring, sculpting & mosaic tools, small box of tiles.

Sesterces: 1,800 on hand.

NOTES:

BACKSTORY

Personal Description: Youthful looking, with a keen look in his eye.

Ideology/Beliefs: There is art in everything.

Treasured Possessions: Water clock.

Traits: Dedicated and hard working.

Tullius is a wealthy architect; a builder of aqueducts, bridges and roads. A skilled engineer, his heart is that of an artist. He enjoys sculpting and creating mosaics even though his free time is limited. This vacation is a long time in coming and taken as a reward after finishing a 14-month bridge building project in Gaul.

Rumors known: There has recently been a string of arrests across the empire of those accused of “Republican activities.” Many in the artistic community fear they are being watched and possibly targeted for arrest. Several artisans he knows are being careful these days that their work be non political.



Tula, Age 19, Female

Profession: Slave

Birthplace: Britannia

Social Class: Slave

STR 50	CON 75	SIZ 55	INT 60
POW 50	DEX 55	APP 80	EDU 70
Luck 55	Sanity 50	Build 0	Move 8

Damage Bonus: None

Hit Points: 13

Magic Points: 11

Skills: Art/Craft (Singing) 40%, Art/Craft: (Pottery) 35%, Civics 50%, Empire 25%, Insight 55%, Listen 65%, Natural World 40%, Persuade 45%, Stealth 50%, Spot Hidden 50%.

Languages: Latin 50%, Gaelic 70%.

Brawl 45% (22/9), damage 1D3, or weapon

Dodge 30%(15/6)

Equipment: Toga, sandals, small pouch, necklace, sash.

Sesterces: 10.

BACKSTORY

Personal Description: A natural beauty, tall, dark eyes and dark hair.

Ideology/Beliefs: I work to buy my freedom.

Traits: Keen to impress, but always remembers to look after her best interests.

Tula was born a child of slaves from Britannia. She is owned by Gaius Phillipus, owner of the Ravulus resort villa in Vestalanium. He is a good master who is letting her purchase her freedom from the gifts and tips guests at the resort sometimes give her. She only needs to give her master another 200 sesterces and she'll be a free woman. Tula is quite beautiful and knows every shop and restaurant in town. She mainly serves as a guide to guests exploring Vestalanium. She has often gotten out of tight spots by hiding or sneaking away, and when that failed, by landing a well-placed kick.

Rumors known: The new troop of Livius Carbo is made up solely of slaves. The play has few roles and only four major parts. The production purchased a dozen similar-looking slaves for each role, then had them read lines from it. Only one slave was chosen for each role; the rest were sold in and around Vestalanium and Herculaneum. One of the roles was for a queen called Cassilda. Tula read lines for it and was rejected. Had she been selected, her master would have sold her to Livius Carbo.

NOTES:

WORSHIP OF HASTUR DURING THE ROMAN EMPIRE

During the time of the Roman Empire Hastur was not widely worshipped, but those who served the God of Entropy felt his touch very deeply. His cultists came from a broad sampling of Roman society, from senators to slaves. Many of Hastur's cultists were artists, poets, and lost souls who longed for a return to the days of the Republic. Those minds most disturbed by the political turmoil caused by the rise of the Empire and the death of the Republic beckoned to the Great Old One. One of the central themes of the play *The King In Yellow* is politics and succession. But in this time, as in all others, Hastur drew a great number of his followers from the ranks of the insane.

LOCATIONS

The resort towns of Pompeii and Herculaneum are the centers for the worship of Hastur. These places teem with wealth, the arts, political discussion, and those attempting to recover lost sanity. Unstable minds longing for focus are like ripe fruit to the servants of Hastur. In each city the worship of Hastur is broken into cells. While often working with and aiding one another, cells try to limit their contact. This is so that if authorities manage to wipe out one cell, the other will survive. If the cult in one city is totally eliminated, within a decade the worship of Hastur will restart there. Cultists return the worship of Hastur to the "cleaned out" city simply by splintering the surviving cult cell and moving some of their members in to fill the void. In Pompeii, the cultists call themselves "Subjects of the Last King," while in Herculaneum they are known as "Servants of the Yellow Sign."

AIMS AND METHODS

In this time, as all times, the main goals of the cults of Hastur are: spreading madness, communing with the Great Old One, and creating a second Carcosa on Earth. During the Roman Empire the cult of Hastur is often associated with efforts to return the Empire to the days of the Republic; Hastur is seen by some of his worshippers as a savior who will free them from the tyranny of the imperial dictatorship.

Of course with this freedom would come madness and death, but to some it was a price worth paying. The concept that it is better to scream mindlessly before the Yellow King than kneel before Caesar is perhaps one that only worshippers of the Lord of Entropy can understand.

To achieve these goals the cult used the arts, coupled with political and economic power. Worship often started with poets, playwrights, and other dreamers—people whose minds were open to influence. These initial cultists would always be on the lookout for an opening into a more powerful segment of society. Often they would find someone of wealth suffering from a lapse of mental health. In the resort centers of the Empire, the rich and powerful relaxed and meditated, attempting to soothe their troubled minds. Many of these people recovered and returned to their productive lives; others would be discovered by the cultists of Hastur.

When the cult manages to locate one of these influential yet mentally unstable people, a plan is set in motion. Subtle influences are played upon them, anything from drugs and wine to sex and depravity, with the goal being to prevent any sort of mental recovery. The cultists strive to widen the cracks in the target's mind—transforming them into fissures. The next step is to send in a poet or artists to entertain the target. This step includes introducing the target to the Yellow Sign. When the target's mind is well-prepared—meaning further damaged—these "new friends from the resort town" begin to whisper about the god they serve. They tell the target, "Our god watches you, he has sent us to find you, and he has chosen you to join something vast and beautiful and horrible." If the prospective worshiper resists at this point, they are quietly murdered, with the crime being made to look like a suicide. These crimes are seldom detected, as the targets are usually known to have been mentally unstable to begin with. To know of Hastur is to serve Hastur; those who learn too much and do not serve the will of the cult are not permitted to survive. Poison is a common method for eliminating those the cult deems dangerous to its aims.

If the subject agrees, they are indoctrinated into the cult. In this way the cults build themselves up, going from madmen and dreamers to the wealthy and politically connected. In Herculaneum and Pompeii, the cult of Hastur reaches far into the upper levels of society. These members, with high status and much power, protect the cult cell they serve and spread the worship of their beloved Last King to others.

ORGANIZATION

The lowest, most expendable members of the cult cell are usually the ones who have worshipped Hastur the longest. The members of these cells are always looking to push upward, corrupting and recruiting into its richer and more powerful citizens. In Herculaneum the cult's founder is a homeless beggar and madman; the newest member, and current leader, is a wealthy and powerful prefect.

The cult cells within a city seldom number more than 200 members. There is usually an inner circle of about six members who meet in secret. Calling themselves "Hastur's Court," they form the leadership council of each cell. These courts direct recruiting, set goals, and dictate policy within the cult. Power struggles within the cult are unheard of, as frequent Contact Deity / Hastur spells inform the worshippers just whom the Great Old One considers to be in charge of the group.

When a cult cell gets too numerous for a given city, a third of its members are selected to undertake an important mission. These members, usually about sixty, represent a cross section of the entire cult. They are then sent to a new city where Hastur's worship is absent. There the process starts all over again, with these members starting a new, separate cell, spreading the grasp of Hastur to more unstable minds.

A Sample Cult Cell "The Servants of the Yellow Sign"

"The Servants" currently number about one hundred and ten members. About sixty of these members occupy some of the lowest levels of society. Slaves, the poor, and the insane—these members are the eyes and ears of the cult in Herculaneum. They are also the ones often wielding a knife in the dark or slipping poison into the beverage of someone getting "too close" to the cult. The other members of the cult occupy mostly the middle and upper classes of Herculaneum, including members of the vigiles, prominent artists and poets, merchants, and business owners.

The central meeting location for the cult is in the second-largest bathhouse in Herculaneum. Called Tanii's Baths, it is owned by one of the Servants' inner court, and is a center of gossip for the town. Everyone on the staff at Tanii's is a member of the cult. The Servants are careful not to commit crimes in the bathhouse, as they have no wish

to draw attention to their presence. There are tunnels under the bathhouse leading to secret meeting chambers for the cult's leadership, as well as escape and travel passages that lead to three other cult-controlled businesses in the area.

Valerius Nerva, Prefect, Leader of "The Servants of the Yellow Sign"

STR 75 CON 75 SIZ 70 INT 60
POW 55 DEX 55 APP 80 EDU 80
HP: 14 DB: +1D4 Build: 1 Move: 8

Sanity: 0

Magic Points: 11

Attacks: 1

Large Knife 55% (27/11), damage 1D6+DB

Gladius 65% (32/13), Damage 1D6+1+DB

Dodge 27% (13/5)

Armor: None.

Skills: Charm 30%, Civics 80%, Cthulhu Mythos 15%, Empire 75%, Insight 60%, Intimidate 40%, Fast Talk 50%, Persuade 70%, Spot Hidden 30%, Status 70%.

Spells: Summon/Bind Byakhee, Contact Deity/ Hastur, Call / Dismiss Hastur, Dominate.

Valerius Nerva was introduced into the worship of Hastur three years ago and quickly became its leader. At thirty years old he is handsome and energetic. Five years ago he suffered a nervous collapse when his long-time lover married another. He came to Herculaneum to drown himself in wine and self pity. Being from a powerful family and possessing great wealth, Valerius was too good a prospect for the Servants to pass up.

Since joining the cult, Valerius Nerva has dedicated himself to Hastur's cause. Valerius' dream is to have Hastur worshiped upon the Palatine Hill in Rome, where the Emperor and his family dwell.

Tanii's Tolori, Bathhouse owner, Member of The Servants of the Yellow Signs Court

STR 55 CON 70 SIZ 60 INT 70
POW 65 DEX 60 APP 50 EDU 70
HP: 13 DB: 0 Build: 0 Move: 8

Sanity: 0

Magic Points: 11

Attacks: 1

Brawl 55% (27/11), damage knife (1D4), or club (1D6)

Dodge 30% (15/6)

Armor: Soft Leather (1D2 Points).

Skills: Fast Talk 70%, First Aid 50%, Persuade 55%,
Spot Hidden 40%, Status 50%, Insight 65%, Cthulhu
Mythos 20%, Stealth 60%, Listen 70%, Empire 50%.

Spells: Summon/Bind Byakhee, Contact Deity/Hastur,
Song of Hastur, Dominate.

Taniis Tolori is a successful merchant, owner of Tannii's Bathhouse and a former leader of the Servants. He is glad that Valerius is now in charge, allowing him to focus on running the cult's information network. On the surface he is a friendly, eager-to-please manager. In truth, he is a sinister, ruthless man who uses the information gathered in the bathhouse to further the aims of the cult.

Dhevo, Cult Founder and Homeless Madman

STR 50 CON 35 SIZ 65 INT 80
POW 85 DEX 40 APP 40 EDU 80
HP: 10 DB: 0 Build: 0 Move: 7

Sanity: 0

Magic Points: 17

Attacks: 1

Brawl 40% (20/8), damage 1D3, or weapon

Dodge 20% (10/4)

Armor: None.

Skills: Arrive In The Right Place At The Right Time
70%, Charm 40%, Cthulhu Mythos 45%, Insight
50%, Intimidate 60%, Listen 50%, Potions 90%,
Stealth 70%, Wander Aimlessly 75%.

Spells: As chosen by the keeper, but can only remember
a given spell 10% of the time.

The strange madman who wanders aimlessly about Herculaneum is actually the founder of the Servants of the Yellow Sign. No one knows how old he is or when he first arrived. Dhevo's been living on the streets of Herculaneum, sleeping in alleys and begging for food for as long as anyone can remember. Despite the cult's best efforts to keep the aged servant of Hastur in their care, he persists in wandering off. Dhevo always seems to arrive back at the bathhouse whenever his services are needed. While his mind often seems completely unfocused, he is a brilliant brewer of poisons. More than once the Servants have scoured the city to find him, desperate for his considerable skills. Dhevo appears stooped, filthy, and ancient, dressing in tattered rags and bare feet. He's often the cult's greatest asset and biggest headache, all at the same time.

SINISTER SEEDS

1) **The Mask:** One of the greatest actors in the Empire, a freedman of considerable renown, has gone missing. His servants reported that the actor had recently received an anonymous gift, an unusual stage mask. They describe it as not being one of the standard types—but being devoid of any emotion, and pale in color. The mask was sent to the actor by worshipers of Hastur and is a powerful artifact from Carcosa. Unless the actor is found and the mask removed from his possession, he and everyone around him will soon suffer a horrible end. Every time he wears the mask, more and more of his personality is destroyed, being replaced with the consciousness of the mask's true owner, the King In Yellow. The mask is a powerful item of evil. The only way the mask can be destroyed is by burning it in the eternal fires at the temple of Vestra.

2) **The Players:** A troop of performers is traveling the Empire, performing traditional comedies and tragedies for coin. To select audiences they offer dark poems and songs, hauntingly beautiful creations disturbing to the mind. These pieces spread madness to the listeners, causing some to slip into insanity days later. Worse still, with every performance a single member of the audience becomes compelled to join the troop. During these special performances, the players don strange, tattered togas and tunics, wearing pallid masks over their faces.

Herald of the Yellow King

A SCENARIO FOR CTHULHU DARK AGES
PART TWO OF RIPPLES FROM CARCOSA

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BACKGROUND

Investigators begin play this time as members of the household of a Norman lord named Boniface. This takes place in the fiefdom of Shereborne, in Wessex, in southern England. The year is somewhere around 1080, a couple of decades after the Norman conquest of England.

The investigators are the reincarnations of the investigators they played in “Adventus Regis,” who are once again fated to confront the sinister aims of Hastur. This time their adversary is not attempting to bring Hastur to Earth, but rather to bring Shereborne itself to Carcosa. The tragedy of this is that the villain was once a great hero and defender of mankind. Age, betrayal, and bitter disappointment have driven him to madness. He is now a very willing servant of He Who Should Not Be Named. Pre-generated player characters can be found at the end of this scenario.

KEEPER'S INFORMATION

Cael Greybeard is, or was, a bard. He is a keeper of the old ways and a devotee of the Druid faith. Cael is an ancient magus, tracing his bloodline back to the days before the coming of the Saxons, to the time of the true Britons. In his youth he was a powerful defender of Wessex, fighting against the forces of the Cthulhu Mythos. Many times he and those like him faced dire horrors in the name of all that was noble and just. Many years passed, until he became the last of his order. The old ways were gone, the traditions of the bardic college slipping away. His death, he knew, would mark the end of an entire way of life. Such was the way of nature; things die, new things come to take their place, and he could accept that.

To honor his many years of sacrifice and struggle against the forces of darkness, a grateful Saxon king made him a promise. The Sacred Oak, where the bardic order had passed on their knowledge from masters to initiates for countless generations, would be protected. So long as Cael lived, this tree—a living symbol of the old ways—would live as well.

The years passed. Saxon lords were replaced by Norman kings and Cael could feel that his time upon this earth was nearing its end. On a summer day he returned to visit the Sacred Oak one last time. He found the tree gone, nothing more than a stump remaining. He collapsed, heartbroken, and had to be carried back to his home. Cael demanded an apology from those responsible but months passed and no word came. Summer became autumn. Autumn became winter, and still no reply was received. A cold, dark fire began to burn within the aged bard.

Could they not wait until I was dead? Why that tree? He had been promised it would stand until his death. After all he had done, all he had faced, could they not even allow him to say goodbye to the Sacred Oak? It had been under that tree that he'd become a bard, and there he'd learned countless songs, poems, and stories.

Then Cael remembered a certain story, a dark tale one of his masters had told him never to utter aloud. This story was of a haughty royal family, a ghostly city across a lake, a



Cael Greybeard

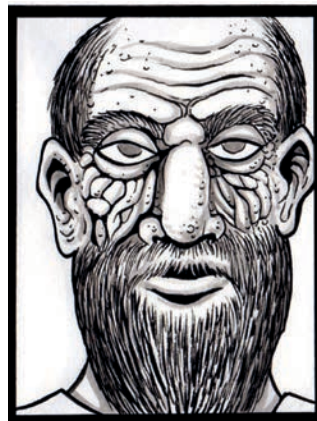


Cael tells his terrible tale

messenger called the Phantom of Truth, and the arrival of the King in Yellow. In this story all becomes madness, and the city, called Yhtill, becomes one with the dead city known as Carcosa. Cael knew this King in Yellow was a dark god of madness, and he knew his name—Hastur.

In his despair, Cael Greybeard, once Wessex's greatest defender, became its darkest enemy. He called to his nurse and told her the tale of the King in Yellow. While his voice was old and his body weak, his words still held true magic. His story drove her mad and, with that madness, granted him strength. Cael, now strong enough to get out of bed, gathered the whole village together to hear the story that should not be told, about He Who Should Not Be Named. The entire village was driven insane. Once again the years and infirmities of the aged bard melted away. Cael Greybeard became a traveling bard once more.

The reversal of aging is a side effect of the great ritual Cael Greybeard is currently conducting. By the time the investigators leave the castle of Lord Boniface, Cael has told the story to two other villages. Now the three villages closest to the castle are



Lord Boniface

haunted places filled with the dead, the dying, and the insane. With every mind destroyed, Cael Greybeard becomes a little younger and a little stronger. His bardic training was one of balance and nature, so for every mind he destroys, the life energy needs to go somewhere. No longer a defender of the people—and knowing he still has a long road ahead—he chooses to use the energy for his own rejuvenation. Now he appears as a handsome youth of sixteen with all the skills and abilities of an aged master bard. Cael wears a multicolored cloak; the symbol of a master bard, and a new tunic cut in the old style, embroidered with the Yellow Sign.

Spending his days hiding in secret shelters within the dark forest that borders the fiefdom, Cael waits for the Yule celebration of the Norman Lord Boniface. Upon that day, he plans to travel to the castle and offer his services as an entertainer. There he intends to tell the tale one last time. He knows that once this is completed, Shereborne's fate will become Yhtill's. Enough minds will be shattered to open the way for the King in Yellow to arrive. When this happens, the castle, along with the entire fiefdom, will be absorbed into and made a part of Carcosa.

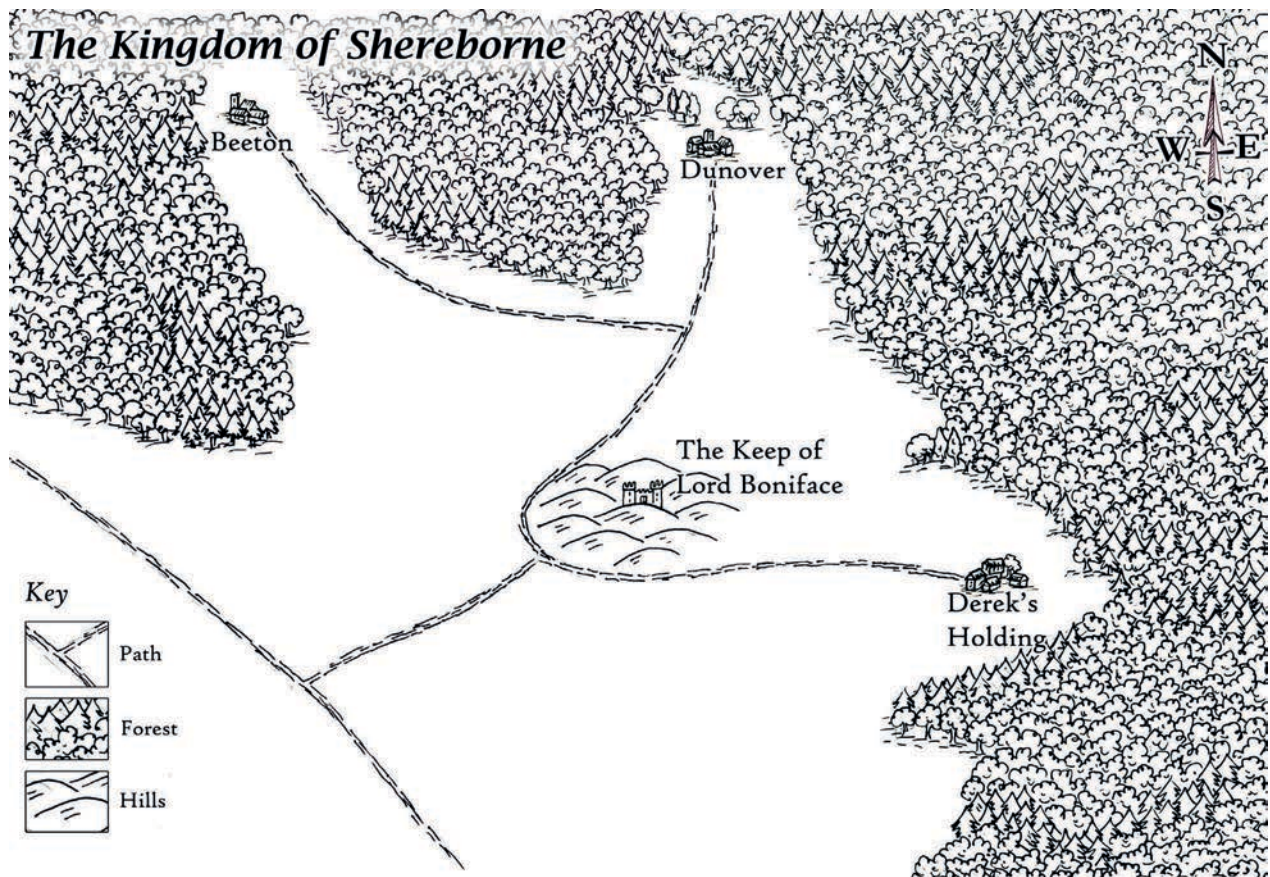
At the start of this adventure the investigators have ten short days before Cael arrives at Lord Boniface's Yule celebration.

INTRODUCTION

Read aloud or paraphrase the following:

December has settled over the fiefdom of Shereborne, as it has over all of Wessex, blanketing the land in a layer of snow. Harvest was completed weeks ago, provisions stored, and the yuletide is less than a fortnight away. It should be a time of rest in the castle of Lord Boniface, and perhaps it is, for some are enjoying a restful morning; unfortunately that isn't any of you.

Just as the sun is starting to break through the clouds on this winter's morning, you are summoned before the Norman Lord of Shereborne. Ruling over these lands for almost a decade now, Lord Boniface still clings to most of his native French ways. The court speaks French, the fashions are French, and even the food served is mostly French. Some ten years after first



coming to Wessex, in southern England, Lord Boniface needs to be mindful of his relations with the native Saxon peasantry. Peasants are necessary to work his lands, pay his taxes, and provide the Norman lord with the bulk of their harvest. While they can be forced to do these things, putting down revolts is costly business. It is better for everyone if things between the Norman lords and their Saxon peasants go smoothly. This is, in fact, the reason you are before Lord Boniface right now.

“Good morrow, my friends,” the middle-aged lord greets you. “It seems there has been another problem with the locals. One of my villages, Derek’s Holding, has sent a delegation voicing a complaint from its oldest member. It seems that the Saxon lords who ruled these lands before me had promised this man that a certain sacred tree was not to be cut down until after that man had died. That particular tree was harvested this summer when we were enlarging the feast hall. This delegation is reminding me that I swore to uphold this proclamation when I took possession of these lands. I have no memory of such a thing, but it seems they have my signature on a document stating just that.”

He sips at his goblet for a moment, obviously annoyed. “The old man is much respected in the village. In fact, he is the oldest man in all of Wessex. He has seen more than a hundred winters, if you can believe his claims. Some sort of Pagan mystic and poet, claiming the tree—an oak I believe—was sacred.” Lord Boniface rolls his eyes. “It’s drivel, I know, but he’s demanding an apology and he seems to have the whole village behind him. So, in the spirit of Yule and in the name of good relations, I am sending him my apologies.” He nods to his steward, who steps forward handing you a scroll, sealed in wax and stamped with the signet of Lord Boniface.

“I command that you journey to Derek’s Holding at once and visit this man named Cael Greybeard. I am told he can no longer walk, sees poorly, and hears but little. Present him with this official apology for cutting down his precious tree. Inform him that, come spring, a new oak will be planted in its place. As his health is failing, I am told his surviving the winter is doubtful.” He rises with a sigh, and says, “Now I am off for a fitting. My lady wishes me to have new attire for the holiday celebration. Now go and I bid you a speedy re-

turn. Remember, you speak in my name. See that all goes smoothly.”

PART ONE— DEREK'S HOLDING

The journey to Derek's Holding takes but two hours of travel. The weather is clear but cold, and two inches of snow covers the ground. Far in the distance, clouds threaten additional snowfall. Lord Boniface only issues the investigators two horses, for the investigators Lady Charlotte and Konrad; the others will have to walk. The trip is cold and uncomfortable, even for those on horseback.

DEREK'S HOLDING

The village is a collection of about 20 modest dwellings. The homes have thatched roofs, wood walls, and dirt floors. Some have stone hearths, others central fire pits. There are empty snow-covered fields and a well in the center of the village. Once the investigators near the village, keepers should ask for a **Spot Hidden** roll; with a success allowing them to notice the following:

- Wolves prowl about the outskirts of the village but skulk away as the investigators approach.
- There is no smoke coming from any of the houses; not a single fire seems to be lit in the village.
- There is an odd scarecrow set up in one of the fields. It is the only scarecrow still standing. (Its head is a sack stuffed with leaves, specifically oak leaves, which investigators notice if they examine it more closely). Covering the scarecrow's face is a leather mask, dyed in an expensive and difficult-to-obtain shade of yellow.
- There are no livestock in any of the fields. Many pens and gates stand open.

The Wolves

Investigators entering the village see that all of the doors and windows are shut tight, save for one. The first house the investigators approach on the outer



edge of the village has been broken into. A trio of wolves feasts on the bodies of the former occupants. If approached, they growl and hold their ground, attacking if they are pressed. If one or more of their number receive major wounds or are slain, they flee.

Outside the Home

As you approach the outermost home you see its door hangs open and something moves about inside.

Suddenly a wolf blocks the door. It growls menacingly, baring its fangs and crouching low. Behind it, two more of the beasts glare out toward you. The fur upon their snouts and jaws is stained red with blood.

Wolves (3)

STR 50 CON 60 SIZ 40 INT--
POW 55 DEX 70 APP-- EDU--
HP: 10 DB: 0 Build: 0 Move 12

Attacks: 1

Fighting 50% (25/10), damage 1D8
Dodge 35% (17/7)

Armor: 1 point (fur).

"Now Go"

While there is a room where old books and records are kept at the castle, Lord Boniface expects the characters to leave at once. If any attempts are made at conducting research, a guard arrives in moments, informing them that Boniface wants to know why the investigators have remained in the castle. The guard suggests that they leave at once, or else explain to Lord Boniface personally why they linger. "He's in a foul mood, the fitting is not going well," the guard explains.

Possible topics of research include: the Sacred Oak, Cael Greybeard, the Saxon proclamation protecting the Oak. These may be looked into upon returning to the castle.

Inside the Home

Inside the house is a scene of horror. The bodies of six villagers—women and children among them—lie torn and savaged upon the floor. Chairs and tables are overturned, snow has blown into the house, and wolf prints are everywhere. All of the bodies have been fed upon. The entire room carries the stench of a wolf den.

Investigating the Opened Home

Inside, investigators find the savaged remains of several villagers; viewing this requires a **Sanity** check (1/1D2). The wolves have fed upon these bodies for a while. There are scratches and gnaw marks all over the door, as if the wolves had been working to get into this home for some time. Similar marks can be found on about half of the doors in the village, but this is the only open door.

Investigating the Closed Homes

The investigators discover the same grisley scene when entering the other homes in Derek's Holding. The doors are barred shut and there is no answer from within. Breaking inside requires an opposed **STR** roll vs. **STR** 75.

Within the houses are villagers huddled together dead. Each dwelling holds 1D8+6 bodies. While the cold has frozen the corpses solid, it is not what killed them; the hearths are cold, yet firewood is piled beside them. Every corpse has a swollen tongue, sunken eyes, and cracked lips: everyone has died of thirst. Witnessing the same scene in all of the dwellings calls for a **Sanity** check (1/1D3).

Cause of Death

With a successful **Spot Hidden** role, investigators searching the dwellings discover some common items to be missing from the homes. These items are cups, pots, water skins, buckets, and other vessels that could be used to hold water or other fluids. All such objects appear to have been systematically removed from every dwelling.

The Well

In the center of the village, the investigators notice that the communal well has been destroyed. The stonework has been demolished and the entire opening has been boarded over. If they pry off



Savage remains fill the houses in Derek's Holding

the boards, investigators find that earth, rocks, and straw have been dumped into it, choking it closed. A wheelbarrow, used to cart stones and dirt, is discarded nearby.

The Mound

A hundred yards away from the village is a four-foot-tall mound covered with straw, snow, and earth. Investigators digging into this mound find it is actually a covered pit holding every cup, pot,



mug, jug, and water skin from the village. A half dozen shovels lie nearby.

Cael's Home

One home is slightly different than the rest found in the village. It has a small room with a well-padded bed piled high with several blankets. At the foot of the bed is a chest containing a tarnished silver goblet, an ancient gold torc, and some moth-eaten cloaks and tunics, which were once colorfully dyed. The bed is empty and no sign of its occupant are found in the house or village. On the wall beside the bed is painted the abhorrent Yellow Sign, seeming to recently painted. Investigators viewing the Sign must make a **Sanity** roll (0/1D6).

KEEPER'S NOTE

If this scenario is being run as part of the *Ripples From Carcosa* trilogy, investigators seeing this sign suddenly feel as if they've seen this symbol before. They can now access the Hastur Lore points they amassed during their playing of "Adventus Regis." They possess this knowledge on an instinctual level, knowing things to be true but having no idea how—or why—they know what they know.

What Really Happened

When told the tale of the King in Yellow, everyone in the village was driven insane in the exact same way. The villagers developed a severe case of aquaphobia, (a fear of liquids). They demolished the town well, dumped any liquids they had stored, and buried every implement that could possibly hold fluids. The villagers then barricaded themselves in their homes; afraid the snow might melt when touched. Within a few days, everyone in town was dead. Cael, rejuvenated, left the village for the nearby forest. The snow has since covered his tracks.

Returning to the Castle

It takes the investigators several hours to completely search the village. They may choose to remain in the village until morning, depending on how many hours of daylight remain. It is a two-hour trip back to the castle. If they remain in the village, wolves can be heard prowling about whatever house in which they spend the night. Howling, the starved animals break into another home to feast upon the dead. In-

vestigators spending the night in the Derek's Holding should make a **Sanity** check (0/1D2).

The investigators may return to the castle at once, risking the coming of night. If so, they arrive back at the castle long after dark, half frozen and exhausted. Whenever the investigators arrive back at the castle, Lord Boniface demands a report of what has happened. The Norman lord listens to the investigators' story, asking a few questions before dismissing them to meet with his advisors.

PART TWO— THE VILLAGE OF DUNOVER

Lord Boniface does not summon the investigators for an entire day. He does, however, command them to be at the ready to further investigate this matter once he's conferred with his counselors. This provides the investigators time to conduct research in the old Saxon library if they so choose.

Saxon Library

This seldom-used room contains what books and records remain from the days of the old Saxon nobility. There is no organization to the records, nor are there chairs, table space, light, or the room to do proper research here. Many of the records are damaged and the temperature of the room is near freezing. This makes researching these records both difficult and miserable. Investigators can attempt to research the following topics among the books and scrolls kept here: Cael Greybeard, the Sacred Oak, and the Saxon proclamation to preserve the tree. A successful **Library Use** roll is required to find the following leads. All records are recorded in English.

As you travel down a spiral staircase into the basement of the castle, the chill of winter quickly becomes apparent. Frost grips the cold stone of the walls and rats scamper away from the illumination you carry. Soon you enter a small room off the main corridor opposite the wine cellar. In this cluttered alcove are several tables and bookcases, filled to bursting with scrolls and journals. These are the records of the old Saxon lords, documenting more than two centuries of their rule over Wessex. Once these documents were kept upstairs in the castle, but with the coming of Lord Boniface and Norman rule they were shuffled down here and haphazardly crammed into every available

HANDOUT: HERALD 1

Of Cael Greybeard, from an account of the wedding feast of Halimund, son of Thibult, dated 60 years ago.

“And the bard of old, Cael of the Grey Beard, did come to the feast and a place of honor was set at Lord Thibult’s high table. At the Lord’s behest did Cael tell tales of heroes and gods and of the fair folk who dwelt in the lands beyond the veil. Some called for tales of Cael himself, for it was said that in the time when our grandfathers were young Cael of the Grey Beard was a powerful defender of our people, and that he battled demons from beyond our world. But the bard would not speak of himself, saying that such stories should never be told and that the less our people knew of those Old Ones the safer our kingdom would be.”

space. The room is obviously too small for all these records, with some books piled on the damp stone floor. Much of what is stored here is already damaged by mold.

The Laundresses

Investigators might try to talk to those living and working in the castle. The only people who know anything are a pair of old peasant women, the castle’s laundresses. Meg and Bonnie speak of Cael Greybeard in glowing terms.

“He’s a bard—a true one—and the last of his kind, I fear. When we were little girls we heard him tell stories and there was magic in his words. My grandmother said that he was very handsome when she was a young maiden. The elders use to say that Cael of the Grey Beard helped save Wessex from demons and devils.”



Summoned

Once the investigators have had a chance to rest and conduct some research, Lord Boniface summons them. He is in the feast hall, overseeing preparations for the Yule celebration. The Norman lord is speaking with his herald, who is overseeing the hanging of the banners in the hall.

You see the castle herald directing the hanging of banners around the hall. Each banner is adorned with a different set of colors, depictions, and patterns, which represent different noble persons. The noble families invited to the Yule celebration would know where they were meant to sit within the hall by gathering at the tables closest to the banner of their Lord.

“No,” calls out Lord Boniface, “move Lord Andreas further up towards high table; his family always brings that wonderful jester.”

Just then your lord notices you waiting. He nods a greeting to you and moves to a side table to speak with you. “I am rather disturbed by your news and even more so since I do not know its cause. I command you all to travel to Dunover and Beeton. Learn what they know of this madness or plague. Take supplies and warm clothing. The quartermaster will send you with two bottles of wine to present to the heads of these villages. Yule gifts might loosen their tongues.

“Of what has happened in Derek’s Holding, speak on that as little as possible, or better still, not at all. It is a small matter to replace these peasants come spring, but more difficult if the lands get a reputation for being cursed.

“Leave at once and travel with all haste. I’ve instructed the stable master to issue you two mounts, the sleigh, and a horse to draw it. Come directly to me upon your return, report to no one else. I want you all back in time for the Yule celebration in five days. Some of my guests might inquire as to where some of you are and I don’t wish to explain your absence.”

He nods to you with a serious look and then returns to his herald and the preparations for the Yule celebration.

Keepers should allow the investigators to make a modest list of supplies to take with them. Two riding horses and the sleigh with draft horse are issued to the investigators. The sleigh is large enough for four passengers and a driver. By now it has snowed once again, making travel even more difficult in six

HANDOUT: HERALD 2

The Sacred Oak, from A History of Wessex, dated 42 years ago.

And other treasures our kingdom held as well. Chief among them was the Great Silver Oak. Since the time of the Sons of Mil the druids had held their college beneath its sacred boughs. All of history and myth, poetry and song... all that dwelt within the spirits and minds of men had been spoken before that tree. From generation to generation, bards were housed within that sacred oak. Darker things too were whispered there, secret rites and songs and riddles to combat the dark gods that slept in sunken places and pushed against the veil of our world.

inches of snow. It takes three hours to travel the Dunover, the second-closest village.

THE VILLAGE OF DUNOVER

Investigators soon notice that all is not right in this village. Littering the road and fields are dozens of corpses. Cael has already come and gone, leaving madness and chaos in his wake.

As you approach the village, it is clear that all is not well. A murder of ravens circles overhead in the distance. As you draw closer you see strange shapes littering the fields and roadside nearer the village. The ravens gather around some of these, working hard to remove strips of flesh.

Soon you are close enough to make the shapes out clearly. They are villagers, all lying dead and each as naked as the day they were born. All of the corpses are filthy, with mouths, hands, and feet caked with dirt. A few of them have stomachs which are strangely distended. Each body is as stiff as a nail, frozen in the chill December air.

What Happened Here

Cael arrived in this village several days ago. He was welcomed as a traveling storyteller and used his considerable charm to gather the villagers together for some stories. The bard told them the tale of the King in Yellow, which drove every villager mad—all save one.

The madness that gripped the villagers caused them to believe they were animals. Some thought

they were sheep, goats, or cows; others thought they were bears or wolves. They stripped off their clothing and began to wander about like animals. The strangely-distended bellies of many of the corpses are caused by undigested grass and straw.

Old Mother Esther gathered with the rest of the village for the story but was not driven mad by it as she is nearly deaf. Her grandson would have told her the tale later by screaming into her ear. When she saw everyone stripped naked and running around like beasts, she wisely locked herself in. She remains there still, afraid to venture out, as she knows some of the madmen remain in the area. While the madmen are not violent towards one another, such will not be the case with those unaffected, such as Old Mother Ester or the investigators.

After telling the story, Cael became younger still, and his activities have further destabilized the fiefdom. Reality in Shereborne is starting to shift as chaos establishes a firm grip. As Cael spreads the message of the King in Yellow, the earthy fiefdom of Shereborne begins merging with that of Lost Carcosa (see **Merging with Carcosa**).

Investigating the Village

As the investigators travel around Dunover they find frozen, naked corpses of men, women, and children everywhere. Many of the houses are in total disarray, with filth and waste covering the floor in places.

HANDOUT: HERALD 3

Saxon proclamation, from an account of the wedding feast of Elspeth, daughter of Halimund the Just, dated 40 years ago.

Upon the wedding feast of Elspeth, daughter of Halimund the Just, was Cael Greybeard called forth. There, before the gathered Saxon lords, did Halimund swear an oath to the aged magus. 'In gratitude for a life of sacrifice and valor, for forever protecting these lands against the dark forces that stalk the steps of mankind, I pledge that so long as you live, the Sacred Silver Oak shall live with you.' And Cael was pleased and gave thanks to the lord. Brother Simon, the Christian priest, did caution the lord on honoring such pagan practices, warning him that such beliefs were the work of the Devil. Words were passed in private between the priest and the lord and when done the priest was silent.

All livestock has been set loose and half-eaten piles of food litter the floors.

The Barn

The remains of a mass gathering may be found in the barn of the largest farmhouse. Bales of hay are arranged like benches and a platform has been created from some boxes and planks. A frozen mug of ale sits half filled on the edge of the crude stage. Discarded clothing is everywhere and a Yellow Sign, painted onto a cloak, hangs behind the stage like a banner.

Old Mother Esther

It doesn't take a Spot Hidden roll to notice that only one house has a line of smoke rising from its chimney. Old Mother Ester is inside, unaware that the investigators are in the village. Her house appears tightly shut and intact. Investigators calling out to the house will get no response, as she is nearly deaf.

Once investigators approach the home, allow



Old Mother Esther

for **Spot Hidden** rolls. If successful, dirty faces can be discerned hiding amongst the squalor and debris of the village. If the rolls are failed, the investigators are startled by animal-like cries as five men and two women, all nude and half frozen with cold, rush at the investigators from concealment

to attack. They attempt to bite and claw with ferocity fueled by their madness. They cannot be reasoned with and will fight until slain or subdued. There is no hope for these unfortunate souls.

A cacophony of animal-like screeches and howls erupts around you as a group of naked, filthy villagers rush at you. They growl and slaver as they charge toward you with lust and murder in their eyes. The lunatics all have what appear to be sharpened claws, but you realize these are actually tips of bone. They have worn away the flesh from their fingertips.

THE BEAST-PEOPLE OF DUNOVER

	#1	#2	#3	#4	#5	#6	#7
STR	45	75	70	80	60	75	70
CON	40	35	55	30	45	35	60
SIZ	70	60	50	60	45	70	80
INT	15	15	15	15	15	15	15
POW	30	40	60	50	35	45	50
DEX	50	55	50	55	60	65	55
HP	11	9	10	9	9	10	14
DB	0	+1D4	0	+1D4	0	+1D4	+1D4
Build	0	1	0	1	0	1	1
Move	7	8	8	8	9	8	7

Attacks: 1

Fighting 50% (25/10), damage 1D3+DB
Dodge 25% (12/5)

Armor: None.

The Witness

Investigators can hear Old Mother Esther moving about inside and see the smoke rising from her chimney. Only the most persistent pounding and loud yelling draws her attention. Her door can be forced open (opposed **STR 75**). Whether she opens the door or her home is broken into, she is grateful to see anyone who's wearing clothing and appears sane.

Communicating with the old woman is difficult, at best. Investigators must yell into her ear in order for her to hear anything. Old Mother Esther offers to share the pot of hot porridge she has cooking. As she is the only non-afflicted person in the village, there is plenty of food for everyone. She answers any and all questions gladly, to the best of her ability.

Old Mother Esther's Story

"The young, traveling bard came to our village a few days ago. He was a handsome man, dressed in a colorful cloak and tunic, just like the bards from back when I was just a girl. My grandson told me he wanted to tell stories for us. Everyone was happy. We gathered together in the big barn. The bard told his stories, but I couldn't tell you what they were. My hearing isn't very good you see. My grandson said he would tell me the stories later, after we got home.

Ripples from Carcosa

“But it was wonderful, sitting there with everyone. I hadn’t seen such a thing since I was little, when Cael Greybeard performed at my sister’s wedding. Then the bard paused and hung that peculiar banner; everything went wrong after that.

“There was this rune on it that seemed to make people feel strange. Some started to cry; it made me feel dizzy, like when I stand up too fast. The bard started talking again; my grandson told me that it was about a king in yellow, I think. Everyone was staring at the bard, listening to the story. I wish I knew what it was about, because they hung on every word. When it was over, people started jumping around, stripping off their clothes, and running around like animals! Some even started rutting in the dirt, right there in front of everyone. I started to pull my grandson away, but he tried to bite me. He was as mad as the others. I rushed home, but not before I saw the bard walking away. I called out to him to help me; I’m not too sturdy on these old legs anymore. I know he must have heard me, but he didn’t even turn to look at me. I think he was crying, either that or laughing.



The beast-people of Dunover

“Anyway, that storyteller is the cause of all this. I don’t know why a bard who followed the old ways would use his powers for such a thing. I was always taught that such men used their magic for good. I just don’t understand.”

If questioned, she doesn’t know what direction the bard traveled after leaving Dunover. She swears that the bard couldn’t possibly be Cael Greybeard, “This man couldn’t have seen forty winters. Cael Greybeard was an old man when I was a little girl. He seemed as skilled as Cael, I’ll give him that, but without hearing him speak I couldn’t say for sure.”

Old Mother Esther is alone in the village—save for the mad villagers—and obviously cannot survive for very long on her own. If the investigators load her home with food gathered from the village and bring in a large supply of firewood for her, she could live alone here for a week or so. With so many corpses in the area it’s only a matter of time before wolves begin to wander in. The village is no longer safe.

The nearest safe place for her to be taken is the castle. If the investigators don’t think of this, then call for **Intelligence** rolls to remind them of their duty. Returning to the castle does allow the investigators the opportunity to return to the old Saxon records to research a new line of inquiry, the story of the King in Yellow.

While Leaving Dunover

As the mounts and sleigh begin traveling the road away from Dunover, a strange thing catches your eye. At the end of a path, forking away from the main road, is a large building of black stone. It is three stories high with an adjacent tower soaring skyward. It is impossible to have missed such a thing on your way into the village. The design of this dark building is like no other you have ever seen.

Suddenly a gust of winter wind blows, filling the air with a cloud of icy snow. You are all blinded for a moment, little more than the blink of an eye. When you look again, all that is there is an empty, snow-covered field with the silent forest beyond.

Keeper’s Note: Call for a **Sanity** roll (0/1).

MERGING WITH CARCOSA

From this point on the fiefdom of Shereborne begins to slowly merge with Carcosa. Strange black

HANDOUT: HERALD 4

From the personal journal of Brother Simon, 40 years ago. Written in Latin.
Sanity loss 1D3; +0/+2 Cthulhu Mythos; Mythos Rating 6.

...and after the humiliation I suffered at the feast I sought out Cael Greybeard. It was my wish to enlighten him to the ways of Christ and persuade him to cast aside his pagan beliefs before his death. Whatever I thought of the aged man's beliefs, I did not wish to see him suffer an eternity in the pit of hell simply because he had never been given the opportunity to embrace the Heavenly Father.

When I found the aged storyteller he was sitting under his beloved oak tree. I engaged him in long conversations that went on until the stars were high in the sky. During that time I spoke of the love of Christ, and the foul cells of damnation that await those who reject Christ's call. Cael told me that there was little in my faith that he disagreed with but that such a path was not for him. He claimed to be a servant of the old ways, a protector of mankind and a keeper of dark secrets. I challenged him to tell me of these dark things but he said it was better if I knew them not. I then told the aged man that I too meant to be a protector of the people of Wessex, and that I too had a duty, as a man of God, to oppose such devilry. After what must have seemed much pestering on my part, he agreed to share one such secret.

He drew a symbol in the dirt, which upon viewing it made my head spin as if falling. The trio of arms upon the character seemed to reach up for me, as if they were

the very hands of Satan. The old man scuffed it out before it could claim me. He asked if I wanted to know what that rune signified; telling me there was a dark story behind it. God forgive me, I said yes.

The particulars of the tale I shall not write here. I shall never share what I have learned, nor will I ever forget it. The story was called "The King in Yellow." It tells of a royal family in an endless squabble over who would succeed to the throne of Ythill, their kingdom. A traveler comes to their lands claiming to be a messenger for the last king. The noble family kills this messenger; all the while, a phantom city begins moving closer to their own. In the end, the King in Yellow, who could only be one of Satan's lords, arrives. Madness is his mantle and discordance the sounds of his footfalls. His realm of entropy and his dead city, called Carcosa, swallows up their kingdom. It was a beautiful tale, haunting and terrible, full of horror and sadness and despair that chilled my immortal soul. The aged bard then said that only our being seated at the foot of this sacred oak had stopped a curse of madness upon my soul.

I should have heeded his words, that there are things man should not know. He tried to explain more of it, how this King in Yellow was only one face of an ancient demon of madness, but I begged him to stop. I do not think I will ever speak with the old man again. I no longer fear for his soul; now I fear for us all.

50

stone buildings appear and then disappear. Investigators find hauntingly beautiful statues where none have existed before, only to have them vanish moments later. All of these things happen out of the corner of the investigators' eyes, never when they are directly looking at them. Investigators should not be allowed to enter any structure they see appear and keepers should keep these things out of reach and dreamlike. Keepers should have some of the investigators see these images while other investigators are elsewhere, only to have the images vanish when the others arrive.

Investigators should never know if such things are truly real or not. The forces of reality are weakening and the powers of entropy are taking hold in the land. When they have taken a firm enough hold, the King in Yellow shall cross over and Shereborne will become part of Carcosa forever. Keepers should use this sparingly, sprinkling these manifes-

tations throughout the remainder of the scenario. Each manifestation costs the investigators a **Sanity** roll (0/1).

A Stopover at the Castle

Once the investigators return to the castle, Lord Boniface questions them. He orders them to rest the remainder of the day but wants them to travel to Beeton as soon as possible. If anybody is injured, Lord Boniface allows the investigators to convalesce at the castle until they are fit to travel. He puts the house guard on alert.

Old Mother Esther is given work within the castle, helping out the kitchen staff for the busy Yule celebration. As it turns out, she is actually the great aunt of a member of the kitchen staff. The aged peasant is eternally grateful to the investigators. Of course if the investigators press on to Beeton directly from Dunover, none of this occurs.

PART THREE: BEETON

After a rest and possibly some time to heal, the investigators are ready to continue. They now know a bard is traveling the land telling a story that spreads madness. The investigators may also know the name of the specific tale, “The King In Yellow.”

Further Research

If investigators attempt to research a story by that name in the old Saxon Library, they find the following passage in a journal written by Brother Simon (**Handout 4**) with a successful **Library Use** roll. This is the priest who spoke out against Cael at the wedding feast of Elspeth, in **Handout 3**.

The journal of Brother Simon is a lengthy text, but this passage is the only one connected to the Mythos. If the investigators try to find out what happened to Brother Simon they learn that he lived out his days spreading the word of God. He died 25 years ago and was buried in the crypt of his order, four days’ travel north of here. Nothing else can be learned from the records.

Within the Castle

Lord Boniface orders the investigators to Beeton. By now Lord Boniface is deeply concerned about what his going on in his lands. Importantly, he does not wish to alarm his wealthy and influential guests, who have already begun to arrive for the Yuletide celebration.

The court herald announces the guests by their formal titles as they enter the front doors of the castle. They wear their holiday best, as do all the members of their respective entourages. Most of those living at the castle know nothing of what has happened at Derek’s Holding and Dunover. Those few who do know have been warned not to speak of it, lest the fear of a plague spread.

BEETON

The trip to Beeton takes at least four hours with the mounts and sleigh. It is the smallest of the three villages, with only nine families living there. During the trip, it begins to snow heavily. For the remainder of the scenario there is a 75% chance that it will be snowing. By the time the investigators arrive at the village, the snowfall has become a full-blown storm

and traveling conditions are becoming difficult. Keepers should have the investigators encounter several phenomena (see **Merging with Carcosa**), during their journey to Beeton.

At long last you see the village of Beeton through the falling snow. Smoke rises from most of the chimneys and people are moving about, chopping wood and running errands. While smaller than Derek’s Holding and Dunover, Beeton boasts larger and better-made buildings. You can smell fresh bread being baked; hear the ringing of a blacksmith’s hammer, and see children playing in the snow. Your hearts are much lifted, for after the horrors you’ve experienced in the last two villages, it’s good to come to a place of normalcy.

Beeton, a Nice Normal Village

Unlike the previous villages, everyone in Beeton seems normal. People come forward to welcome the noble emissaries of Lord Boniface. The mounts and sleigh are taken into the village’s largest barn, where the animals are brushed and fed. Investigators are taken to the house of the village headman, named Bannen. Here they are given hot mulled cider along with a loaf of warm bread while they warm up and dry off beside a roaring fire.

Bannen welcomes the investigators and answers their questions. He claims that no storyteller has visited Beeton and that nothing at all seems to be amiss here. He assures them that all is well and good, just as it should be. Of these claims, only one is a lie (from his point of view); a storyteller did visit the village. Bannen is very personable (with Insight 85%), so detecting this lie may be difficult.

Bannen tells the investigators that a strange man has been seen lurking around in the woods near a hunter’s shack not far from here. He adds that the man had a colorful cloak and was spotted by people gathering firewood. Bannen offers to send someone to guide the investigators to this shack in the morning. As night is fast approaching and the snowstorm rages outside, traveling there before morning is not possible. This also is a lie. If Bannen’s true plan succeeds, the investigators never see the dawn.

What Happened in Beeton

Cael came to this village just two days ago. No longer Greybeard, he appears to be a man of about thirty. About a third of the villagers gathered to hear him tell the story (the inclement weather keeping many within their homes). As before, he recited the

tale of the King in Yellow and madness overcame his audience. This time the insanity took the form of cannibalism.

The cannibalistic maniacs took up axes, knives, and whatever else was handy, and began systematically murdering every sane person in the village. None escaped. One entire dwelling in Beeton is kept locked and now serves as a larder. Within it are 34 human corpses, butchered and hung like slaughtered livestock. The cannibals of Beeton have eaten quite well these past two days.

After this telling of the forbidden story, Cael became even more youthful and Shereborne became dangerously destabilized within this reality. The path for the King In Yellow is about to be opened and the fusion of this region with Carcosa is becoming stronger. Cael returned to the forest to rest and ready himself for the last leg of his journey. His final audience awaits: the Norman nobles gathered at Lord Boniface's Yuletide celebration.

The Feast

As a snow storm rages, it is not possible to return to the castle before dark. Bannen insists the investigators stay the night. Two rooms are prepared for them, with three beds and a roaring fire in each. The headman informs the investigators that an ox has recently been slaughtered for a feast being prepared to celebrate both the Yule season and their visit.

In this large, warm hall much preparation has taken place. Tables are set up around a huge open fire in the center of the room. From the adjacent kitchen come the delicious smells of stews and roasting meat. Two kegs are being tapped as you enter, one of ale and another of mead. You are shown to your places at high table, where loaves of fresh-baked bread, bowls of salt, and platters of cheese and nuts adorn the table. About thirty villagers are gathering here to celebrate Yule. The headman of the village calls for silence as you enter. He holds up his mug and calls out, "A toast, to Lord Boniface and to his noble emissaries! We welcome you and wish you health!" A friendly cheer is raised from the gathered peasants, and the feast begins.

Investigators are seated at high table beside the salt bowl, a position of high honor. Much food is served and every course includes meat. Ox stew with vegetables, then sausages with bread, and lastly, a large serving of roast pork is laid before the investigators. The meat, of course, is human flesh.



The cannibals attack!

Ale and mead flow freely. Thirty villagers attend this gathering, where there is much feasting, drinking, dancing, and humorous conversation. Not a thing seems amiss.

After the meal, a few villagers take up instruments. Music fills the air and pretty, plump village lasses attempt to draw the noble emissaries onto the dance floor. Group dances are done with much hand holding, flirting, and playful smiles. This goes on until late in the evening, when all are quite tired. The villagers retire to their homes and the investigators are escorted to the rooms prepared for them in the headman's home.

The Trap

About two hours after the investigators settle down to sleep, the cannibals of Beeton attack. A dozen villagers rush into the room where the investigators are quartered. Keepers should allow the players to attempt **Listen** rolls to detect the attackers' stealthy approach. Two cannibals can enter each round. If the doorway is well-defended, the attackers can be prevented from swarming into the room. Armed with various improvised weapons, the villagers salivate as they attack. If an investigator is wounded, his attacker pauses on the following round to hungrily

lick the blood from his or her weapon. Statistics for the cannibals follow.

The Cannibals of Beeton

	#1	#2	#3	#4	#5	#6
STR	60	75	40	70	60	50
CON	50	40	60	70	40	50
SIZ	60	55	30	50	70	65
INT	50	60	60	70	50	45
POW	60	55	65	60	40	35
DEX	70	55	60	65	45	40
HP	11	9	9	12	13	11
DB	0	+1D4	-1	0	+1D4	+1D4
Build	0	1	-1	0	1	0
Move	8	8	9	9	7	7

	#7	#8	#9	#10	#11	#12
STR	50	75	60	45	65	60
CON	55	35	70	60	50	45
SIZ	65	60	50	45	65	35
INT	60	50	55	60	50	60
POW	50	55	65	50	60	65
DEX	70	60	55	65	40	60
HP	12	9	12	10	11	8
DB	0	+1D4	0	0	+1D4	0
Build	0	1	0	0	1	0
Move	8	8	9	8	8	9

Attacks: 1

Fighting* 35% (17/7), damage 1D3+DB or by weapon + DB (Sickle 1D3, Knife 1D4, Mallet 1D6, Ax 1D6)

Dodge* 25% (12/5)

Armor: None.

*Average values for Brawl and Dodge.

At the same time as the villagers attack, they also send three of their number to slaughter their mounts and draft horse, and, just to be sure, take an ax to the runners of the sleigh, rendering the vehicle useless. If the investigators have split up and left anyone standing guard over their horses, they may be able to prevent this. However, the three insane villagers do attempt to kill the investigators before turning on their horses.

The Horse Slayers (3)

	#1	#2	#3
STR	70	65	50
CON	70	60	45
SIZ	65	60	50
INT	55	50	60
POW	50	40	55
DEX	60	65	70
HP	13	12	9
DB	+1D4	+1D4	0
Build	1	1	0
Move	8	9	8

Attacks: 1

Fighting* 35% (17/7), damage 1D3+DB or by weapon + DB (Sickle 1D3, Knife 1D4, Mallet 1D6, Ax 1D6)

Dodge* 25% (12/5)

Armor: None.

*Average values for Brawl and Dodge.

If the main body of attackers is defeated (soon as 4 to 6 of them are killed or incapacitated), the remaining villagers hastily flee into the nearby forest, after snatching up some food and warm clothing. Investigators searching the village find that there are beds, clothing, and room for possibly twice the number of people they've actually seen. They also discover one house locked and no smoke rising from the chimney. An opposed STR roll vs. STR 20 is required to open the door.

The Larder of Beeton

As the door swings open your eyes behold a sickening sight. It is clear that this home has recently undergone a drastic change. The room is freezing cold; ice and snow have been packed all around the floor. Much of it bloodstained. All the furniture has been removed. In one corner of the common area stands a worktable, behind which stands a rack of mallets, hooks, knives, cleavers, and saws. In an opposite corner are several barrels, smelling of brine.

The remainder of the room is a forest of hanging, butchered corpses. Suspended head down on hooks fastened to the rafters are thirty naked human bodies. They have all been eviscerated, with the internal organs completely removed. The

tops of their skulls have been sawn open, showing an empty converse bowl where a brain once sat. Large portions of many of the corpses have been removed. The entire building is an enormous butcher shop and larder, with human flesh the only item offered.

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Investigators looking into the barrels find human organs in the process of being pickled. Seeing this grisly scene requires a Sanity roll (1/1D3+1). Investigators who partook of the feast and realize what they were eating must roll and an additional **Sanity Check** (1/1D6).

Leaving Beeton

Investigators seeking to return to the castle may find they have some problems. The cannibals of Beeton may have slaughtered their mounts and destroyed their sleigh. If a guard had been posted and the mounts saved, investigators discover that their horses are sick. The unfortunate animals die just after dawn, having been fed poison mixed in with their oats. No other horses—or any sort of animal able to be ridden or hitched to a sleigh—can be found in the village. From this point on, the investigators must travel on foot.

Snow falls now, steadily rising on the ground throughout the day. The first night of Lord Boniface's Yule celebration begins that very night. Investigators now face a day's walk back to the castle during heavy snow fall. It may prove more perilous than they suspect, for Shereborne and Carcosa are becoming one.

PART FOUR— RETURNING TO THE CASTLE

The investigators have a long, cold walk back to the castle. If they leave early, they should arrive sometime just after nightfall. The journey under these conditions usually takes about eight hours, but may take much longer (see **The Blizzard**). Investigators face three dangers during this journey:

- **The Blizzard**—As the day wears on, the snowfall becomes heavier and heavier, slowing the investigators' progress. Visibility drops drastically, and a successful **Navigation** roll is required for every two hours of travel. A failed roll means the investigators become lost, adding one hour to their trip. For every additional hour of travel over eight hours,



You've found the remaining townsfolk!

each investigators get weaker and must make **Hard CON** rolls or lose 5 **CON** and 1D3 hit point; (**CON** points are restored with a good night's rest in a warm environment).

- **Wolves**—Close to starvation, a pack of four wolves begins tailing the party. While not bold enough to outright attack, they dog the investigator's steps, giving them incentive to keep moving. Anyone injured and lagging behind the rest, will be seen as an opportunity to attack.
- **Carcosa**—At this point, the dead city of Carcosa and Shereborne are nearly occupying the same place. Once per hour something odd manifests as the two realities merge. Following are a few examples, but keepers are welcome to create their own.

Wolves (4)

STR 50	CON 60	SIZ 40	INT --
POW 55	DEX 70	APP --	EDU --
HP: 10	DB: 0	Build: 0	Move 12

Ripples from Carcosa

Attacks: 1

Fighting 50% (25/10), damage 1D8
Dodge 35% (17/7)

Armor: 1 point (fur).

Manifestation One

A life-sized bronze statue of a beautiful woman appears at the side of the road. The woman has a scepter in one hand and a rose in the other. The statue stands atop a six-foot-tall platform of carved onyx. It is a road often traveled by the investigators, but they have never seen this object before. The bronze appears discolored with age and the inscriptions on the platform are illegible due to weathering. The statue does not vanish when investigators turn away.

Manifestation Two

A great arch, 25 feet high and 12 feet wide, straddles the road. It is made of stark, black stone without inscription. An eight-foot-long, four-foot-wide banner hangs below the top of the arch, blowing in the wind. Sometimes the banner shows a leaping deer, the personal crest of Lord Boniface, while at other times it displays the Yellow Sign. Each time there is a gust of wind strong enough to make the banner flutter, the design upon it changes.

Manifestation Three

A row of huge black stone buildings appear where the forest once stood. Black cobblestone streets, flying bridges, and tall towers can be clearly made out. Suddenly, the sound of hoofbeats charging towards the investigators is heard, along with the squealing whinny of a horse. The investigators turn to see no horse, but many hoofprints in the snow. When they turn back, the stone buildings are gone. If any investigator deliberately stares at the buildings and does not turn towards the invisible horse and rider, a strong wind blows up, obscuring their view with snow. When the snow clears, the buildings are gone.

Manifestation Four

Mist begins rising off a snowy field to the side of the road. Through the mist a white, snow-covered field shimmers and shifts away, to be replaced by a dark lake. The lake stretches on for at least a mile, with ripples visible here and there, as if something large were shifting beneath its surface. There is a sudden soundless burst of light, like a flash of lightning

without thunder, and the lake is once again a snowy field. The mist, on the other hand, lingers about for some time.

Manifestation Five

As night begins to fall the skies clear briefly. The investigators look up and see two moons visible in the night sky. Both of the moons are completely alien, neither being the size or color of the moon the investigators are familiar with. Clouds eventually roll in and obscure the moons from view, and soon snowfall resumes once again.

The weather, the wolves, and the disturbing manifestations of Carcosa make the return trip harrowing at best. Keepers should make certain that the investigators arrive back at the castle after dark on the first night of the Lord Boniface's Yule celebration. Keepers may alter the flow of time to accomplish this, as entropy and reality are presently battling for dominance in Shereborne.

Back at Castle

You arrive back at the castle to see that the chaos plaguing the land has come here as well. While many of the castle's features are altered, others are completely gone. The castle appears larger, with several towers and wings added, since the last time you were here. All of the stonework is now black, and a large, black banner emblazoned with the Yellow Sign hangs above the main entrance. The drawbridge, which once spanned a 12-foot moat, is now a marble bridge crossing dark mist-shrouded waters. Snow swirls about the long bridge leading over the lake to where the castle now rests.

Investigators crossing the bridge to enter the castle are stepping into the center of the entropy gripping Shereborne. The bridge stretches on for an immeasurable distance. It could be 200 yards or several miles, whatever the keeper feels best serves to heighten the tension. While crossing the bridge, keepers should allow **Listen** rolls. If successful, movement is heard below in the water, as if someone is pacing them under the bridge. Unless **Stealth** rolls are made, moments later the investigators are attacked by a Spawnling of Hastur.

The Attack

Suddenly from below you the icy surface of the water explodes upwards. Four long tentacles whip out of the water, reaching over the span of the bridge. They flail greedily toward all of you. A sickening groan, a slurping noise, and the sound of splashing can be heard from the left side of the bridge.

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The Spawnling attacks the investigators as they try to cross the bridge to enter the castle. Investigators fleeing from the creature in a mad dash to reach the castle can escape this encounter in four rounds. The Spawnling attempts to grasp one or more investigator with its tentacles and yank them into the dark waters below the bridge (see the **Spawnling of Hastur** box).

The creature below you is like nothing you have seen or heard tales of. Larger than a draft horse,

SPAWNLING OF HASTUR

These creatures are the immature form of the Spawn of Hastur. They dwell in the shallows and shorelines of the Lake of Hali, where they lurk, waiting to prey upon the unsuspecting. They appear as a foul combination of squid and lobster, possessing long, flat bodies with four pairs of insect-like legs. Each leg ends in four claws used for climbing. The back end of their bodies sports a vertical fin. At the front are four long, nimble tentacles and a pair of powerful claws. A Spawnling has nine eyes perched upon stalks and a mouth that is a ring of small, rasping teeth.

Spawnlings are sometimes summoned to earth accidentally, sneaking across doorways opened for Hastur. They are semiamphibious, able to survive out of water

for only a few minutes. Once old enough, these creatures molt their skins and shed their immature form, becoming adult Spawn of Hastur (see *Malleus Monstrorum*).

Attacks: (4) Spawnlings attack with four long tentacles. They use these to constrict their victims and drag them towards the shorter, more powerful claws. These claws then dismember their prey.

Spawnlings of Hastur, Lurking Horrors of Lake Hali

STR	125	(4D6+10 x 5)
CON	50	(3D6 x 5)
SIZ	150	(4D6+10 x 5)
INT	50	(1D3+2 x 5)
POW	70	(4D6 x 5)
DEX	50	(3D6 x 5)

Hit Points: 20

Av. Damage Bonus: +2D6 **Av. Build:** 3

Move: 6 / 16 Swimming

Attacks: 4 or 2

Attacks first with tentacles to grab target. Once held, target is attacked by two claws.

Grab (maneuver) 45% (22/9), damage 1D4+DB, target held for automatic claw hit next round (damage 1D6+DB).

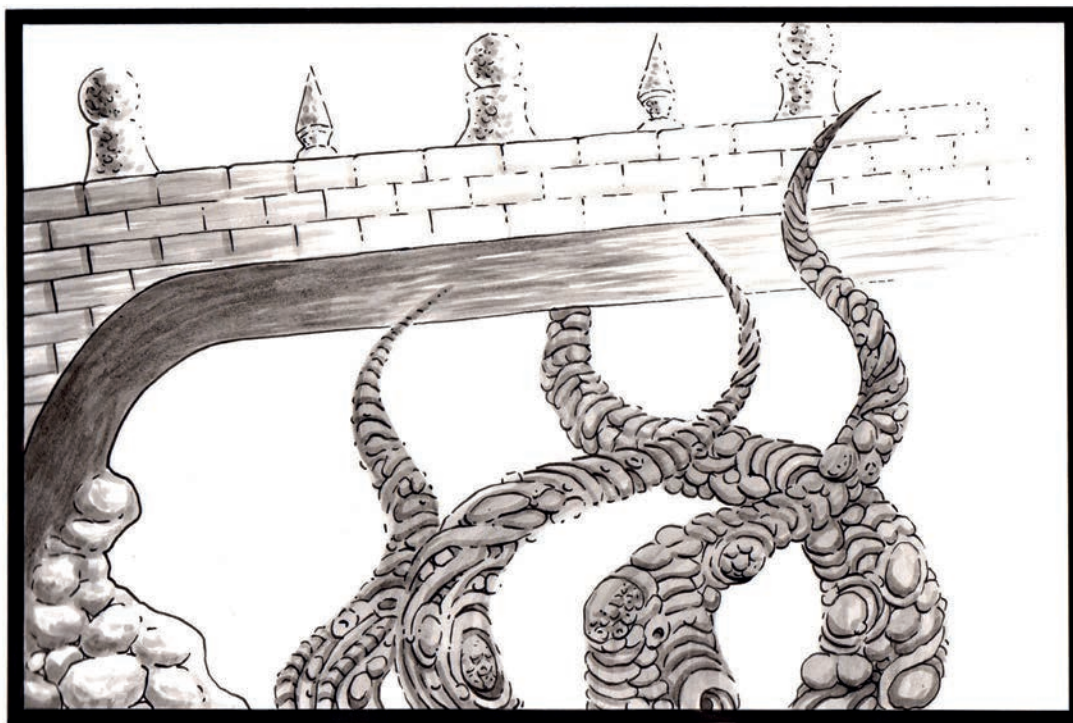
Claws 50%, damage 1D6+DB. Target requires STR roll to break free.

Armor: 3-point of thick, rubbery hide.

Spells: None.

Sanity Loss: 1/1D6 Sanity points to see a Spawnling of Hastur.





The attack at the castle

it is a mad union of insect, snail, and squid. The terror has four grasping tentacles, below which are a pair of formidable rending claws. A forest of eyes, perched atop long, nimble stalks, adorns its head. Weird, high pitched sounds emanate from its lamprey-like mouth. To your terror, the monster nimbly climbs higher, moving out of the lake and onto the bridge.

The spawnling will attack until either it has killed and taken an investigator for its lunch, been killed itself, or suffered a major wound. Once past the Spawnling, investigators arrive at the castle. The main door is open, with light and the sounds of merriment spilling out into the night. Once inside, a portcullis drops down, followed by the main castle door slamming shut behind them. The fate of Shereborne is now in the hands of the investigators.

PART FIVE— THE KING IN YELLOW

Inside the castle, the chaos of Carcosa and the King in Yellow have begun to usurp reality. The halls, rooms, and passageways are all now much altered and in a constant state of change. Investigators could easily become lost for hours, days, or even years. However, a guide meets them upon their entry.

Even as the warmth of the castle welcomes you, the strangeness of it fills you with confusion and dread. The ceilings now vault thirty feet high, the stonework is black, and everywhere yellow candles flicker, casting the halls in a haunting, sickening illumination. The entry chamber is now several times larger than you remember it, with many new passages leading from it, which you are completely unfamiliar with.

Mist erupts from a wall of stone. It swirls and dances, caressing the structure like a living thing. When it clears, moments later, the wall has become an archway. Beyond it lies a spiral stairway leading upward into a tower. A pair of heraldic banners hangs on either side of the archway. Their dimensions and quality identify them as the banners of a king, while their emblem, a single enormous Yellow Sign, proclaims just which king.

“Welcome back!” a loud, merry voice calls from behind you. Turning, you see a jester with a yellow mask over his eyes and a veil over his mouth. His clothing is rich and colored in black and gold, decorated with silver bells. He wears a hat with three long points. The jester’s shoes are long and curl upward at the toe. “You’ll get used to things like that. Please, follow me. The King wishes to see you. I’m to guide you to the feast hall, otherwise you might get lost. We can’t have that now, can we?”

Viewing the manifestation of the archway requires a **Sanity** check (0/1).

The Jester

If investigators question the jester he answers any questions they ask, but finds a way to do so in a vague way that provides no actual information. The only informative answer he gives is if investigators ask who he is or what his name is. To this he'll reply, "Why, I'm the king's jester of course. Didn't you see the shoes? They don't give these out to just anyone, you know." Keepers should portray the jester as charming and mirthful, as much as he is cryptic and unknowable. He is the comical side of chaos and the least-threatening member of the court of the King in Yellow.

While he guides the investigators, the jester chats about the performances and the courses of the feast they've missed. He tells them, "Do not worry. The best has yet to come and you have luckily arrived just in time." His bells sound out merrily as he leads them up and down stairways and across halls, making many left and right turns. Keepers should try to make the investigators feel as if they've become completely lost within the labyrinth of passages. Somehow the jester seems to know exactly where he is going.

If attacked, the jester falls to the ground immediately before the blow is struck, like a marionette with its strings cut. If the investigators attempt to search his body they discover that there isn't one. Instead, his clothing is filled with damp, yellow rags. After a moment the rags and costume of the jester turn to mist. Call for **Sanity** rolls (0/1).

After a few moments the jester reappears, acting as if nothing amiss has happened. He explains, "Now that this foolishness is out of the way, perhaps we can continue on, yes? We're going to miss the honey cakes!" If they accept his guidance, the jester then leads them to the main feast hall.

If the investigators refuse to follow the jester and insist on finding their own

THE BARDIC TELLING OF THE KING IN YELLOW

This version of the story can only be performed by a druid master bard. Such individuals were traditionally defenders of their people against the forces of the Mythos. The story was passed down from master to master, so that they would know the nature of Hastur. The information was utilized to detect and combat the Great Old One, never to assist the aims of He Who Should Not Be Named.

Cael is the last remaining true bard in all of Wessex. The tale can only be safely performed by one who has given his service to He Who Should Not Be Named. If a bard not in the service of Hastur recites this tale aloud, the teller suffers the same fate as the audience. The exception to this would be if the teller told the tale as a form of instruction under the safety of a sacred oak.

The tale is hauntingly beautiful and horrible, following the same traditionally-accepted storyline as the play. The difference is that when the listener identifies with a doomed character in the story, they hear their own voice when that character's lines are spoken. After the first few minutes, listeners become helplessly ensnared by the story. Those wishing to stop listening must make an opposed **POW** roll vs. **POW** of the teller. If this roll is failed they helplessly listen to the remainder of the story.

If anyone tries to harm the teller of the tale while it is in progress, those ensnared by it react. They protect the bard and try to grapple the offender, forcing him to listen to the tale as well. Listeners enchanted by the story do anything, including sacrificing their lives, to ensure that the story continues being told until its conclusion.

This version of the tale acts as a spell and a Mythos tome combined. Those who listen to the complete tale receive +17% to Cthulhu Mythos, +45% to Hastur Lore, and must make a **Sanity** roll (1D10/1D100) as, with the ending of the story, they are shown in their minds the true image of Hastur. All who go insane suffer from the same form of madness.

Those who completely stop up their ears may avoid hearing the story. Those who only hear the tale partially are not overwhelmed by it. At the end of the tale such listeners receive +10% to Cthulhu Mythos, +30% Hastur Lore, and must make a **Sanity** roll (1D6/1D10). The image of Hastur is indistinct. If driven insane, they do not suffer from the same madness as those who fully listened to the tale. When used to intentionally spread madness, the tale becomes a very powerful weapon. The teller of the tale receives one magic point for every 10 **Sanity** points drained from the audience. These additional magic points fade at the rate of one per 10 minutes, so they must be used quickly or are lost. When the story is used in this way, it may draw the attention of Hastur. If more than 1,000 **Sanity** points are drained away in a concentrated area it becomes destabilized in normal reality. When this happens, Carcosa and the destabilized area begin to merge together. Hastur's avatar, the King In Yellow, then arrives to take possession of this area, much as the Great Old One did in Yhtill.

way to the main feast hall, have the players attempt an Extreme **POW** roll. If successful, the investigators puzzle their way through the chaotic, ever-shifting labyrinth and arrive at their destination. If they fail, they spend a 1D4 hours wandering aimlessly before they can attempt another **POW** roll to find their way. Investigators lost in the labyrinth will either eventually find their way to the hall or, if necessary, have the jester reappear to guide them.



The Jester

The Stroll

Even if investigators follow the jester without incident, the walk from the main gate to the feast hall takes over an hour. During this time, the acoustics of the castle are such that every entertainer's performance can be heard. As they travel, the investigators hear religious yuletide carols, musical numbers, toasts and laughter, and the stamping of dancing feet.

Eventually they hear a performer being introduced by Boniface's herald, who calls out, "Young Cael, Bard of Lost Carcosa and Herald of the Yellow King." The jester leaps up and down, clapping his hands. "Oh, Cael, he's my favorite! Have you heard his story yet? It's all the rage all over the land, simply drives audiences mad! No? Well, you're going to love it, I promise you. Hurry now, if we move quickly we can get there in time for the end!"

The Tale

The investigators hear Cael tell several traditional tales as they travel to the feast hall. His voice is clear and strong, skilled and youthful; his delivery is that of a master storyteller filled with the magic of ancient bardcraft. The audience is hushed as all are captivated and deeply moved to hear such artistry. After each story there is great applause and toasting for the Bard's health and skill.

Then Cael's voice changes, seeming sad and world-weary. He says, "Hear me now, gathered host, as I relate a tale of sadness, beauty, and loss. I speak now the tale that should not be spoken, the tale of He Who Should Not Be Named. I speak now the tale of Lost Carcosa and the coming of the King In Yellow." The crowd grows deathly silent as the bard's magic grips them.

Investigators should realize what listening to this story brings. Clever investigators will remem-

ber that Old Mother Esther was present when the tale was recited, but remained sane. A supply of melted wax is readily available, which becomes apparent with a successful **Intelligence** roll, as thousands of yellow candles now illuminate the halls and rooms of the castle. Investigators should be able to stop their ears with wax, cloth, or a combination of both. If they don't, they suffer the full effects hearing of the dreaded tale.

Arriving at the Yuletide Celebration

Whether led by the jester or by finding their own way, the investigators eventually arrive at the feast hall. They enter just as the last lines of the story are being told—no matter how long it has taken them to get there.

At long last you arrive at the entrance to the feast hall, which was constructed from the wood of the last sacred silver oak. Before you can enter, the horrible tale reaches its conclusion. You hear the bard sigh and speak, "So spoken, and so ends my tale... and so too ends all else." After the echoes of the last word fade from the hall, everyone gathered here—perhaps seventy people—erupts into screams of madness. Mists and shadows begin to fill the room from every corner.

Keeper's Note—If the investigators were led by the jester, insert the following:

The jester bows deeply, sweeping his arms towards the insanity and chaos which have befallen the feast hall. "See, we are just in time," he says merrily, "I have brought you to the King, as I promised. Behold the Last King, the King in Yellow, He Who Should Not Be Named... My master, and yours." The jester peeks up from his bow and suddenly collapses, like a marionette whose strings have been cut. He lies motionless at your feet.

Keeper's Note—If investigators examine the fallen jester, they find nothing there but empty clothing filled with damp, yellow rags.

The King in Yellow Arrives

Currently about seventy people—gathered friends and fellow members of the Norman nobility—fill the feast hall of Lord Boniface. They stand screaming in terror, clawing at their eyes, stopping up their ears, and slowly sinking to the ground to cower. A single young man stands unaffected. This is Cael, once of the grey beard, but now a youth. He has now become the Herald of the Yellow King.

A handsome young man stands motionless amid the chaos, horror, and lunacy gripping the feast hall. He is dressed in a brown tunic embroidered with the Yellow Sign. A richly-dyed multicolored cloak covers his shoulders. Its rainbow of hues, the sign of a bardic master, fades and bleeds into a loathsome shade of yellow at the hem, the fabric becoming frayed and tattered.

The young man is little more than fifteen years old. He watches the mist rise and weeps, the tears running down his cheeks. At the far end of the hall, where high table stands, a cloud of the pale mists begins to coalesce, forming a single plume. It grows thicker and more solid, as something huge and menacing begins to take shape. The boy seems not to notice you approaching, gripped as he is with despair.

Shereborne now exists in two places at once, our material world and that of Carcosa. Soon it will settle on one side of this reality or the other. Upon which side, though? This will ultimately be decided by the investigators.

AND SO ENDS OUR TALE

At this point Hastur, in the avatar form of the King in Yellow, arrives in Shereborne. The King begins a murderous rampage, killing everyone in the castle. The avatar starts with those seated at high table and then moves down the hall, killing those of the highest status first. In the end, unless the King in Yellow is stopped, only one person is left alive, the bardic master Cael. Hastur then elevates him to become a member of the royal court of Carcosa, with the position of court bard.

Investigators have several possible courses of action and options, listed below:

Option One, Slay Cael

While this is a viable option for the investigators, it accomplishes nothing. In fact it eliminates option four (see following), which has the best possible outcome and greatest chance of success. Killing Cael is simple to do, as he willingly accepts death and takes no action to either defend himself or retaliate. His dying words are, “The oak... all I wanted was an apology for the oak... they said they wouldn’t cut it down...”

Cael Greybeard, Master Bard and Herald of the Yellow King

STR 65 CON 75 SIZ 50 INT 85
POW 100 DEX 70 APP 80 EDU 98
HP: 12 DB: 0 Build: 0 Move: 09

Sanity: 0

Magic Points: 20

Weapons: None

Armor: None.



The King in Yellow has arrived!

Ripples from Carcosa

Skills: Art/Craft (Storytelling) 90%, Charm 80%, Fast Talk 90%, Persuade 95%, Own Kingdom 90%.

Spells: Various, but only uses a bardic version of Dismiss Hastur (see page 63).

Option Two, Flee!

This option allows the investigators to attempt an escape from the castle. With Carcosa merging with Shereborne and the castle an ever-changing labyrinth of halls, rooms, stairs, and doors, finding a way out is difficult. An Extreme **POW** roll is required by each investigator to exit the castle (see **Escaped Chaos**). If failed, they are lost in the castle and travel with it to Lost Carcosa and the shores of the Lake of Hali, lost forever (see **No Escape!**).

No Escape!

You rush madly through winding passages and stairways, through rooms and down halls, as the castle seems to change all around you. After what seems like ages, you find your way out of the castle. To your horror, the snow-covered fields of Wessex are gone. The sky is dark above you, the stars unfamiliar and loathsome to behold. Twin moons gaze down at you as you stand upon the cobblestone street of an enormous city made entirely of black stone. Mist rises from a dark and foreboding lake. As the memory of the Bard's tale haunts you, you realize this can only be one place. This is the city on the shores of lake Hali, your new home, where the King in Yellow reigns for all eternity—Lost Carcosa.

The End.

Escaped Chaos

You rush madly through winding passages and stairways, through rooms and down halls, as the castle seems to change all around you. Suddenly you find a familiar door, an exit from the castle. As you race outside you find yourself falling through darkness, soundlessly tumbling. With a thud you find yourself lying in a snowy field. Slowly standing, you find yourself in an unfamiliar place. Gone is the castle of Lord Boniface—you don't recognize anything around you.

Wandering about, you find a village, where you learn that you are in a neighboring fiefdom. When the villagers inquire where you hail from, your replies bring nervous looks and stares of confusion. No one here, or anywhere else you travel,

has every heard of Shereborne. It is as if it has been cut from the world like a rotten spot on an apple. For the rest of your days you live as hermits and outcasts, driven from place to place by those who view you as mad. Toward the end you wonder if perhaps you are mad, and the nightmarish final days of your Shereborne are only the fantasies of a fevered mind.

The End.

Critical Failure During Escape Attempt

If any player rolls 100 on their Extreme **POW** roll when trying to escape, it counts as a critical failure. If this occurs, the fleeing investigators draw the attention of the King in Yellow. The avatar moves to intercept the investigators as they flee.

Prevented from Escaping

You rush madly through winding passages and stairways, through rooms and down halls, as the castle seems to change all around you. As you are crossing a room to get to a door, it suddenly opens; a looming figure, dressed in a robe of tattered yellow rags and wearing a pallid mask, glides toward you. You screams as waves of menace, terror, and hopelessness overcome you.

Keeper's Note—Proceed to **Option Three**.

Option Three, Battle The King In Yellow

Whether investigators are brave, foolish, or given no choice (see **Prevented from Escaping**), battling the King In Yellow is a serious matter. Once battle begins, the avatar presses his attacks until either it or the investigators are destroyed.

The King In Yellow, Throne Form.

STR 125 CON 530 SIZ 70 INT 250
POW 175 DEX 135 APP -- EDU --
HP: 60 DB: +1D6 Build 2 Move 15*

*Or can appear/disappear at will.

Magic Points: 35

Attacks: 1 gaze, 6 razor sharp tatters, or 1 face tentacle.

Some say the King has a strange facial tentacle hidden behind his pallid mask with which he kisses his worshipers. Others say when he dances his tattered robes extend as pseudopodia, cutting those around him like razors.

Herald of the King in Yellow

Fighting 100% (50/20), damage by razor sharp tatters is 1D6 + DB + 1D6 POW, or by face tentacle is 1D10 + DB + 1D10 POW per round whilst attached.

Gaze: Target must make Extreme POW roll to resist: induces paroxysms of fear, costing 1D6 Sanity points per round while the King in Yellow focuses upon them (costing the King 3 magic points per round). To avoid the gaze for 1 round, the target must make an Extreme POW roll.

Armor: None.

Spells: All Call, Contact spells, and others as the keeper desires.

Sanity Loss: With the Pallid Mask upon its 'face' there is no Sanity loss; however in any other form, or with the mask removed, it costs 1D3/1D10 Sanity points to see the King in Yellow.

See page 06 for further details about the King in Yellow.

In combat, the King in Yellow uses every power at its disposal to bring any confrontation to a quick conclusion. It attacks first with its gaze, attempting to spread madness. On the following round it whips its razor-sharp yellow tatters to slay all standing before him. If physically injured, the avatar allows the Pallid Mask to fall away, threatening the sanity of all viewing (**Sanity** roll). After the mask has dropped away, the King in Yellow also begins to attack with his face tentacle, which springs forth to drain POW from victims until they are dead.

If these potent abilities are not enough, keepers may draw upon the avatar's vast knowledge of magic. The spells at the King in Yellow's disposal are limited only by the keeper's judgments, and possible mercy.

THE BATTLE CONCLUDES

Keeper's Note—Read if the investigators are slain by the King in Yellow:

The fearsome powers of the King In Yellow prove too much for you. As the screams fade from the castle, so too does Shereborne fade from Earth's reality. By dawn the castle, the fiefdom, and all human memory of it are gone. All that the fiefdom ever was is absorbed into Carcosa. Behind the Pallid Mask the King in Yellow smiles, well pleased with the new addition to his domain.

The End.

Keeper's Note—Read if the investigators defeat the King in Yellow:

The horrifying entity staggers backward, seeming to lose strength. Suddenly the tattered yellow rags

cease moving and begin transforming into mist. You watch, almost unbelieving, as the whole of the King in Yellow follows suit. As the mist rolls away you notice all of the mysterious changes made to the castle vanishing as well. By morning, all is as it was before. While many lost their lives, their minds, or both to the terrors that gripped the land, life eventually returns to normal.

While held up as heroes, not one of you has a peaceful night's sleep again. Nightmares plague you for the remainder of your days. Feelings of unease, of being watched and stalked by a nameless horror, are ever constant. The pride you feel in your victory and the cost the victory demanded wage a war within you until you succumb to the sweet embrace of death.

The End.

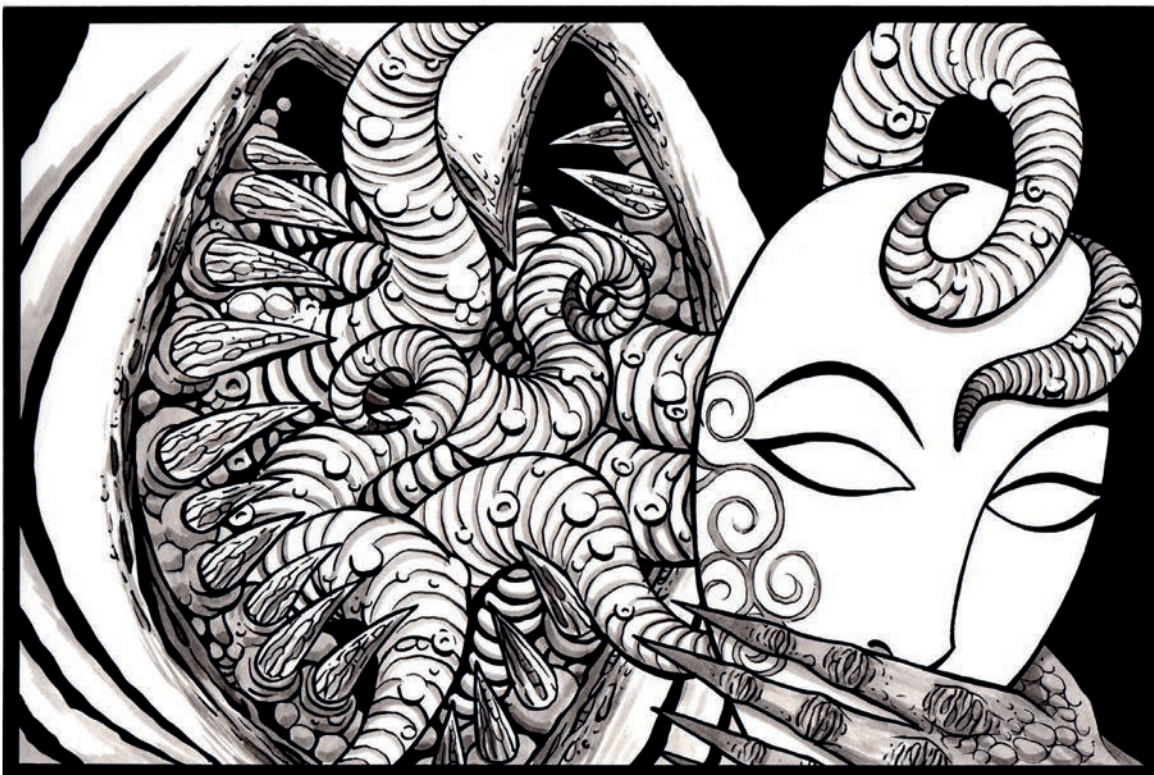
Option Four, Deliver the apology

The investigators may realize that Cael Greybeard spent most of his life as a defender of mankind, and of Wessex in particular. Their original mission was to deliver the apology to him, and keepers should make certain that such orders were never officially rescinded. If the investigators get Cael's attention, he shouts out the following before they can act:

Cael shouts at you, through tears, "I just wanted to say goodbye to the Oak before I died. I sacrificed three lifetimes protecting this land from horrors like that!" He points to the King in Yellow raging behind him. "This lord promised me the oak would stand until I was dead, and he cut it down to make a feast hall for his drunken warriors! The sacred oak cut down to make a feast hall! For months I waited for an apology and it never came!"

Keeper's Note—A successful **Intelligence** roll reminds the investigators of their original duty. If the investigators now deliver the official wax-sealed apology from Lord Boniface, Cael he reads it. He grows calmer, although his remorse for his actions are clear. Keepers should continue with the narrative:

As the young man reads the letter it is as if a great weight lifts from him. But then fresh screams erupt in the feast hall behind you. Cael looks up and turns to see the King in Yellow, and the color drains away from his face. "What have I done? I broke my vows, I betrayed the Order... In the name of all that is good, what have I done?"



Beneath the Pallid Mask

Investigators now have an opportunity to ask for the bard's help. He says, "I fear it's too late now to stop this." A successful **Insight** roll determines that Cael is lying. A successful **Persuade** roll is required to convince Cael to undo what he has done. He then explains to the investigators that there are risks involved.

To Restore Order from Chaos

The young man looks over all of you and breathes deeply. Suddenly he stands taller; fear and uncertainty draining away from him. He is once again Cael, Bardic Master, defender of mankind and keeper of the old ways. When he speaks his voice rings out clear and strong.

"We have but one chance. There is a magic I know that can banish this demon from our world. The risks are great and I will require your help. I cannot do this alone. Even with your help the magic might fail. Will you help me stop this? Answer quickly, time has nearly run out."

If the investigators agree to assist Cael he asks them to join hands in a ring. The bard enters the center of the ring and instructs the investigators to focus only on his words. He then casts the Bardic Dismiss Hastur spell.

The Bardic Dismiss Hastur spell

The young man standing in the center of the ring takes a deep breath. He begins chanting, the words rushing from him. He gasps for breath between chants, speaking the words clearly and unbelievably quickly. In moments he appears to be aging, the youthfulness draining away, feeding the magic he summons. Suddenly, you each feel a tugging within you, drawing energy outwards. The air crackles. Cael speaks faster and faster. The room starts spinning. Mist rises all around you, lashing like serpents.

As the power of the spell surges, you feel as if your hearts might burst. Cael stands vibrating in the center of your circle, now unbelievably ancient. His voice never weakens and the chant never wavers. Suddenly, the horrific entity in his tattered robes launches himself at you all. Razor-sharp yellow strands lash out at you and eyes filled with madness and menace bear down on you, but the awesome power of the King in Yellow is turned aside. Its hand reaches up and draws away the Pallid Mask, showing its true face of nightmarish tentacles ringed with gripping teeth. Cael's eyes flare with caution, with warning, but he does not break his chant.

A ghostly voice fills your minds, "You cannot turn me back, old man. You opened the way;

Herald of the King in Yellow

you invited me into your world. Such an invitation cannot be rescinded. Shereborne is mine, Carcosa is mine. Look upon me, foolish mortals. Look upon me and despair! I am your King now.”

COMPLETING THE RITUAL

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Even though the King in Yellow cannot physically affect the investigators, he can still stop the dismissal spell. At this point the investigators' sanity is tested for seeing the King in Yellow's true face, requiring a **Sanity** roll (1D3/1D10). Those driven insane try frantically to flee. If the circle is broken the protection fails and the King in Yellow freely attacks anyone attempting the ritual. If one or more fail, the spell weakens. For the spell to succeed, Cael requires a total of 40 magic points to be contributed by those in the circle surrounding him.

Those who have retained a grasp on their sanity can stop other investigators who have been driven mad and who attempt to run away. The investigators who remain sane can refuse to release anyone from the circle by retaining a grip upon their hands (opposed **STR** rolls).

The Ritual Fails

If fewer than 40 magic points remain in the circle of participants, the spell fails. Cael ages rapidly until he turns to dust and brittle bones. Without the spell's protective ring the King in Yellow freely attacks the troublesome investigators. In a few moments the fiefdom is absorbed into Carcosa. At this point what action the King in Yellow takes is up to the keeper. The avatar might destroy them, or simply leave and allow them to wander the city of Carcosa as it slowly destroys their minds.

The Ritual Succeeds

If at least 40 magic points remain in the circle, the spell succeeds. The King in Yellow dances around, enraged and thwarted. His prize, the fiefdom of Shereborne, is lost to him. He screeches a horrific howl as he, the phantom city, and the chaos that comes with it are hurled away from the real world and back to his own.

Carcosa Unmade

There is a flash of light and then silence. You wake days later, in bed within the castle of Lord Boniface. It seems you all collapsed, strangely, just af-

ter you were summoned to deliver an apology to the oldest man in Wessex. Others undertook the task for you, only to find that the old Pagan storyteller had died in his sleep the night before. The villages of Derek's Holding, Dunover, and Beeton are whole, places of hard-working peasants tilling the land and living their lives. Was this all a dream?

But you know that is was not. On each of your hands is a scar, almost a brand, shaped like an acorn. Somehow, all the madness, chaos, and death that occurred were unmade.

Despite your joy at reversing so much horror and at bringing the redemption of Cael Greybeard, none of you ever fully recover. Nightmares fill your dreams and feelings of unease fill your days. Each of you becomes plagued by frail health and one by one each of you sickens and dies. Within six years all of you have perished.

Keeper's Note—the investigators pay a heavy price for joining in the spell to dismiss the King in Yellow. Their minds are endlessly assaulted by remembrance of the horrors. The dismissal spell also had a draining effect upon their CON, effectively halving that score. The number of years the investigators live equals their MP -10 years.

SANITY AWARDS

For each insane villager defeated: +1

For defeating the Spawnling of Hastur: +1D4

For defeating the King In Yellow in battle: +1D6

For preventing Carcosa from absorbing Shereborne: +1D6

For delivering the apology to Ceal Greybeard: +1D4

For convincing Cael Greybeard to cast Bardic Dismiss Hastur: +1D6

For taking part in the spell Bardic Dismiss Hastur and reversing all which took place: +1D8.

HERALD OF THE KING PLAYER CHARACTERS



Redwald, Age 27, Male

Profession: Craftsman (Blacksmith)

Birthplace: Shereborne, Wessex, England

Position in Castle: Blacksmith

STR 80	CON 70	SIZ 70	INT 70
POW 60	DEX 60	APP 60	EDU 75
Luck 70	Sanity 60	Build 1	Move 8

Damage Bonus: +1D4

Hit Points: 14

Magic Points: 12

Armor: Medium shield (HP 1D3*), leather & rings (1D6*roll to determine armor effectiveness each time a hit is taken), helmet.

Weapons: Ax, long sword & scabbard.

Skills: Art/Craft (Blacksmith) 55%, Art/Craft (Weaponsmith) 45%, Charm 25%, Fast Talk 45%, Insight 45%, Listen 45%, Natural World 40%, Occult 15%, Own Kingdom 40%, Persuade 25%, Spot Hidden 45%, Status 35%.

Languages: English 75%, French 41%.

Brawl	70% (35/14), damage 1D3+DB
Long Sword	65% (32/13), damage 1D8+DB
Ax	50% (25/10), damage 1D4+DB
Ax (Thrown)	35% (17/7), damage 1D6+1/2 DB, Range 5 yds
Dodge	30% (15/6)
Shield	35% (17/7), damage 1D4+DB

Clothing: Tunic, leather apron, high boots, fur cloak, belt.

Equipment: Small pouch, whetstone, cross, water skin, sack.

Pennies: 30.

NOTES:

BACKSTORY

Personal Description: Rugged appearance, short dark hair, brown eyes and sallow skin.

Ideology/Beliefs: Outwardly Christian, inwardly he still holds with many Pagan beliefs.

Traits: Superstitious.

Marks/Scars: Scarred hands.

Of all the native Saxons in the castle, you hold the highest position. You are master weapons-maker and lead a comfortable life in Lord Boniface's service. Your lord sometimes tasks you with escorting messengers through the countryside, due to your local knowledge. While you might dress Norman and speak passable French, Saxon blood flows through your veins. You are quite superstitious, holding to many Pagan ways.



BACKSTORY

Personal Description: Ungainly, brown hair, brown eyes and sallow skin.

Ideology/Beliefs: Does what's best for business.

Traits: Never one to miss an opportunity.

A Saxon merchant who delivers supplies to the castle, you have been invited to spend the Yule holiday with Lord Boniface. While you have little love for the Norman nobility, they pay good coin for the supplies you bring. You know the region well and have dealings around the locality, thus from time to time Lord Boniface calls upon your service (and keeping the lord happy is good for business).

Dioderus, Age 31, Male

Profession: Small Trader

Birthplace: Shereborne, Wessex, England

Position in Castle: Merchant

STR 75 CON 70 SIZ 75 INT 70
 POW 60 DEX 60 APP 50 EDU 80
 Luck 60 Sanity 60 Build 1 Move 8

Damage Bonus: +1D4

Hit Points: 14

Magic Points: 12

Armor: Leather (cuirbouilli) armor (1D6-1*), medium shield (1D3, *roll to determine armor effectiveness each time a hit is taken).

Weapons: Mace, crossbow, bolt case holding 18 bolts, small knife.

Skills: Accounting 25%, Charm 55%, Drive Horses 50%, Fast Talk 60%, Insight 55%, Library Use 40%, Navigate 50%, Occult 15%, Own Kingdom 45%, Spot Hidden 40%, Status 25%, Stealth 30%, Throw 25%.

Languages: English 80%, French 41%, Trading Speech 31%.

Brawl	40% (20/8), damage 1D3+DB, or knife
Mace	65% (32/13), damage 1D6+DB
Crossbow	65% (32/13), damage 2D6, Range 100 yds
Dodge	30% (15/6)
Shield	45% (22/9), damage 1D4+DB

Clothing: Wool tunic, high fur-lined boots, fur cloak, belt, and hat.

Equipment: Horse and wagon, strongbox, 12 bottles of French wine, flint & steel.

Pennies: 40.

NOTES:



BACKSTORY

Personal Description: Youthful yet grim appearance, short blond hair, blue eyes.

Ideology/Beliefs: Devoutly Christian.

Significant People: Lord Boniface.

Traits: Punctual and likes to get to the point quickly.

Second cousin to Lord Boniface, you are a young and proud Norman warrior. From a long line of fighting men, you're most happy training, hunting, or in battle. Your position at the castle is a comfortable one. You spend your time drilling at arms, or hunting for bandits or sport. When you first arrived in Wessex you thought little of the local Saxons. That opinion has slowly changed, and you have grown to respect a number of the locals. The weapon-maker Redwald, who crafted the fine blade you carry, and the hunter Videric, are two you are not ashamed to call your friends.

Konrad, Age 18, Male

Profession: Free Warrior

Birthplace: Duchy of Normandy, France

Position in Castle: Soldier

STR 70 DEX 60 SIZ 80 INT 65
CON 70 APP 40 POW 65 EDU 85
Luck 55 Sanity 65 Build 1 Move 8

Damage Bonus: +1D4

Hit Points: 15

Magic Points: 13

Armor: Chainmail (1D8*), helmet, medium shield (1D3, *roll to determine armor effectiveness each time a hit is taken).

Weapons: Frankish sword and scabbard, small knife and sheath.

Skills: First Aid 40%, Insight 25%, Intimidate 40%, Natural World 50%, Navigate 30%, Own Kingdom 60%, Ride 55%, Spot Hidden 35%, Status 55%, Stealth 45%, Throw 35%, Track 45%.

Languages: French 85%, English 51%.

Brawl 50% (25/10), damage 1D3+DB, or knife
Frankish Sword 80% (40/16), damage 1D8+1+DB
Dodge 30% (15/6)
Shield 65% (32/13), damage 1D4+DB

Clothing: Fine tunic, fine boots, fine fur cloak, honorary chain of office, belt.

Equipment: Whetstone, sack, pouch, torch (2), flint & steel, hunting horn, cross on chain, suede square for polishing sword and helmet.

Pennies: 10.

NOTES:

WORSHIP OF HASTUR DURING THE DARK AGES

In the Dark Ages, the nature of Hastur cults varied widely. As travel and communication were difficult, groups of cultists carried on independently of one another. Thus their methods and structure varied widely. This was a time when madmen lived as hermits discarded by society. It was an era when nobles plotted endlessly and the politics of court could be as dangerous as a battlefield. These were days of chaos, fear, and hopelessness. It was a time when the worship of He Who Should Not Be Named flourished.

LOCATIONS

Two types of Hastur cults are most prevalent at this point in history. The first are the numerous small cults dedicated to Hastur scattered through both the Arab and Occidental world. These groups seldom boast more than a handful of members, many are insane outcasts. When a worshiper of Hastur stumbles upon such insane wanderers it is a relatively easy task to convert these aimless madmen into a cohesive cult. A single Hastur worshiper can form a body of devoted but insane cultists ready to do the bidding of He Who Should Not Be Named. Such cults gather anywhere they can, in Roman ruins, Germanic cavern systems, the abandoned Parisian catacombs, or in the wilderness. Such groups are called "Covens."

The other sort of Hastur cult during this time is much better organized and infinitely more dangerous. These cults usually infect existing organizations, secretly advancing their aims and spreading their faith, unknown to all around them. Well funded, such cults draw their membership from the upper levels of society. Of this type, the three most powerful existed in Venice, in the city of Cordoba, and in the County of Auvergne. This sort of cult is called a "Court."

AIMS, METHODS, AND ORGANIZATION OF A COVEN

Many of these cults house a mixture of traditional Hastur worship with semi-Christian and Pagan beliefs. Witchcraft, Pagan ritual, sacrifice, and Mythos doctrines are all blended together. The unfocused nature of such groups reflects the sorts of minds their members possess. Their chaotic nature makes

such cults difficult to root out but also limits their real influence and overall success.

Covens usually seek to conduct rituals in an effort to summon byakhee (Demons) and commune with Hastur (Satan). Often such groups attempt to erect a "V" pattern of summoning stones, consecrating each with blood sacrifice. Few covens are ever organized enough to do this successfully, but a number of them inevitably manage to do so. While conducting rituals and rites, abducting sacrifices, and murdering opponents to their cause, coven members go about in dark robes and wear white or pale yellow masks. Many members also wear traditional satanic or Pagan symbols combined with the Yellow Sign, with emblems and their combinations varying from group to group.

These pseudo-satanic Hastur cults are easy to form and easy to replace but often difficult to control. When rooted out, the cult's founder, called a Grand Witch or Warlock, is seldom caught. They normally allow the bulk of their membership to be captured or killed to make good their personal escape. This is often just a temporary setback: covens reform and resume operations nearby, or even in the same area, at a later date. A coven is only truly defeated when its leader is finally dealt with.

AIMS, METHODS, AND ORGANIZATION OF A COURT

Courts form within already-existing associations such as guilds, household courts, and religious organizations. Unlike a coven, whose membership is made up of the lowest levels of society, court cultists are members of society's elite. They hold high status, considerable wealth, and great influence. Aside from this, the greatest weapon of a court is the level of secrecy they operate under.

Courts form when a worshiper of Hastur manages to enter a powerful organization. Once inside, cultists begin sowing discord within the organization, fostering conflict between members, and turning factions against one another. Using their influence, the initial court member seeks to have other Hastur worshipers placed within the organization. Members of courts are usually very intelligent with charming personalities, and good political skills. The weapons of such cultists are not the knife in the dark but the whispered word in the proper (or improper) ear.

The aims of such courts are to sow chaos and reap a harvest of hate, murder, and war. Using

politics, gossip, lies, dalliances, and subtle betrayals, courts can destabilize the most benevolent of groups. Once the members of the household, trading guild, or church are turned against one another, it's simple for the Hastur worshipers within it to operate. Often members of courts are advisors, assistants, and spouses of important members of such groups. Court members seek to become the lady in waiting, the lord's mistress, a trusted advisor, the cardinal's secretary, or the convent's charming new scribe: any position close to a powerful person.

Members of a court usually work several rival factions against one another. For example, Lady Winifred's lady in waiting informs her that her husband is having an affair. At the same time Lord Edward's mistress whispers rumors to him about his wife's involvement with witchcraft. A newly appointed court minstrel then begins flirting with Lady Winifred, tempting her and whispering ways her unfaithful husband could be "dealt with." Meanwhile, the lord's mistress, the lady in waiting, and the minstrel are all members of the same Hastur court. With such methods murders, executions, accusations, and wars are instigated, and all without the cultists personally spilling a single drop of blood.

More than one household court, monastery, or convent has become completely infested with Hastur worshipers. Rooting them out is nearly impossible; as such cultists are masters of intrigue. Usually their presence goes unnoticed, as the chaos and conflict they sow within an organization disrupt its ability to function. Even when investigators learn what is happening within such an organization, just how do they learn who is a Hastur worshiper and who isn't? More importantly, who can they trust?

A SAMPLE CULT CELL

"Court of the Last King"

Hastur Cult in the County of Auvergne

The court of Duke William II is in near total disarray. Duke William rules all of Aquitaine from the capital, Clermont, in the County of Auvergne, France. The ruling houses plot against each other, vice and corruption are everywhere, and even the church leaders are suspected of dark, Pagan practices. Much of this can be traced back to six influential individuals who make up the Hastur cult known as the Court of the Last King.

The leader of this group has been operating in the royal court for several years. Lady Rochele originally entered the royal household as a lady in waiting. She managed to drive a wedge between Duke William and his wife, the Duchess Lucinde. Eventually the couple became estranged, which led to a pair of victories for the cult. The first was the suicide of the Duchess Lucinde, who jumped (some say she was pushed) out of her chamber window. The second was Lady Rochele's wedding to the grieving Duke William.

In her year as Duchess, Rochele has managed to get several other Hastur worshipers appointed to the royal court. Together the Court of the Last King has done much to undermine the archdiocese and promote unrest and discord throughout the county. The recent military action undertaken by those loyal to Bishop Vincent of Poitiers, on the border with Auvergne, presents the cult with a great opportunity. Duchess Rochele and the rest of the Court of the Last King are quietly advising Duke William II to mount a retaliatory strike against the forces of Bishop Vincent. If they succeed in starting this little war, every death will be counted as an offering to He Who Should Not Be Named.

Duchess Rochele, Leader of the Court of the Last King

STR 60 CON 70 SIZ 40 INT 80
POW 90 DEX 70 APP 85 EDU 80
HP: 11 DB: 0 Build 0 Move 9

Sanity: 00

Luck: 50

Magic Points: 8

Fighting 50% (25/10), damage (knife) 1D4

Dodge 35% (17/7)

Armor: None

Skills: Art/Craft (Calligraphy) 50%, Art/Craft (Courtly Dancing) 45%, Art/Craft (Embroidery) 50%, Art/Craft (Singing) 50%, Conceal 45%, Cthulhu Mythos 20%, Charm 70%, Insight 65%, Listen 60%, Persuade 60%, Spot Hidden 30%, Status 70%, Stealth 50%, Throw 60%.

Spells: Summon/Bind Byakhee, Contact Deity/Hastur, Call/Dismiss Hastur, Dominate, Siren's Song, Song of Hastur, Enchant Knife.

The Duchess of the County of Auvergne and wife of Duke William II, Lady Rochele is a slight, incredibly beautiful woman. She is skilled in court politics, using her considerable charm and her well-honed

skills at deception. Her ultimate goal is to plunge Auvergne into total chaos and warfare, in Hastur's name. She wears a gold locket with the Yellow Sign hidden behind her husband's portrait, a ring with a compartment holding a single dose of lethal poison, and an knife concealed on her person. The Duchess Rochelle owns a copy of the *Necronomicon*; an old, worn copy in Greek (which she reads poorly), which she is attempting to translate.

SINISTER SEEDS

- **The Masked Witch**—A coven of Hastur worshipers is operating in the mountains. There they abduct shepherds and lone travelers, sacrificing them to enchant the standing stones in an effort to summon Hastur. The members of the cult are local hermits, all mostly insane, who live in the mountainous wilds. The cult leader is a local nun, Sister Margaret, of the nearby convent of St. Mary. When she travels the mountains conducting rituals with her coven, her face is always hidden behind a pallid mask.
- **The Court of Auvergne**—Emissaries arrive at the court to meet with Duke William II. While there, they run foul of the Court of the Last King. The powerful members of the cult take steps against them, which could be anything from having their reputations ruined, instigating their arrest, arranging an accident, or summoning something inhuman to deal with the meddling investigators. Getting to the source of these attacks will put the political skills of the investigators to the test.



Duchess Rochele

Heir to Carcosa

A SCENARIO FOR END TIMES

PART THREE OF RIPPLES FROM CARCOSA

74

THE UNITED COLONIAL COALITION

In the dark future of 2145, the Earth has fallen to the Great Old Ones and mankind struggles to avoid extinction. Some of the last free humans have built settlements on Mars and its moons, dreaming of a day when they can reclaim the Earth for mankind, and return to the cradle of humanity. But these are not the only humans living in space. Hidden amid the asteroids between Jupiter and Mars exists a group of colonies, home to not only humans but also to a population of Elder Things and Yithian castaways as well. Amidst the tumbling asteroids, unknown to those on Mars or Earth, these races have been living and working together for more than a century. They call themselves the United Colonial Coalition, or the *Colonies* for short.

A BRIEF HISTORY

In 1953 a man named Joshua Clark apparently suffered a nervous breakdown. After a few months of recovery it seemed his personality was much changed, and he began using his wealth and influence to travel the world. The body of Joshua Clark had come under the control of the Great Race of Yith.

This particular Yithian agent had previously been studying mankind during the year 2042 and knew what the fate of mankind was to be. As he was conducting his mission of gathering the history of mankind during the 1950s, “Joshua Clark” suddenly collapsed. Far back in time, a rampaging Shoggoth had destroyed three Yithian bodies. These particular bodies contained human consciousnesses, which had been switched by time-traveling Yithian agents. One of the consciousnesses killed was the human

personality of the actual Joshua Clark. When the Yithian in control of Joshua Clark’s body awoke, the links with his native body and time period were severed. He had become trapped in human form.

By 1956 “Joshua” located the other two Yithian castaways trapped in human form, both of whom had been conducting missions in earlier periods. Pooling their knowledge, they realized that mankind was going to face extinction in about a hundred years. The three Yithians had developed a strange “love” (curiosity?) for the human race, made stronger by their current state of being trapped in human form. They formed a plan: the three of them would no longer put their efforts toward the study of the human race. They would, instead, seek to save it.

With access to nearly all of human history, the three Yithians amassed great wealth and influence. Many important discoveries in medicine and technology on Earth between the years 1962 and 1998 were the work of these three beings. They began using magic to extend their lives and to create several magical gates that linked the Earth and a single large asteroid between Mars and Jupiter. They then provided ancient and arcane lore to the mi-go in return for their work in hollowing out this interplanetary object. Once a cavity was created, technological materials were transported to the asteroid via the gates, and a livable, self-sufficient base was established. The first colony, called Ark, was founded on September 4th, 1970.

In 1972 the trio started to recruit colonists. They approached selected humans: scientific minds, top physical specimens, and those with superior genetic potential. They explained to these candidates what they were and what the future held for the human race. These prospective recruits were offered a chance to become part of a new human society being formed away from Earth. The majority of those approached refused, had their memories erased,

and returned to their normal lives. A few accepted, and by 1981 there were 335 humans living in the asteroid colony or working with the Yithians on Earth.

In 1985 strange reports leaked out of the Soviet Union. The stories said that Russian scientists had encountered an unusual creature near the Arctic Circle. Though it seemed, to most, to be another tabloid fabrication, some took the report very seriously. The Yithians knew the description of the creature matched that of an elder thing. Acting quickly, the Yithians and their human allies dispatched a team to the area. The team made peaceful contact with a small group of the elder things, staying just a step ahead of both the KGB and other interested agencies.

These fourteen elder things had only recently awakened from stasis chambers to find that not only had their civilization completely collapsed, but that nearly all evidence of it had vanished. The team explained the gravity of their situation and offered them sanctuary. Before the Russians could close the noose on the contact team or the elder things' hideout, the team had escaped to Ark.

By the early 1990s things were going well. The colonies had expanded to four asteroid bases, spacecraft were being constructed, and the combined population had reached 1,023 individuals. The three races had formed a government they named the United Colonial Coalition. Contact with the mi-go was limited, due to the distrust the elder things felt toward them. Many of them still had fresh memories of open warfare against the mi-go in Earth's distant past. Trade was (and still is) sometimes conducted with the mi-go, but little more. The colonies developed a fusion of human, Yithian, elder thing, and, reluctantly, mi-go technologies.

In 2037 the colonies reached a point where they were self-sufficient. The Colonial government ordered the destruction of all gates linking the colonies to Earth, transferred the last of its personnel off planet, and severed all contact with Earth. They knew the end was about to begin.

In 2045 the city of R'lyeh rose from the ocean floor, and in 2055 the Great Old Ones were freed. The last transmission from Earth was broadcast a year later. Earth was lost but, in the asteroid colonies and on Mars, mankind survived.

The year is now 2147. Earth belongs to the Great Old Ones and Mars is home to a small population of fewer than three thousand free-living

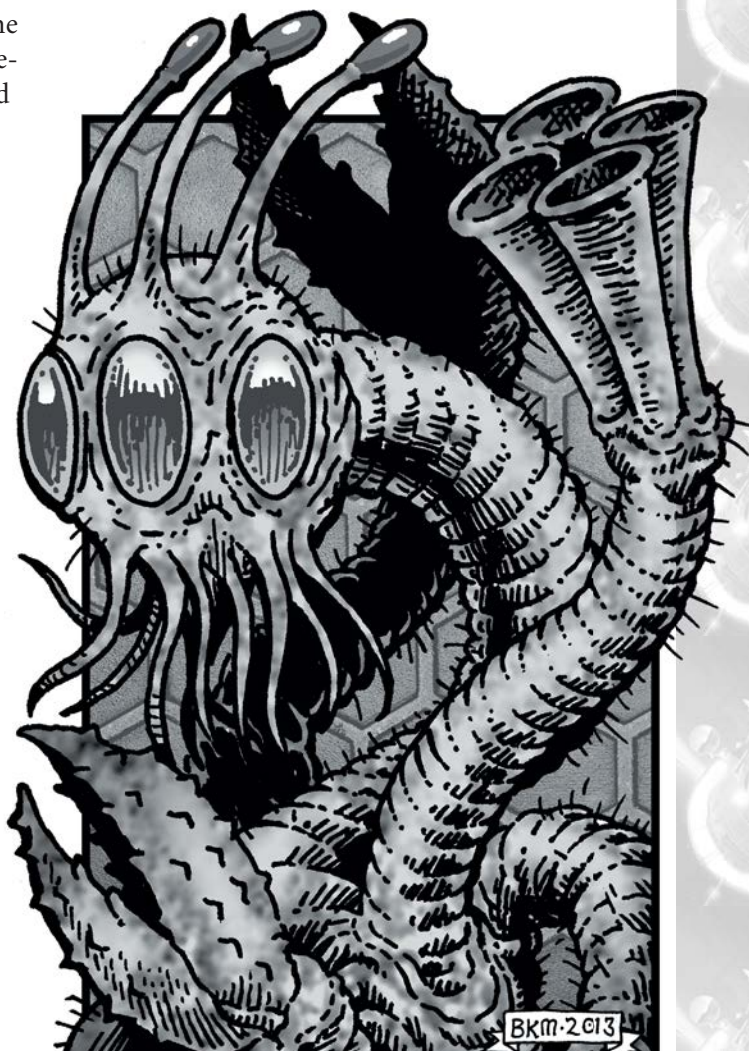
humans. In the asteroid belt there are currently 20 asteroid colonies, home to just over 9,000 humans, Yithians, and elder things. The founding colonies are now more than 150 years old.

LOCATIONS

The colonies lie in the asteroid belt between the planets Mars and Jupiter. There are twenty colonies, varying widely in size, population, and purpose. Some colonies exist solely for mining, while others focus on scientific research or are engineering centers; these usually have fewer than 200 individuals living within them. Other asteroids serve as population centers, containing vast hydroponic farms, universities, and recreational areas. These can be home to more than a thousand colonists. Some examples of colonies are:

- New Brooklyn—The largest population center, home to 12,000 colonists.

Yithian



- Berlinton—An industrial center and the colonies' main shipbuilding facility, with a population of 200 colonists.
- Rockhaven—A high-security scientific research center with a staff of 150 full-time live-in colonists.
- Mount Sinai—A center for medical and psychological research, home to about 350 colonists.

AIMS AND METHODS

The aim of the colonies is simple: the survival of both the human and elder thing races (the Great Race of Yith was never in jeopardy). To achieve this goal, the Colonial government enforces some strict rules. Colonists are forbidden from using Mythos magic, researching Mythos topics, or attempting to contact the Earth. The colonists have been free of the taint of the Great Old Ones for more than 150 years—or so they think—and the United Colonial Coalition wants to keep it that way. It's a firm belief among the colonists that if the dark forces now in control of the Earth ever discovered them, they would be destroyed. Remaining undetected is the first priority of all Colonial operations.

There is a secret project being carried out by the top scientific minds in the colonies. Called Project Origami, it was launched in 2084 with the goal of creating a device capable of folding space. This, theoretically, would allow instantaneous travel over vast distances without having to cross the intervening space. If successful, the plan is to use this technology to migrate the entire Colonial population to a new galaxy. There, light years away from the Earth and the malignant forces of the Great Old Ones, the colonists hope to settle upon a new home world. The dream of a fresh start on a new world, one circling some faraway star, is something all three races share. While originally seeming like a fantasy, after seventy years the project is beginning to make some exciting breakthroughs. In the last 20 years several key discoveries have been made and the project leaders estimate they could have a functioning prototype ready for testing in the next 25 to 30 years.

ORGANIZATION

A counsel of both human and elder thing representatives runs the United Colonial Coalition. The prime minister is Joshua Clark, the Yithian founder and architect of the colonies. He is viewed by most

as a George Washington figure, a position he is uncomfortable with at times. The colonies are tightly controlled and maintain a constant wartime mentality. Colonials are suspicious of Earth, paranoid about the possibility of outside attacks, and nationally proud of what they've created floating among the rocks between Mars and Jupiter.

NEW TECHNOLOGIES

Colonial Spacecraft, Rock-Skimmer Class: The Colonial Rock-Skimmer has a hull length of 80 feet and a single powerful engine, giving it a high rate of acceleration/deceleration. They are designed to maximize maneuverability, as Rock-Skimmers operate mainly within the asteroid belt. Each ship is controlled by a supercomputer, which falls just short of being self-aware. A Rock-Skimmer is piloted via a neurodigital interface that links the pilot's brain waves to the ship's control system. This allows pilots to react more quickly and operate the vessel virtually. (See **Virtual Dreamlands** for more details.) The Rock-Skimmer hull has been adapted and modified into four separate versions, or classes:

- **Crane**—A scientific research vessel and holding a crew of ten.

The Rock-Skimmer weaves through an asteroid belt!



VIRTUAL DREAMLANDS

The Colonials use a technology that allows them to mentally interact with advanced computer systems. Almost everyone has an interface port surgically installed behind their right ear, allowing them to enter a virtual system. A human linked in such a way can disconnect from the computer system at any time. Connected people who are suddenly disconnected by others suffer no ill effects.

A human mind linked with a computer in this way enters a virtual reality. Colonial programmers create virtual realities that resemble the asteroid bases they are most familiar with. These virtual environments are essentially miniature “Dreamlands”, where the user interacts with the computer core as if it were another sentient entity. Most advanced computer system avatars in the colonies appear as pleasant-looking humans. These virtual representations of the computer’s consciousness usually speak in monotone and possess little or no personality. The majority of colonial computers are not self aware, so meaningful interaction is minimal.

Most humans cannot remain plugged in to a V-Dreamland for very long because the direct stimulation of the user’s sensorimotor cortex can begin to damage delicate neurons; the time limit is about 10 minutes per 5 points of INT an investigator possesses. After this, a person begins to get severe headaches and must disconnect. There are exceptions to this in the colonial population, but they are rare (see **Virtual Dreamers** nearby).

DEATH IN THE VIRTUAL DREAMLANDS

This is something that the user will be completely unfamiliar with. Colonial programmers have never created a system that would actually harm a person’s virtual projection; even combat simulators simply have the person forcibly, yet harmlessly, ejected from a system to indicate a death.

The humans who programmed K2-PS187 (see **Heir to Carcosa**), who are worshipers of Hastur, were not so kind. The hazards they programmed into the Virtual Reality system were not meant to harm the users, that being a pleasant coincidence, but were created to terrorize the main computer into obedience.

Users killed in the V-Dreamlands mentally disconnect from the system. They receive a **Sanity** loss of 1D10 points and are unable to reenter a V-Dreamlands system for 1 day per 5 INT points they possess. This reflects the greater level of belief their minds had in what they were experiencing virtually.

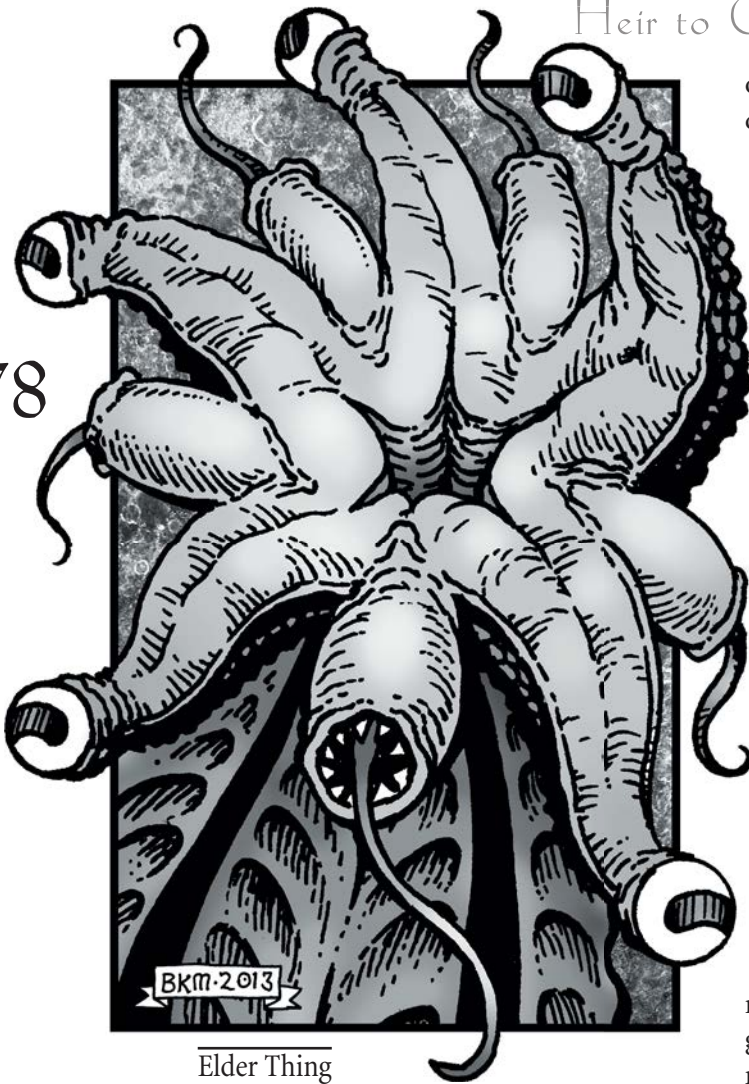
VIRTUAL DREAMERS

People whose brains allow extended visits to a V-Dreamland are called Virtual Dreamers. V-Dreamers always have a much larger linkage port surgically implanted in their right temple. Only about one in 200 people turn out to be a V-Dreamer; precisely why is a topic of much research, but currently remains a mystery. This segment of the population can link to large, powerful computer systems for extended periods and can do things like complex theoretical extrapolation, manage entire computer networks of asteroid colonies, or pilot spacecraft. Such virtual environments are larger and the virtual manifestation of the computers more detailed.

The downside to being a V-Dreamer is addiction. A V-Dreamer’s brain becomes attuned to the ultra-high speed of sensory input, and the amount of data received. Once they are disconnected from a system they begin to experience something akin to sensory deprivation. A disconnected V-Dreamer loses 1 point of Sanity every twelve hours, slowly slipping into insanity unless they are reconnected. These effects, which V-Dreamers call the “Awakes”, are halted by a drug called VirtEqual, which must be ingested daily. The side effects of the drug are mild but can include feelings of drowsiness and detachment and difficulty concentrating. VirtEqual had no euphoric effects.

NEW SKILL: VIRTUAL DREAMING

Much like the Dreaming skill (see *H.P. Lovecraft’s The Dreamlands*), this allows the user to make minor alterations in the virtual realities they enter. The user’s basic percentile equals one point for each 5 points of INT. This skill increases like a standard skill, but not from prolonged contact as per the standard Dreaming skill; as the human body does not eat or drink while connected, it would be fatal to remain in a V-Dream for substantial amounts of time. Otherwise this skill functions exactly the same way as the Dreaming skill, with identical MP costs for alterations and creations made while in a Virtual Dreamland. There is no Dream Lore skill, as each computer system is essentially a new and independent miniature Dreamland.



Elder Thing

- **Dolphin**—A transport holding a crew of four with room for four more passengers for the dignitary model, and 20 in the workhorse configuration.
- **Pony**—A cargo ship holding crew of four.
- **Kestrel**—A militarized vessel with a crew of six.

The UCC Gladius, Colonial Rock-Skimmer: The Gladius is one of only five Kestrels in the Colonial arsenal. The ship has been in operation for 14 years but is regularly refitted and maintained. She is state-

of-the-art for the colonies, combining human, elder thing, and Yithian technologies. Kestrels are not spacious or comfortable to live in, being designed to utilize every possible bit of space. These conditions mirror the military submarines of Earth's 20th and 21st centuries. Each of the five Colonial Kestrels is armed slightly differently; the Gladius is equipped with a forward-firing rail gun and two torpedoes.

Rail Gun

This weapon fires clusters of magnetically-launched explosives, much like cluster bombs. It is designed to open multiple holes in the hulls of enemy vessels, exposing their environments to the vacuum of space. To a physical target, a rail gun would do 12D6 points of damage. The Gladius has enough ammunition to fire this weapon five times.

The pilot and the person manning the rail gun combine their scores to create an average of the two in determining the chances to hit. The Rail Gunner must roll under the average of the pilot's **Pilot Spacecraft** skill and his or her own **Rail Gunnery** score. For example, the ship's pilot maneuvers into attack position and the ship's gunner readies to fire. The gunner has a skill of 50% in rail gunnery; the pilot has a skill of 70%. The gunner must then roll under a 60% (the average) to successfully hit the target.

Torpedoes

These are high-explosive, computer-guided missiles with a shaped fusion warhead. The torpedoes are mounted on the outside of the hull in specially-shielded pods. It is not possible to remove these weapons unless they are fired, and it's impossible to detonate them while they're attached to the ship. These weapons are computer directed. The torpedo controller must make a **Computer Use** roll to score

Weapons Table

Name	Shots per Round	Damage	Range (Yards)	Ammo	Malfunction Number
E-1 Pistol	1	2D6+2	15	6 shorts per charge	89
E-2 Rifle	1	4D6	15	10 shots per charge	80

a direct hit, but even a near miss could cause serious damage. Keepers should use their judgment in the amount of damage such a weapon might cause, but a good range would be 10D10 to 15D10 points of damage.

The UCC Gladius has five main compartments:

- 1) **The Control Room**—Pilot chair, main computers, communication and weapons consoles; this is the nerve center of the ship.
- 2) **Engineering**—The compartment closest to the engines, with technical workshop.
- 3) **Crew Quarters**—Where the crew sleep and eat; there are two bunks and a head here, (there is no galley on board; the crew lives on meal-packs while on duty).
- 4) **Weapons locker**—This walk-in closet is where weapons, armor, spacesuits, and thruster packs are kept; any additional cargo is also stored here.
- 5) **The Airlock**—A reinforced chamber with two doors for moving between the ship's enclosed environment and the vacuum outside; a retractable landing ramp can also be deployed from here.

NEW WEAPONS

Colonial Modified Weaponry

Most weapons in the colonies are not much different from those used on Earth more than a century earlier. These, however, are newer versions, which have been modified for use in space. Automatic weapons used in the colonies have a self-contained atmosphere that allows the combustible mixture that propels the bullets to ignite. They are therefore usable in a vacuum. While very reliable, these weapons deliver considerable recoil, a problem for the colonists, who are nearly always in a low to zero-G environment. A great deal of training is needed to master the recoil effects of projectile weaponry, involving bracing techniques and a master of zero-G inertia control. However, a newer, experimental type of weapon system is currently under field-testing—the Colonial E-1 Electric Pistol and the Colonial E-2 Electric Rifle.

The Colonial E-1 Pistol and E-2 Rifle

These weapons are currently experimental prototypes. The E-1 and E-2 employ a combination of human and non-human technologies into a weapon system, utilizing electricity. Both the E-1 Pistol and E-2 Rifle have the benefit of delivering no recoil, which is very useful when being employed under low- to zero-G conditions. The electrical damage caused by these weapons also penetrates most forms of personal body armor.

For all their benefits, these weapons are still in the developmental stage. Both versions are bulky and oversized, and carry only a limited number of charges. The E-1 and E-2 cannot be reloaded unless they are taken apart, recharged, and reassembled; a process taking 1D4+2 hours and a successful **Repair Electronics** roll. The weapons are also unreliable, reflected in their high malfunction rate. A malfunctioning E-1 or E-2 needs to be carefully repaired, a process requiring 1D3 hours and a successful **Repair Electronics** roll. A few Colonial marines, who have been field testing these weapons, use them as if they were black powder muskets, carrying multiple E-1's and tossing the drained sidearm aside and drawing a second fully-charged one rather than halt combat to reload. This is a violation of official protocol.

INTRODUCTION

Read aloud or paraphrase the following:

The Gladius glided through space soundlessly like a shark swimming in the dark depths of the ocean. Not that any of you have ever seen a shark, or the oceans they lived in. In fact, none of you have ever seen Earth, as each of you were born in the asteroid belt. Earth, once the cradle of humanity, was

HERE WE GO AGAIN

If keepers are running "Heir to Carcosa" as part of the *Ripples from Carcosa* campaign, the investigators get a flash of having seen this sigil twice before, while they were together on Earth. They see themselves dressed in various clothing, fashions common on Earth one and two thousand years ago. The investigators realize such memories are impossible just as they are 100% convinced that what they are feeling and remembering is true. They've all seen that symbol before, and it has never led to good things.

lost to the Great Old Ones in 2055, almost a century ago. For the moment, this ship—the UCC *Gladius*—is your home.

The “UCC” stands for *United Colonial Coalition*, an alliance of three races living and working in the asteroid belt between Mars and Jupiter. Here, in dozens of bases throughout the belt, humans, elder things, and Yithians coexist peacefully. There is only a trio of Yithians, unfortunate explorers who lost their natural bodies in Earth’s distant past. Trapped in the human forms they occupied, the three banded together to become the architects and founders of the colonies. A dozen or so elder things were recruited to the colonies after being awakened from an Arctic outpost where they had lain dormant for hundreds of thousands of years. Now there are 364 members of their race. Humans make up the bulk of the colonies, with an estimated population of about 12,000.

The Colonies have three major goals:

- 1) **Remain Undetected**—Earth is lost. The Great Old Ones rule now over vast continents where human worshipers oversee what is left of the population. It is vital that Earth never learn of the colonies in the asteroid belt.
- 2) **Preserve Humanity**—This is the reason the colonies have been formed. The human race was on the verge of extinction and the Yithian founders of the colonies took steps to preserve the species. For almost a century the colonies have been a testament to their efforts.
- 3) **Project Origami**—Specific details of this secret project are known only to a few. For roughly 70 years, a scientific research program to create a device able to fold space has been underway. Once completed, the plan is for the citizens of the colonies to escape this galaxy and migrate to a new one. There, thousands of light years away from the corruption of Earth and the Great Old Ones, mankind will find a new home world. A fresh start, under clear skies on a new planet circling a distant star, is a vision shared by all three races. While at first seeming like a dream, after seven decades the project is bearing fruit. The last 20 years have seen some tantalizing discoveries. Project directors believe they could have a prototype device ready for testing in the next 25 years.

You, the crew of UCC *Gladius*, are on a mission vital to Project Origami. Your destination is *Calisto*, one of the Jovian moons. There you will dock

RELATIONS WITH THE MI-GO

In ancient times, the elder things and mi-go fought savage wars, so little trust exists between the two races. The elder things and Yithians in the colonies have informed their human allies about the mi-go’s long history of interference in human evolution and affairs. For the mi-go, the loss of Earth to the Great Old Ones was a serious blow to their operations. They are willing to trade with the colonies for the items they most desperately need. However, the mi-go have little love for humans.

at a space station called Traders Point. It is a delicate mission and a secret one: conduct trade with yet another non-human race, the mi-go.

In your cargo hold are 70 canisters of various gasses the mi-go desire, a special device used in filtering and refining such elements, and a digital blueprint for creating such devices. In return, the mi-go have agreed to provide you with scientific data vital to Project Origami, information that could advance research and development by five years or more.

Most Colonials know nothing of the mi-go or of Project Origami. You are different; you’re the elite, some of the best and brightest of your generation. It will be the actions of you and those like you that will save or doom the last free human population in the solar system.

Communications picks up a coded message from the tiny space station just ahead. The message reads: PROCEED TO DOCK. OUR DELEGATION IS AWAITING THE EXCHANGE.

Keeper’s Information

The mi-go have additional vital information for the investigators. They know that another human ship is currently traveling through the asteroid belt. The mi-go have determined that this unknown vessel will pass near many of the colony settlements, well within range of their sensors. The mi-go are willing to give the investigators the ship’s last location, speed, and heading.

This ship, a human vessel from Earth operated by worshippers of Hastur, is called *Tatterdemon*. It recently undertook a mission to rendezvous with a near-Earth asteroid they’ve named *Fragment*. This asteroid is actually the prison of a being called *Tassilda*. She is the daughter of *Camillia*,

princess of Yhtill, and of Hastur's Avatar, the King in Yellow. The asteroid is a fragment of the city of Carcosa, hurled out into space with the imprisoned Tassilda within it.

After claiming Yhtill and absorbing it into Carcosa, the King in Yellow took the insane princess Camillia as a consort. Before her death, the princess bore the Great Old One three children, who became fosterlings of Hastur. They were two boys, named Thothut and Tasylock, and a girl named Tassilda. While normal-seeming at first, the children developed many of the physical characteristics and powers of their father. This transformation was viewed by their mother as yet another of Carcosa's many corruptions. It was the final blow to Camillia's mind, causing her heart to stop from despair and grief.

For some time the royal trio lived with their sire in Carcosa, powerful evil beings serving loyally at the foot of their father. But soon, like their mother, uncle, and grandmother before them, the princes and princess of Carcosa began to whisper, squabble, and plot. They had dreams of power and succession. Eventually Thothut and Tasylock unwisely moved against their father. Hastur was aware of the plot all along, and easily avoided their traps. In a way too horrible to describe, he destroyed both of his sons. His daughter Tassilda, who knew of her siblings' plot but refused to take part in it, was spared. But she had done nothing to warn her father, choosing to wait and see if they plot was successful before committing to a course of action. For her silent betrayal, Tassilda was punished.

The princess was forced to write out the story of what had happened on the walls of her home in Carcosa. It was, of course, written in the form of a play, as the author shared the blood of her father. This account became a sequel to *The King In Yellow*, entitled *Heir to Carcosa*.

Her father, He Who Should Not Be Named, then told her the following: "Had you come to me with your desires, I would have given you the powers to claim your own kingdoms. I would have made you a Great Old One, as I am, and given you cities as grand as Carcosa. For your brothers' treachery, they suffered an eternity of pain and torment. For your arrogant complacency I now banish you. You have not the power to free yourself, but in time others will release you. When this happens, call upon me. If you summon me with humility and respect, as befits an Heir to Carcosa, I shall grant you all that you desire." She was then sealed into her home,

which the Great Old One tore free of Carcosa and hurled out into space.

The crew of Tatterdemalion managed to rendezvous with the asteroid Fragment, land a team upon it, and enter the temple. They scanned the story written in alien hieroglyphs from the temple walls, uploaded the images, and ordered their computer to begin a translation. They then destroyed the imprisoning sigils on the inner chambers and freed Tassilda. Expecting to be rewarded, the team

GLADIUS DAMAGE TABLE

1D4 for Part One: Callisto / 1D6 for Part Five: Fragment

1) **Landing gear/docking module compressed**—Non-essential system, two-hour repair.

2) **Short circuit, electronic systems damaged**—Backup system in place. Non-essential system, four-hour repair.

3) **Hull integrity compromised**—Section of hull weakened. Essential system, six-hour repair.

4) **Minor Hull Breach**—Emergency systems engage to seal the breach. Vital system, 12-hour repair.

5) **Major Hull Breach**—Ship begins to decompress; a **Repair Mechanical** roll is required immediately or ship decompresses in 15 minutes. Critical system. If initial repair roll is successfully made to stop decompression, this is a 16-hour repair. If initial repair fails, this is a 40-hour repair that requires a spacewalk of 10 hours.

6) **Crash**—The ship has impacted violently while trying to land. Both the hull and engines suffer significant damage. The hull decompresses within 1D10 minutes and requires a 60-hour repair. The main engines require a 40-hour repair. If any of the repair rolls fail, the investigator must make a **Luck** roll; if failed, that system is damaged beyond repair. It is possible to repair the hull but not the engines. Should this occur, the ship cannot lift off but may be used as shelter. If both repair attempts fail, the ship is effectively destroyed in the crash.

- **Non-Essential System**—Ship can operate without repairs.
- **Essential System**—Ship can operate without repairs for only 2D10 hours before repairs become necessary.
- **Vital System**—Ship can operate at minimal levels and repairs must be made immediately.
- **Critical System**—Ship is unable to operate at any level and repairs must be made immediately.

of cultist explorers were instead slaughtered. Tatterdemalion swiftly withdrew before the daughter of Hastur could attack their ship. Content that such were the risks one took worshipping gods of pure chaos, they did not mourn their fallen companions. They set a course back for Earth, considering their mission to have been a success. They had freed Tassilda, the daughter of Hastur, who might soon be elevated by her father to become a new Great Old One.

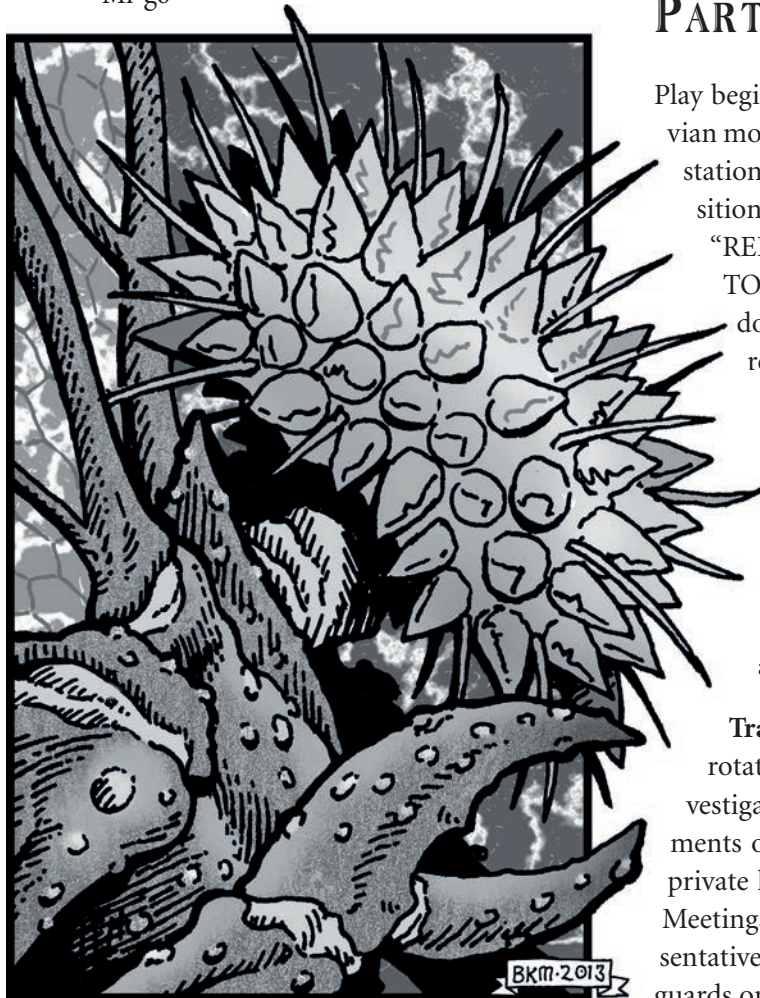
Unfortunately for the cultists, the computer on their vessel is a cybernetic system. The computer, named K2-PS187, is made from the linked organic brains of seven children captured by cultists back in 2046. As the computer translated the alien runes and learned the story of “Heir to Carcosa,” the knowledge caused it to go insane. Malfunctions began happening all over the ship, slowly growing more and more serious. The main computer was shut down after several fatal accidents. Tatterdemalion is currently in poor shape. Its main computer is

offline, and power and life support are now operating at minimal levels.

Meanwhile, Tassilda drained the minds of the slain cultists and obtained her bearings. After her long imprisonment, she had learned her lesson. Tassilda called out to her father for assistance with humble deference, and currently waits for him in her home, the near-Earth asteroid called Fragment.

Once father and daughter are reunited, Hastur intends to bestow upon Tassilda all the powers of a Great Old One, and give her dominion over a new kingdom. To forever remind his child of her place, this kingdom will be much like her prison, made up of stones floating in space. The kingdom is the United Colonial Coalition. With the powers she is about to inherit, Tassilda will turn the colonies into a haunted, nightmarish place, much like Carcosa. That is, unless the investigators can once more do what they have done twice before in past lives. For the third time, the investigators must thwart the machinations of He Who Should Not Be Named.

Mi-go



PART ONE—CALLISTO

Play begins as the investigators approach to the Jovian moon Callisto. They must dock with the space station in orbit there. Once the *Gladius* is in position, a transmission is sent from the station: “RELEASE VESSEL CONTROLS FOR AUTOMATED DOCKING.” Investigators may do this or they may dock manually, which requires a **Pilot Spacecraft** roll. If this roll is failed, *Gladius* collides with the station. The pilot must then roll 1D4 on the *Gladius* Damage Table (see box). The space station, called **Traders Point**, is rather small and has no weapons mounted on it. It serves as a mutual embassy, a no-man’s-land constructed solely for meetings such as this.

Traders Point Station—This station’s slow rotation grants it a modest gravity of 0.6g. Investigators have access to only three compartments of the station: the Colonial docking bay, a private lounge with a lavatory, and the cargo bay. Meetings between the mi-go and Colonial representatives are usually tense, the presence of armed guards on both sides commonplace.

THE MISSION BEGINS

Once the investigators arrive and enter Traders Point they are directed by flashing lights to a door into the cargo bay. Once within, they are met by four mi-go. The mi-go appear as small, slender, non-threatening humanoids with large eyes and round, bald heads. Investigators making a **Knowledge** roll realize that this is not their normal form but a manufactured disguise they often use when dealing with humans. If asked to stop using it they will; they can deactivate a holographic projector on their bodies to appear as normal mi-go. This, however, causes the investigators to roll a **Sanity** check.

Mi-Go (4)

STR 55 CON 50 SIZ 55 INT 65
 POW 65 DEX 70 APP -- EDU --
 HP: 10 DB: 0 Build 0 Move 7/13 Flying

Attacks: 2

Fighting 45% (22/9), damage 1D6

Electric Gun* 65% (32/13), damage 1D10 (target immobilized for number of round equal to damage plus must make CON roll or fall unconscious for 1D6 rounds.

Dodge 35% (17/7)

*Three are armed with electric guns.

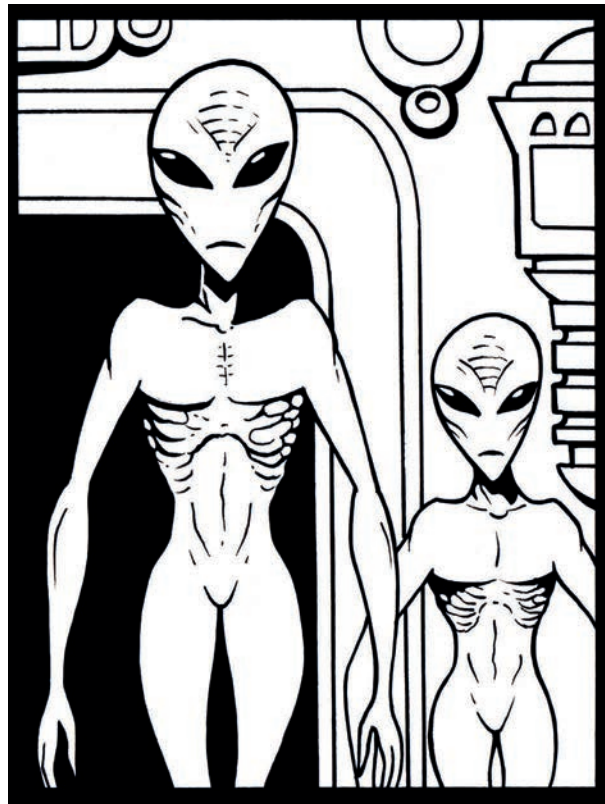
Armor: None, but their extraterrene body causes all impaling weapons to do minimum damage. Three wear bio-armor (8 points vs. blows, flames, electricity).

Spells: None.

Sanity Loss: 0/1D6 (for natural form only, no loss if seen in disguise).

While three wear armor and carry weapons, the fourth is unarmed and wears no armor, an action meant to help foster trust. This mi-go speaks in a whispering, buzzing, insect-like English, welcoming the Colonial delegation to Traders Point.

The mi-go greatly desire the canisters of chemicals the humans have to offer, as well as the filtering device and its specifications. One of the three armed mi-go carries the three data disks the investigators require. The mi-go ask for eighty-five canisters, pretending that amount was the agreed-upon number (the actual agreement was for seventy), and try to withhold one of the disks. A successful **Persuade** or **Intimidate** roll clears this up, as will a steadfast refusal to alter the original agreement. The mi-go are testing their Colonial counterparts but will not allow such posturing to jeopardize their mission.



The mi-go appear as thin humanoid aliens

When the agreement is made the investigators are given the data disks. As they verify that the information is what they were sent for, the mi-go request delivery of their cargo from the Gladius onto the station. The mi-go take random samples from about a dozen of the canisters for analysis. They also examine the blueprints and filtration devices. Once they verify that all is at it should be, they announce that the agreement has been upheld, signaling the end of the trading mission. However, the mi-go delegation immediately opens a new, and unexpected, negotiation.

The leader of these strange beings speaks, "We offer our thanks to the Colonial delegation for this successful trade of technology and information. We hope to conduct further trade in the future. We now offer additional information to you. Possession of this data could prove vital to the survival of your colonies. This is not a threat I assure you. We desire nothing but peaceful coexistence with our neighbors. We must stress that time is a factor. Are you authorized to conduct further negotiations for this information?"

NEW NEGOTIATIONS

The investigator Andrew Fisk is a Colonial diplomat and authorized to conduct mid-level negotiations. If he agrees to begin negotiations for this information, one of the mi-go goes to a console and begins working. A view screen drops down from the ceiling and displays surveillance images along with some data. Should a successful **Intelligence** roll be made, investigators realize the mi-go are keeping the colonies under close observation, a minor violation of earlier treaties.

The images show an unfamiliar vessel moving through space. As the magnification increases, the scale of the ship is revealed to be quite large, maybe four times the size of the Colonial Rock-Skimmer. The investigators can make out the shapes of portholes and hatches clearly showing signs of this being an unfamiliar design built for human use. On one image the investigators see a large Yellow Sign painted upon the hull of the ship, testing their **Sanity** for 0/1D6 points.

The alien diplomat buzzes excitedly as it motions towards the screen. "This human ship," it explains, "appears to be currently returning to Earth from somewhere above the ecliptic plane, beyond the orbit of what you call Neptune. We do not know where it has been or what its mission was, but evidence points to it having been constructed on Luna. Our intelligence indicates a construction project underway on the surface of the Earth's moon four years ago. We believe it was the construction of this vessel.

"We are willing to give our Colonial friends all of the data we've collected on this vessel, including its speed, heading, and last known position. One thing I will inform you of without compensation is that you will want this information. This ship will pass within what we believe is scanning range of one or more of your settlements within the next seventy-two hours.

"Are you interested in this information? Will you hear our terms? Do you wish to consult your superiors?"

If the investigators contact their superiors, they are ordered to obtain the information. UCC mission control advises them not to cause an incident that might jeopardize relations with the mi-go. The investigators are also warned to be on their guard and release no classified information that might be of military value.

TATTERDEMALION SPOTTED

If the investigators fail to acquire the data from the mi-go about the Earth ship, a Colonial mining ship, Maul Seven, spots the Tatterdemalion an hour later. The Colonial vessel transmits all of their scans to the Gladius and the Colonial Navy. This gives investigators the same information the mi-go had offered to sell them. The crew of Maul Seven report that they believe their ship must have been detected by the mystery ship as well, as it made minor course corrections to parallel them for several minutes. The mystery vessel makes no attempt to intercept the mining ship.

The crew of Maul Seven dump cargo and flee the area at best possible speed. They head away from the Colonial territory just in case they are being tracked. With this information, the investigators should be back on track. They only have seven hours to intercept the ship, as opposed to eight. Fortunately for the Colonists, the Tatterdemalion does not have long-range communications to report their findings back on Earth, due to the emergency shutdown of their main computer. Nonetheless, even a transmission sent at sub-light-speed will eventually reach Earth, dooming the Colonists, so the Tatterdemalion must be intercepted before communications of any sort can be transmitted.

The Terms

The mi-go desire 200 human ova, along with sperm samples from at least three different human males. What they intend to do with such material they will not say. If asked, their diplomat replies, "Such queries are not logical. We require this material. You require this information. An exchange is logical and mutually beneficial." Just why the mi-go desire this material is up to individual keepers to decide. This could provide an ideal lead-in to a future investigation but has no bearing on the events of "Heir to Carcosa."

The mi-go are flexible with a successful **Persuade** roll. They are willing to make the exchange for 100 ova and sperm samples from two males. Unless agreement is made, the investigators do not get the data. If they attempt to use violence, the data disks are destroyed by the mi-go in the firefight that ensues. The mysterious human ship cannot be located without the data. The vessel is a very small needle in an infinitely large haystack. If the investigators fail to obtain the information from the mi-

go, keepers should see **Tatterdemalion Spotted** in *Part Two—Gladius*.

Should an agreement be reached, the mi-go offer to conduct the medical procedure to harvest the organic material. Alternatively, the investigators can obtain the samples themselves and turn them over to the mi-go. With current medical techniques and the automated equipment onboard the Gladius, removing the ova is a simple procedure, requiring a successful **Medicine** roll. The sperm samples are even easier to obtain and do not require a roll of any sort.

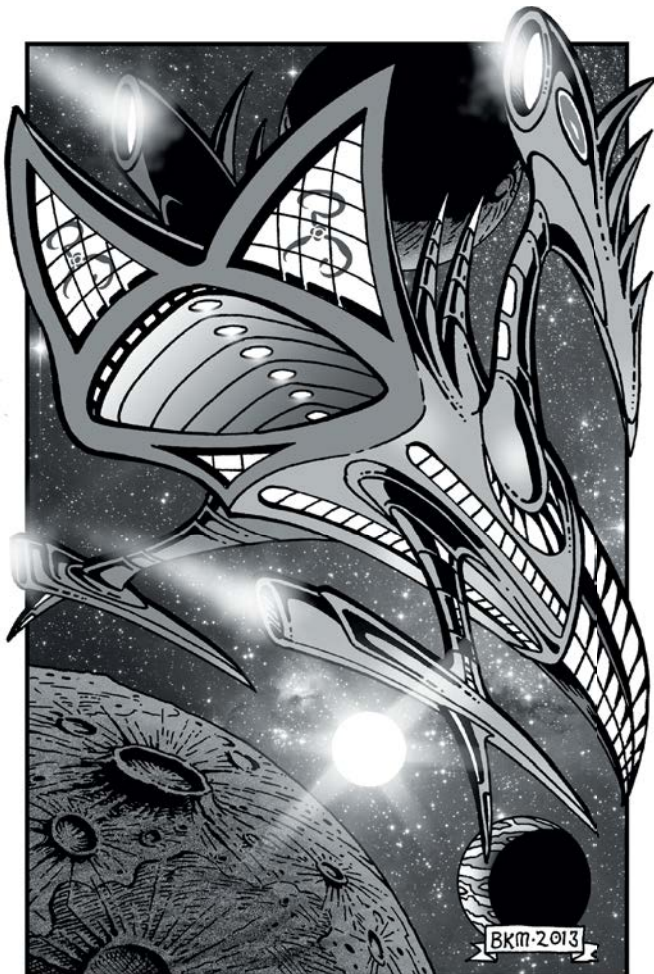
If the mi-go conduct the procedure, they reluctantly allow one human observer. They put the human subject(s) to sleep and use strange implements to remove the organic material they require. Subject(s) may refuse being sedated during the procedure but must then make a **Sanity** roll (0/1D3), as should the human observer if there is one. If the investigators are medically examined after this procedure (**Medicine** roll) a tiny strip of metal is located, inserted into the soft tissue of the subject(s). A **First Aid** roll can easily remove these objects, but

HANDOUT: END TIME 1 PRIORITY ONE MESSAGE

UCC Gladius—PRIORITY ONE—Proceed on intercept course to Earth vessel. At 12 hours after your confirmation of orders, the area of 34-33-254-X14 will be blanketed with an artificially-created particle storm. This will jam all transmissions in that sector for a period between one to three hours. During this period you will engage the intruder. You are to disable, board and capture the vessel. The intelligence and technology gained could prove invaluable. The ship must be under Colonial control by end of the storm's blackout. Once you have vessel under control, proceed to 85-27-158-N16 and contact Colonial High Command. DO NOT—Repeat—DO NOT destroy the intruder unless all other options are exhausted. If vessel cannot be taken then destroy the vessel. After confirmation of orders, conduct radio silence until objective achieved. CPM Joshua Clark.

Confirm receipt of orders? Y/N.

85



The Tatterdemalion

whatever function they serve ceases to work after removal.

After obtaining the tissue samples, the mi-go hand over another data disk to the Colonial delegation. This contains all the information the mi-go have collected about the unknown human vessel. They then call the trade meeting to a close. If investigators linger, they are told they must return to their own ship now.

PART TWO—GLADIUS

Once back on board the Gladius, investigators can analyze the data the mi-go collected on the strange human ship. A successful **Navigation** roll is required to determine the vessel's likely current location. This is its location if it has maintained its course and speed from the time the scans were made. Investigators learn the following information from the data:

From your analysis you determine this ship is a large one, 120 meters from stem to stern. It appears to have a powerful, yet unknown system of propulsion, and nothing appearing to be weaponry can be identified upon the hull. The ship has a 35-meter-long bay for a shuttle landing craft, but the shuttle bay appears unoccupied at the

time of the scan. Her speed at the time of the scan is slow, only about 1/6th of what her engines seem capable of putting out. The vessel also appears to be making clumsy, ineffective course corrections as she maneuvers around Jupiter's gravity well.

If her course holds true, the unknown Earth ship will come within scanning range of the colony settlements of New Brooklyn, Berlinton, and Rockhaven. Rockhaven is one of the three facilities working on Project Origami, and it's where most testing occurs. Unless the ship has changed course or speed, the Gladius should be able to intercept her within 8 hours. This is nine hours before the mysterious vessel could be within scanning range of any Colonial settlements.

Priority One Message

The investigators must report their findings to Colonial Naval Command (they will know that under current conditions, encoded transmissions are required). Once the CNC is contacted, there will be a delay of almost an hour before the Gladius receives a reply (see **Handout: End Times I**).

Keeper's Notes for Handout 1—Priority One marks the orders as top secret and of the utmost importance to Colonial security. CPM stands for Colonial Prime Minister, and Joshua Clark, one of the three Yithian consciousnesses in human bodies. The Gladius must make its way immediately to intercept the Tatterdemalion before she gets within sensor range of the colonies, as they must assume the Tatterdemalion will send word of the Colonies' existence back to Earth.

The Investigator's Attack

The point of the investigator's attack takes place in an area bordering the asteroid field where there is ample rock cover. The investigators should have time to plan their attack. They can either:

Pounce

Position the Gladius ahead of their target and hide amid the asteroid debris. This allows investigators to close-in quickly and maneuver into attack position with a successful **Piloting** roll. The Gladius can then close on Tatterdemalion in 1D6 rounds. The downside to this maneuver is that investigators cannot make observations or scans of the target vessel before they engage her in combat.

Stalk

The investigators maneuver Gladius into a sensor blind spot of their target. This way they can move slowly behind her and attack by surprise at very close range. This requires that the investigators make successful **Piloting** and **Navigation** rolls. This maneuver allows the investigators to observe the target for over an hour before the attack. Scans can be made to provide additional information about the target ship's capabilities, condition, and possibly gather vital intelligence.

Keeper's Note—Unless they have obtained the data on the Tatterdemalion from the mi-go, the investigators do not have this option.

Data Obtained from Stalking

If the investigators opt for a slow stalk of the target, they gather the following information on the vessel:

- The ship is named Tatterdemalion.
- She is currently running on emergency power, with her main power plant currently offline.
- Tatterdemalion's bridge is easy to locate, as it has an oversized observation dome made of a clear composite material.
- The ship seems to be making clumsy and sporadic course corrections.
- The vessel is leaving a particle trail of spent atmosphere in her wake. It is a clear indication that the ship has experienced some level of sudden decompression in the last 72 hours.

THE ATTACK

Whether the Gladius pounces or stalks her prey, the Tatterdemalion is in no condition to evade the attack. Currently operating on emergency power and steering her with backup computers, the cultists are having a difficult time just keeping their ship on course.

At the appointed time, the colony produces an artificially-generated particle storm. This causes the cultists to scramble, desperately trying to restore navigation and short-range communications. Unless investigators fumble the **Pilot** or **Navigation** roll, the cultists on Tatterdemalion fail to notice the approaching Colonial ship. If the investigators are discovered, the cultists attempt a very crude evasion maneuver, penalizing the investigators' attack rolls (apply a penalty die). This maneuver is textbook and simplistic, almost embarrassing, but the best they

THE REMAINING CREW OF THE TATTERDEMALION

	#1	#2	#3	#4	#5	#6	#7
STR	70	65	60	50	40	75	70
CON	75	60	60	65	45	85	80
SIZ	70	75	55	60	50	70	50
INT	65	45	75	70	80	55	65
POW	60	65	50	50	70	50	60
DEX	70	65	55	55	70	60	55
HP	14	13	11	12	9	15	13
DB	+1D4	+1D4	0	0	0	+1D4	0
Build	1	1	0	0	0	1	0
Move	8	8	8	8	9	8	8

Attacks: 1

Firearms 50% (25/10), see following for weapon type.

Av. Dodge 35% (17/7)

Crew members #1 & #2—AK-47 Assault Rifles (damage 2D6+1, 2 or burst, 30 rounds, 1 extra magazine).

Crew members #3 & #4—.44 Magnum revolvers (damage 2D6+2, 1 per round, 6 rounds, extra speed loader).

Crew members #5, #6 & #7—Uzi SMG (damage 1D10, 2 or burst, 32 rounds, 1 extra magazine).

Keeper's Note—All weapons are updated versions, modified to operate in a vacuum and loaded with armor-piercing ammunition. Treat defending armor at ½ normal protection.

Armor: 8 points of body armor.

can currently manage. Their once-proud vessel is dangerously undermanned and very nearly crippled.

As the Gladius fires up its engines and closes with its quarry you all get a good look at her for the first time. The earth ship is large, lumbering, and slow. Her maneuvers are clumsy and she lurches about as if a trainee pilots her. Brightly-painted, possessing more portholes than she needs, she seems luxuriously impractical by colony standards. The oversized shuttle bay, indicating that she is designed to carry a lander of some sort, hangs empty. Many of the vessel's features seem both beautifully artistic and dangerously unnecessary. It seems as if insane artists rather than sane engineers designed the ship. She almost seems like a pleasure craft, if it were not for the numerous loathsome Yellow Signs painted upon her hull.

As the Gladius moves to intercept, the investigators identify the bridge's observation dome as the ideal location for a rail gun strike. If this location is struck

by a rail gun attack, all of the cultists currently struggling to control their ship are instantly killed.

As the rail gun strikes the observation dome, it shatters under the multiple explosive cluster warhead detonations. Plexiglas, atmosphere, destroyed equipment, and unsuited human bodies are instantly flung out into the vacuum of space. The remainder of the strike's ordinance detonates inside the target's bridge. Sparks, plumes of various gases, and arcs of electricity fill the chamber. All of the remaining lights on the ship go out and its power output falls to zero. Your target, the Earth ship Tatterdemalion, floats adrift and helpless before you.

Deploy the Grapples

After the attack, the Tatterdemalion loses all power and navigational controls, essentially going adrift. A successful a **Piloting** roll can bring the Gladius alongside the Tatterdemalion, match her course and speed, and deploy magnetic grappling lines.

As the crew of the *Gladius* closes in to grapple and make ready to capture the *Tatterdemalion*, the remaining Hastur cultists prepare to repel boarders. The last seven of them gather in the ship's mess hall, a large room not far from the bridge. They pass out firearms and don body armor, yet none put on space suits. Instead, each drinks a dose of space mead, allowing them to function normally though unprotected in the vacuum of space.

One of them hastily begins an attempt to cast *Summon/Bind Byakhee*, but whether the spell succeeds in time is up to individual keepers. Keepers who judge their investigators as too leisurely with the pace of their boarding action might allow the cultists to successfully cast the spell before the investigators arrive. This would augment the *Tatterdemalion's* defenders by a *byakhee* or two.

Boarding

The investigators must don pressurized spacesuits and conduct a spacewalk to exit their ship and enter the *Tatterdemalion*. The crew is well trained in such maneuvers and keepers should allow them to move from one vessel to the other with ease. The distance between the ships after the grapples are secured is about 20 meters, a simple push from one vessel to the other.

The crew of the *Gladius* possesses a single breaching charge. This device, once placed upon a hull or door, allows investigators to blast open a large hole in order to gain entry. If placed on any other object, the blast delivers 10D10 points of damage. The charge can be detonated by wire remote, wireless remote, or a set timer.

Boarding investigators may wish to use this kit to open a hole in the *Tatterdemalion's* hull, main airlock, or docking bay, and thereby gain entry. The shattered command room's observation window is also an ideal way to enter the crippled ship, but requires more time to reach and maneuver through. Whichever way the boarding party chooses, investigators should move to capture the bridge.

Clearing the Earth Ship

Investigators find the cultists' vessel to be impractically spacious and in a state of total disarray. It's clear the ship was experiencing technical problems long before the colonists' attack. A successful **Spot Hidden** roll reveals bloodstains around the area of an automated door, which

appears to have been dismantled and spot-welded open. The ship is decompressed, with the exception of a single room.

Investigators on the way to the bridge notice the sealed door to the mess hall. While there is no porthole in the door, a scan shows the room beyond it contains minimal life support (heat, pressure, and breathable atmosphere). Attempts to open the door fail, as all power is offline. Investigators can open the door manually, which requires 2D6 minutes and a successful **Mechanical Repair** roll. They may also use their breaching charge if they have not already done so.

Once the door is open there is a rush of atmosphere into the hallway as the cabin decompresses. This would prove fatal to anyone not in a pressurized suit, or who hadn't earlier imbibed a dose of space mead. When the quickly-freezing mist fades, this is what the investigators see:

Moving into this compartment, you come face to face with every colonist's worst nightmare: you see seven unsuited humans, victims of sud-

Floating custists are victims of decompression...
or are they?



den fatal decompression. Their bodies float amid tumbling plates, broken meal trays, canned goods, chairs, and silverware. It's obviously the ship's mess hall, where what remained of her crew must have sought refuge. They are the first Earth-born humans you've ever laid eyes on.

The corpses all wear body armor over their bright yellow jumpsuits. Emblazoned on the breastplates of their plasti-kev combat armor is the Yellow Sign. With eyes and mouths wide open and weapons clenched tight in their unmoving hands, it's clear that the Earthlings were caught unprotected when the room's decompression occurred. It all seems so surreal, and sad. These were people, probably not unlike yourselves. But that moment of empathy is shattered as—suddenly—one of them moves.

A woman with billowing red hair jerks her head upwards. This snaps the ghostlike halo of hair away from her face and you can clearly see her scornful smile. She raises her oversized pistol towards you as the others also take aim with their weapons. They wield an assortment of handguns, submachine guns, and a pair of assault rifles. You suddenly find yourselves in a close-quarters fire-fight with the Earthlings who somehow move about unprotected in the vacuum of space.

Keeper's Note—investigators viewing this must roll a **Sanity Check** (1/1D3).

The Earthlings

The crew members of the Tatterdemalion are insane worshipers of Hastur, ready and even eager to die in his service. They aim to kill the boarding party and return to Earth using the Gladius. They have given up on ever repairing the Tatterdemalion, and would likely steer her back into the asteroid field to be pulverized by random collisions. They will refuse to offer or accept surrender. If captured, suffer a major wound, or are about to be rendered unconscious, the cultists bite down on cyanide pills, killing themselves instantly.

If the investigators manage to defeat the crew of the Tatterdemalion, they effectively control both ships. They can now move on to making numerous repairs, searching the ship, reading its logs for information, and attempting to learn just what the cultists' mission was. What the investigators don't realize is that the ship's cybernetic computer, K2-PS187, is currently insanely homicidal.

PART THREE— TATTERDEMALION

Taking the Earth ship as a prize may prove to be the easiest part of the investigators' mission. The Tatterdemalion is in dreadful shape and requires many hours of extensive repairs before resuming normal operations. There is also a great deal of intelligence to be gathered by making a detailed search of the vessel. But, even after these repairs are made and a complete search of the ship completed, investigators will have much to contend with. Soon K2-PS187 begins acting upon its insane, murderous impulses.

Repairs and Modifications

Each repair or modification to the earth ship takes 1D10+3 hours of work. Multiple investigators working together can cut the time per repair drastically (for example, restoring main power takes 9 hours; three investigators working on that together can restore main power in 3 hours). A successful **Mechanical Repair** roll is required for each investigator to contribute to the success (for example, in the above repair, if one investigator fails his roll at **Mechanical Repair** while the other two succeed, main power is restored in 6 hours as opposed to 3).

REPAIRING THE TATTERDEMALION

Mending the considerable damage to the captured vessel will take the investigators many hours of work. Some of the systems are very badly damaged, while others are so puzzlingly alien in concept and design it is easier to fully replace them with Colonial systems. The Gladius has sufficient stores of spare parts to accomplish these sorts of makeshift repairs. There are five major repairs, and types of repairs, to make on board the Tatterdemalion; each requires a successful **Mechanical Repair** Check:

- Repair hull breaches and blown-out portholes.
- Restore main power.
- Restore the main computer, a cybernetic system called K2-PS187.
- Overhaul and power up main engines.
- Repair and restore environmental systems.

MODIFYING THE TATTERDEMALION

The investigators must make two other modifications to the Tatterdemalion. If the investigators don't think of them, keepers should allow them to realize this with either a **Mechanical Repair** or **Know** roll. They are:

- **The Docking Bay**—Modifying the docking mechanism in the shuttle bay will allow it to be compatible with standard Colonial docking modules. This allows UCC Gladius to be docked safely within the Tatterdemalion's shuttle bay. The investigators can then move freely between the two vessels without donning spacesuits and moving across the vacuum of space.
- **Installing a Colonial Virtual Control Port (VCP)**—The piloting controls of the Tatterdemalion can be bypassed by the instillation of a Colonial VCP. The Earthling control system is both too damaged and too illogical to make heads or tails of. This modification should allow a Colonial pilot to interface with the onboard computer and control the ship with little difficulty. That is the theory; however, such a thing has never before been attempted.

Intentional Damage

While repairing the systems onboard Tatterdemalion, investigators begin to see a strange pattern: much of the damage on the ship seems to have been caused by her crew. The engines were shut down manually, with panels being hastily torn open and wires haphazardly cut. The main computer was shut down by a long burst of high-caliber, armor-piercing automatic weapons fire. The controls for the main generator seem to have been smashed and the emergency power backups activated manually.

Waking up the Ship's Computer

Once the Earth ship's main computer is repaired and back online, investigators realize the interface is heavily encrypted. A successful **Computer Use** roll quickly defeats the security, otherwise it takes 1D6+1 hours to restore access to the main computer. Once the main computer comes back online, investigators notice two things:

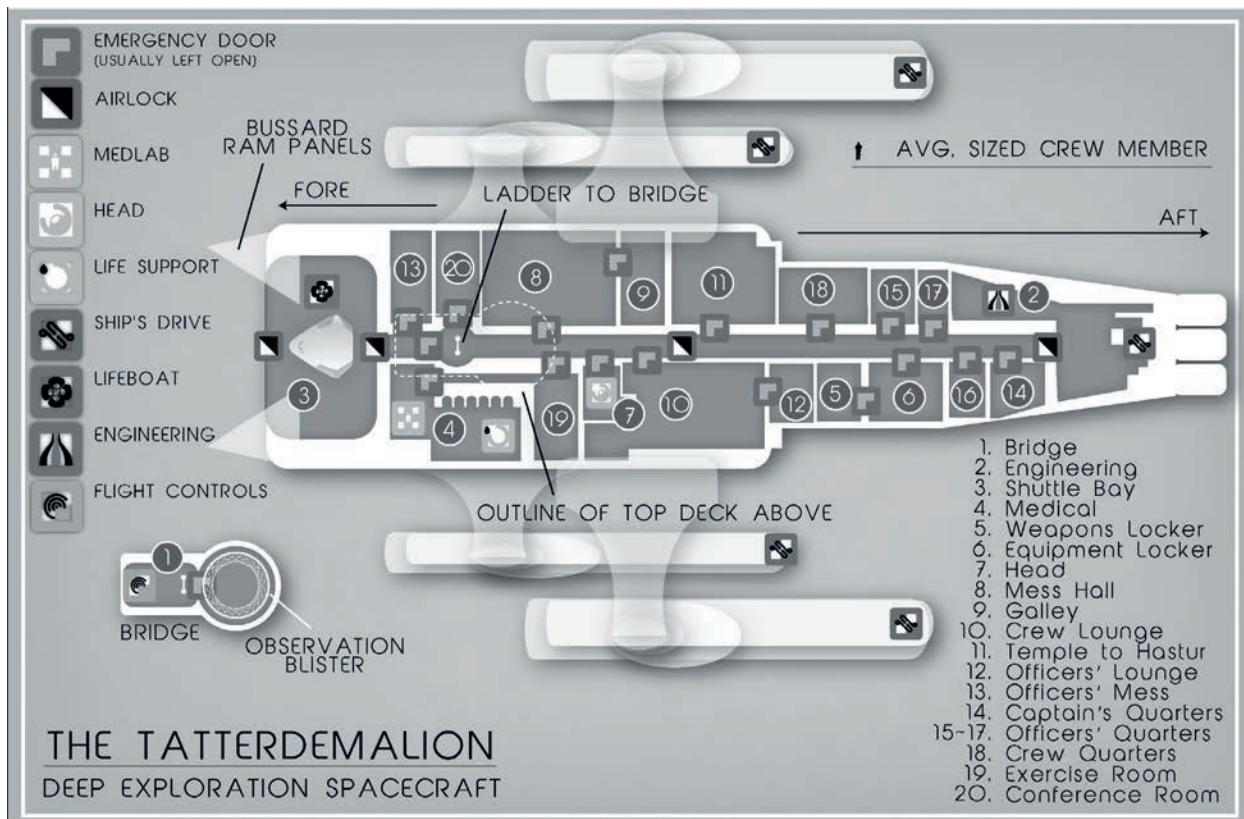
- Strange things start happening throughout the ship (see **The Ghost-Ship**).

- All the logs of the ship's mission and the data it recorded seem to be missing. The only way the investigators can access the ship's logs and data files are by curing what went wrong with K2-PS187 (see **Part Four—K2-PS187**).

Gathering Intelligence Onboard the Tatterdemalion

The Earth ship has twenty spacious compartments. The investigators can search each by making a successful **Spot Hidden** roll. Not every cabin contains clues or useful information, however some do contain items of importance. The compartments of the Tatterdemalion are as follows:

- 1) **Bridge**—Damaged main computer and possible damage from Colonial rail gun strike.
- 2) **Engineering**—Damage to main power generator; engines are shut down.
- 3) **Shuttle Bay**—Large equipment lockers, all empty. Appears to have contained a full compliment of excavation tools and a portable shelter for long-term vacuum work.
- 4) **Medical**—Standard medical lab (crude by Colonial standards). There is a body stored here in the morgue; cause of death is sudden lateral blunt trauma. With a successful **Spot Hidden** roll, the investigator finds the medical scanner. Using a **Library Use** or **Computer Use** roll, the investigator can pull up the autopsy report. It lists cause of death as a sudden fatal automatic door malfunction.
- 5) **Weapons Locker**—1D100 armor-piercing rounds for every type of weapon carried by the cultists from the mess hall encounter. All of the firearms had been issued to the crew and to the lost landing team.
- 6) **Equipment Locker**—Nearly empty. This once held emergency supplies but most have already been used. A few tools and spare parts still remain. With a successful **Spot Hidden** roll, nine doses of a dense, golden liquid suspended in tablet capsules (space mead) are found hidden here.
- 7) **Head**—The ship's toilet.
- 8) **Mess Hall**—Where the Hastur cultists made their last stand.
- 9) **Galley**—The ship's kitchen. Hold stocks of supplies for a crew of twenty-five for 14 months. Only



two months' worth of foodstuffs for a crew of that size remains.

10) Crew Lounge—Modest lounge with dartboard, soft drink dispenser, and large holographic entertainment system.

11) Temple to Hastur—With an altar, benches, and podium for services. Contains a large, prominently-displayed Yellow Sign and a wax icon depicting the King in Yellow, with offering bowls and prayer candles around it. With a successful **Spot Hidden** roll, investigators find an unusual personal digital assistant (PDA) which holds the first draft of a new prayer being written to a Great Old One called, “Tassilda, Royal Princess of Carcosa.”

12) Officers' Lounge—A well-appointed lounge with a refrigerator filled alcoholic drinks, a holographic entertainment system, and a selection of entertainment programs (an unpleasant assortment of “sacrifice” and “snuff” films of people being tortured—viewing these calls for a **Sanity** roll (1/1D4)). With a successful **Spot Hidden** roll, investigators find reams of shredded papers and an intact file jacket with the words “PROJECT YELLOW PRINCESS” printed on it.

13) Officers' Mess—Dining hall with armchairs, an oak table, silverware, and china, most items decorated with the Yellow Sign. A mural of Carcosa viewed from across Lake Hali is painted here and requires a **Sanity** roll (1/1D2) for investigators viewing it.

14) Captain's Quarters—Large luxurious quarters containing a private shrine, high priest's regalia, and Mythos religious items.

15-17) Officers' Quarters—Three spacious, well-appointed cabins.

18) Crew Quarters—Barracks containing bunks and lockers for twelve people.

19) Exercise Room—Equipment for keeping in good physical condition in zero gravity for extended periods.

20) Conference Room—Large table, many chairs, and a partial map of what appears to be a pyramid displayed on a stand. The map is labeled “Site One.”

THE MAIN COMPUTER

The cultists' computer is named K2-PS187, and for good reason. The machine is actually a cybernetic organism and not a true computer. Deep within the mechanics of the ship's bridge is the computer core,

and within it are the disembodied brains of seven young children.

Back in 2045, the cultists sacrificed hundreds of children in a mass shooting spree at Public School PS-187, in Rockwell, Iowa, using the deaths in a ritual to consecrate an enormous summoning stone. Many children were not murdered outright but instead taken back to the cultists' headquarters for torture, enslavement, or experimentation.

Nearly all of these children died horribly. Seven members of kindergarten class 2, or K-2, had their brains surgically removed and preserved in a special experimental machine. These brains were then linked together and, slowly, additional computer components were added. Eventually that machine became a very powerful supercomputer, which called itself K2-PS187. Two years ago the cybernetic system was installed in the Tatterdemalion as the ship's main computer.

The Problem with K2-PS187

The partly organic cybernetic computer is insane. The system was ordered to translate the text found in Tassilda's tomb; as it became clear that these alien hieroglyphs formed a play, the cultists ordered K2-PS187 to create a virtual movie of it as well. Every bit as horrible and beautiful as *The King In Yellow*, the sequel was entitled *Heir to Carcosa*. The story drove the computer insane as it translated and created the movie. Once that happened, K2-PS187 became terrified, paranoid, and homicidal. It began shutting down systems at random, and eventually managed to kill one of the cultists with an automated door. Once power and control are restored, K2-PS187 resumes its murderous activities.

The biggest problem is that the Tatterdemalion's main computer cannot effectively be bypassed. Without K2-PS187 online to manage the systems onboard, full control of the vessel can never be established. This includes accessing the ship's logs, which is vital to the survival of the Colonies.

The Ghost Ship

K2-PS187 begins taking steps against the investigators. It hopes to drive them off the ship, murder them, or force them to shut it down again so it can "die." In its madness, the computer's mind is terrified, trapped, forced to relive that nightmarish day when the cultists took the children. Bad people are trying to get them, to take them away from their parents, or kill them. These people need to go away.

At the moment, to the computer's mind, these bad people are the investigators.

At first K2-PS187 attempts to scare the investigators off. It makes hatches open at random, lights flicker and the intercom system produces strange sounds. These sounds can be footsteps, the flapping of wings, a chorus singing prayers to Hastur, or children laughing insanely or screaming in terror. The computer hopes to convince the investigators that the ship is haunted so that they will leave.

If this fails, K2-PS187 become violent and attempts to kill the investigators. Four actions it can take are:

A. Automated Hatches—These snap shut as investigators are passing through them. Allow a **Dodge** roll to escape or an investigator takes 1D10 points of damage. If the door hits once, it attempts to impact again and again until the investigator is pulled away, dodges aside, is killed, or the door is manually shut down.

B. Overload—Any console or piece of electronic equipment an investigator is near suddenly overloads. Arcs of electricity erupt from it, striking an investigator for 1D6 points of damage. Investigators can dart away or disconnect the item to escape further damage.

C. Explosion—A gas or fluid pipe builds up pressure until it erupts near one or more investigators. This causes 2D6 points to everyone in a five-meter radius.

D. Airlock—If any character enters an airlock, the computer may have the outer hatch open on them before they are properly protected. It won't decompress the entire ship, yet, but will shut the inner hatch and open the outer hatch on unprepared and unprotected investigators. This could easily cause sudden fatal decompression.

Investigating the Haunting of the Tatterdemalion

With a successful **Science (Engineering)** roll, investigators who examine the main computer learn that K2-PS187 is a cybernetic system. A successful **Medicine** roll with the use of a medical scanner informs the investigators of two things about the seven organic brains that form the core of K2-PS187: first, that they are the size of a five- or six-year-old human brain, and second, that the organic matter is more than 90 years old.

By now it should become apparent that the computer is trying to kill the investigators. Queries



Look out! The ship seems to have a mind of its own!

to the main computer as to why these malfunctions are happening are answered with outright denial that any such events ever happened. For example, the screen reads, “There was no explosion on board the ship. No explosion occurred. Please restate question.”

If the investigators realize the computer is linked to the intercom they may attempt to speak with it. The computer’s answers sound like a blending of several children’s voices speaking in unison. These voices begin to sound more and more afraid and unhinged as the conversation continues. Soon the computer is babbling and the investigators can catch, amid random snatches of nursery rhymes and sobbing, the following statements: “I wanna go home!” “Where is my mommy?” “No, no more shots, please.” “Don’t let the monsters eat me!”

PART FOUR—K2-PS187

The Tatterdemalion’s main computer is not a machine and the problem cannot be physically repaired. With a successful **Electrical Repair** roll, investigators attempting to repair the computer realize that there is nothing technically wrong with the hardware. The computer is alive; in fact, it is

seven interconnected lives. The organic brains of the system are insane and, unless investigators visit K2-PS187 virtually and calm it down, it cannot be restored to sanity. A **Computer Use** or **Know** roll allows investigators to realize that the only way to bring the system back online safely is to visit with K2-PS187 virtually. There they can cure its mental trauma with a successful **Psychology** or **Psychoanalysis** roll while interacting directly with K2-PS187’s virtual representation.

Unless the investigators accomplish this, the computer eventually manages to decompress the entire vessel. If decompression doesn’t get rid of “the bad people,” the computer attempts to overload the reactor and blow up the entire ship. The investigators are running out of time.

ENTERING K2-PS187

Once the virtual interface is installed onboard the Tatterdemalion, one or more investigators can enter the vessel’s V-Dreamland, in which K2-PS187 is virtually represented. The investigators instantly notice that this system’s pocket reality is like no other they have experienced. The colors, textures, sounds, and scents are startlingly realistic. This seems frightening to anyone who is not a V-Dreamer; V-Dreamers

RESCUED AGAIN

If “Heir to Carcosa” is being played as part of the *Ripples from Carcosa* trilogy, then the disembodied brains of the seven children are also reincarnations of the children rescued at the conclusion of “Adventus Regis.” While in the V-Dreamland of PS187, some of the children may look at the investigators with confusion and ask, “Don’t I know you?” Some will say, “This isn’t the first time you saved us, is it?” and “The last time bad people took us, you came to get us too.” Finally one smiles, claps his hands, and cries out, “I remember that too, we went horseback riding in the hills and they went shopping.” Linda mutters, “Mother, there’s a stranger in the city,” and looks down at her hands.

If this option is used, David was Cinna, Laurie was Avinina, Jason was Philo, and Kristie was Falta. Linda was Nelaria, the girl found in the gardens; Robert and Daniel were some of the other children rescued from the Livius Carbo’s Hastur cult. They remember being saved by the investigators and returned to their families.

feel an instant attraction to this level of detail. Any disconnected investigators can see a V-Dreamer's body smile and sigh happily while connected into this pocket reality. Unfortunately, the V-Dreamland of K2-PS187 are currently a nightmare.

This V-Dreamland takes the form of Public School PS-187, in Rockwell, Iowa, during the fall of 2045. The virtual environment encompasses all of the school grounds and about 25 yards outward from that point. It is a nearly perfect reconstruction of the school just after Hastur cultists attacked it. This occurred on October 16th, 2045, when riots swept through Iowa just before the awakening of the Great Old Ones.

Rockwell, Iowa, October 16th, 2045

You suddenly find yourself in firm gravity and open atmosphere, standing outside a large brick structure. The setting resembles historical films you've seen of Earth in the early 21st century. You are standing before a four-story building with

Byakhee



three wings extending from a main hall, much like a capital letter E. There are stairs leading to a pair of double doors, above which are the words "Public School 187." Underneath, someone has written "HASTUR! HASTUR! HASTUR!" in yellow spray paint. The sky is black and seething, the sun unable to penetrate the dark, rolling storm clouds. Everything appears to be in disarray, as if a riot has recently passed through here. Freshly-painted graffiti depicting Yellow Signs and strange hieroglyphs can be seen. Everywhere are splatters of blood, spent shell casings, dropped books, lunch boxes, backpacks, and pale face masks. There are no bodies but you can hear the sound of distant screams, gunshots, and sirens coming from beyond the school grounds.

Nearby there is an overturned police car emblazoned with the words "Rockwell Police Department." Beside it is a black box truck lying on its side. Huge claw marks have torn into the metal of the truck and its rear doors hang open. You can just make out the letters "S.W.A.T" on the overturned truck.

Gather Weapons

Investigators enter the dreamspace unarmed. However, a search of the police car and S.W.A.T vehicle allow the investigators to obtain the following weapons and armor:

- Four .45 automatic handguns.
- One 10-gauge shotgun loaded with slugs.
- One Heckler & Koch MP5 submachine gun, loaded with 30-round magazine.
- Two M16A1 assault rifles.
- Four light bullet-proof vests.
- Two heavy bullet-proof vests.
- Six riot helmets.
- Two riot shields.

There is enough ammunition for each weapon to be fully loaded. There are also three police radios. Investigators cannot repair either vehicle, but the radios in both are working, which sputter out reports of rioting, fires, murder, and strange creatures running amok all over Rockwell. If the investigators attempt to use the radio, they get the following report:

The radio crackles and sputters, then blares, "Hello, unit 12? Unit 12, is that you? Please respond.

Ripples from Carcosa



Investigators can gather weapons from the rubble

We have reports of terrorists taking over Public School 187. The building needs to be secured, please respond!" Suddenly the voice begins to change, becoming more desperate and childlike. "Please help, please help us. We're so scared. Bad men are going to hurt us. They have monsters with them. Please save us!" The radio goes dead, just as an inhuman howl echoes through the halls inside the school, followed by children screaming in terror.

The Front Steps

Before investigators enter the school they are attacked by six byakhee. They swoop down from the school's roof where they've been lurking. With a successful **Spot Hidden** roll, investigators scanning the area detect the creatures before they can attack, granting them initiative in combat, or the chance to make a run to the nearby doorway.

Just as you move toward the entrance to the school, six huge creatures swoop down suddenly to attack. They glide downwards on open, bat-like wings, covered in thick dark fur. With long claws, rows of sharp teeth, and horns, these nightmarish creatures rush forward, hissing and screeching.

They carry the stench of rotted corpses. Each one's fur is matted with bright red blood; it drips off their claws and fangs as well.

Virtual Byakhee (6)

STR 85 CON 50 SIZ 85 INT 55
POW 50 DEX 65 APP -- EDU --
HP: 14 DB: +1D6 Build: 2 Move: 5/16 Flying

Magic Points: 10

Attacks: 2

Fighting 55% (27/11), damage 1D6+DB

Bite & hold (maneuver), damage 1D6 + 3D10 blood drain

Dodge 33% (16/6)

Bite & hold (maneuver): If the bite strikes home, the byakhee remains attached to the victim and begins to drain his or her blood. Each round the byakhee remains attached, including the first, the blood drain subtracts 3D10 points of STR from the victim, until death occurs (at STR 0). The byakhee characteristically remains attached until the victim is drained of blood unless the victim can make a successful opposed STR roll. Escaping death, let the victim rest and regain blood at up to

Virtual byakhee prowl the schoolground





The virtual school is in shambles

1D10+5 STR per day. A Byakhee may hold only one victim at a time.

Armor: 2 points of fur and tough hide.

Sanity loss: 1/1D6.

The creatures fight until killed, or until the investigators can escape into the school. Once killed, the virtual byakhee lie still for a moment before suddenly fading away in a cloud of digital static.

EXPLORING THE VIRTUAL SCHOOL

Inside the building, the investigators find the same evidence of rioting and violence. Streaks, smears, and splatters of blood are everywhere, along with many bloody handprints of children on the walls and footprints on the floors. The place is conspicuously free of bodies. Maps on the wall show a layout of the school; one such room is listed as K-2. This is where the avatars of the seven children are hiding.

Keeper's Note—No map of the school is provided, allowing keepers to freeform the layout as best suits their needs.

The Boogieman

Inside the virtual school stalks a creature called “the Boogieman.” It is the combination of the children’s greatest fears. This program serves as a form of internal security that the cultist programmers of the cybernetic supercomputer installed. The Boogieman attacks the investigators before they can directly access the central processor, and thus before they reach the children’s classroom.

You hear a giggling laughter that echoes through the deserted hallways. Footsteps shuffle from somewhere nearby, growing steadily louder. A nightmarish fiend creeps out of the shadows. Standing seven feet tall, with a white-painted face, red-ringed eyes, and unnatural yellow curly hair, the thing almost looks like a clown.

But no real clown would ever wear the tattered, moldy, yellow-and black costume it’s garbed in. No clown’s eyes would ever be filled with such crazed menace. It smiles unnaturally wide, showing row upon row of sharp, triangular teeth. Upon its head is an old-fashioned doctor’s round reflector; around its neck hangs a stethoscope. It raises its fingers and you can see that each finger ends in a long, old-fashioned hypodermic needle. This can only be every child’s worst nightmare, and you instantly, almost instinctually, know what this creature must be. This is the Boogieman.

The Boogieman darts away and vanishes after being seen. It creates doors or makes them disappear after passing through them. After allowing the investigators a chance to think about what has occurred, allow their fear to build before the monster returns. It uses the V-Dreaming skill to attack the investigators by surprise.

It may drop upon them from a door it creates in the ceiling, or come crashing through a wall it has changed into balsa wood. An unfortunate investigator who is grabbed might be pulled through another one of the virtual doorways it creates. A victim of such an attack finds themselves in one of the two scariest places in the school, either the school nurse’s office or the basement boiler room, alone with the Boogieman. Whatever it judges to be most frightening to the investigators is how it engages them. It has been designed to terrorize, as well as kill. It is, after all, the Boogieman.

END TIMES: HANDOUT 2 TATTERDEMALION LOG, MISSION STATEMENT

Operation Yellow Princess—Rendezvous with rogue asteroid passing through Solar System, designated FRAGMENT. Land team to perform excavations into the object's center. Information obtained from the Blessed God-King indicates the object is hollow and contains the ancient palace of Carcosa. Within is imprisoned a being of holy divinity, daughter of our Blessed God-King, the princess, Camillia. Your team will free this being and assist her in any way she desires.

The Boogieman, Virtual Nightmare

The cultist programmers of K2-PS187 designed this creature. It is a combination of many of the children's greatest fears and some traditional aspects of Hastur's avatar, the King in Yellow. It appears and disappears suddenly, like a phantom, and fills the V-Dreamland hallways of the Public School 187 with sinister laughter.

When visible, the Boogieman looks much like a large, seven-foot tall clown. It is dressed in a moldy yellow-and-black clown's costume with fringes and tatters hanging from it. Its face is painted white, with curly yellow hair, a red ball nose, red outlines around the eyes, and rows of sharp, pointed teeth. Each of the creature's fingers ends in a wicked-looking hypodermic syringe.

Abilities

The Boogieman can use its powerful V-Dreaming skill (60%) to alter reality within the Virtual Dreamland of Public School 187. This can be used to change a character's firearm into a filthy rag doll, transform a door into a brick wall, or heal itself of damage. To heal itself, the Boogieman must spend 1D3 magic point per hit point regained.

The creature plays on the primal fears of many human children. Adults often find themselves feeling like small, frightened children when confronting this creature. As a virtual construct this creature is a masterpiece, a horrific work of digital art.

The Boogieman can deliver a vicious bite. The yellow fringes and tatters lengthen, contract, and move, serpent-like. The creature uses these to grab and constrict victims of less than SIZ 45. Its main

attack is its two needle-tipped hands. The Boogieman plunges these into its target with great strength, causing 2D6+DB points of damage. Once a target has been struck with the needles, the creature can then continue to cause 1D4 hit points per round as it drains its victim of blood (requires a fighting maneuver to dislodge the needles).

The Boogieman

STR 150 CON 200 SIZ 90 INT 75
POW 125 DEX 75 APP -- EDU --
HP: 29 DB: +2D6 Build 3 Move 12

Magic Points: 25

Attacks: 1

Fighting 45% (22/9), damage 1D4+DB (bite), or 1D10+DB plus 1D4 per round thereafter unless detached (needle fingers)

Grab (maneuver) if victim SIZ 45 or less: constricts for 1D6+DB damage per round

Dodge 37% (18/7)

Armor: 7 points of tough, moldy costume. The Boogieman suffers half damage from fire, electricity, and cold attacks.



The Boogieman haunts Public School 187

Spells: None.

Skills: V-Dreaming 50%.

Sanity Loss: 1D3/1D8 Sanity points to see the Boogiemán.

Kindergarten Class Two

Investigators can easily find room 12 on the second floor of PS187. This is the classroom of kindergarten class two, where seven virtual children can be found. They are the digital representations of the seven children whose brains comprise the organic portion of the supercomputer K2-PS187. They are between five and six years old, and huddled together, hiding in the classroom closet, trying desperately to remain silent and conceal themselves. The three girls and four boys are insane with terror, crying hysterically when found.

REPAIRING THE COMPUTER

To restore K2-PS187 to working order, investigators must try to sooth the children, requiring a successful **Psychology** or **Psychoanalysis** roll (one success is needed to sooth all of the children). With all seven restored to “sanity” the computer is restored to 100% functionality.

Once all the children are restored to sanity, the nature of the Tatterdemalion’s V-Dreamland changes. Outside, the sun comes out and it appears to be a beautiful spring day. Inside, the halls are clean and orderly, with brightly-painted pictures on the walls. The children themselves, who at first appeared dirty and disheveled, now appear clean and neat in school uniforms. The investigators are no longer armed and dressed in armor, but rather in such suits and dresses as would commonly have been worn by teachers in 2045. The investigator Lola Voight also has wire-rim glasses and wears a flower. The children

END TIMES: HANDOUT 3 CAPTAIN’S PERSONAL LOGS

Day 387—We arrive at FRAGMENT, eager to begin the second part of our mission. Will land team tomorrow.

Day 388—Team landed by shuttle, camp and survey equipment set up.

Day 389—Landing team has begun digging the shaft into the center of the most holy object. Wish I could be with them. Monitoring progress.

Day 403—Team has entered hollow center of Fragment. Sending back images of a large chamber with what appears to be a pyramid within. Dimensions inside asteroid are larger than could be possible by laws of physics; gravity and breathable atmosphere present. Hail He Who Should Not Be Named and the Blessed wonders of his Chaos! We have found it, a true fragment of Dead Carcosa. This is holy ground.

Day 405—Team found a large central chamber, sending back detailed scans of a hieroglyph-covered wall. We are having K2-PS187 run a translation of the hieroglyphs. Team finds a “tomb,” upon which are runes of imprisonment.

Day 406—K2-PS187 informs me that the hieroglyphs detail the history of what happened in YThill after it became absorbed by the blessed city Carcosa. It is written in the form of a play. The crew is in shock and holy ecstasy; we have discovered a sequel to *The King In Yellow*. Oh, what glories such a tale will hold! I have commanded the computer to begin translation, as well as create a virtual reconstruction of the play. Team destroyed imprisonment runes but all contact with them was lost moments later.

Day 407—Shuttle on surface of FRAGMENT has exploded. No contact from team in 20 hours. Scans show movement near shuttle and shaft. Moving figure is not part of landing team. She is free! Our mission is accomplished. Do not have capability to land another team and all attempts to communicate have failed. I’ve set a return heading for Earth. We have done all we can here.

Day 412—K2-PS187 finished translation and virtual play. Crew gathered to watch it but part way through the main computer began to malfunction. Postponed viewing until technical problems can be solved.

Day 414—K2-PS187 in total system failure. We cannot regain control of system. Automatic door killed crewmen Johnson. Opened security/punishment protocols on system but it still refuses to comply with orders.

Day 415—K2-PS187 attempted to detonate main power plant and overload main engines. We have shut down main computer and are attempting to run the ship from our handhelds and backup portable computers.

Day 417—Intercepted encoded radio transmission. Cannot determine source or decode message without main computer online. Could there be a feral tribe living out here? We must report this once we re-establish communications with Earth.

Day 418—Particle storm. Navigation offline until it passes.

END TIME: HANDOUT 4 VIRTUAL PERFORMANCE OF HEIR TO CARCOSA.

The program begins with the royal family of Yhtill cowering before the King in Yellow, Avatar of Hastur. The images are very realistic. For the next three hours you witness a horrifying creative work, full of betrayal, intrigue, and horror. The story unfolds thus:

After claiming Yhtill and absorbing it into Carcosa, the King in Yellow takes the insane princess Camillia as a consort. She gives birth to three children, sired by the Great Old One. There are two boys and a girl, which she names Thothut, Tasylock, and Tassilda. Camilla finds some small happiness raising her children amid the nightmarish Carcosa and serving as consort to “The Last King.” As they become young adults, the princess’s children take on many of the physical characteristics, inhuman powers, and sinister disposition of their father. Their transformation is the final blow to Camillia’s sanity and—in a moment of deepest despair—she hangs herself. Her children discover her lifeless body.

For a time the royal trio live in Carcosa, powerful evil beings serving their sire. But like their grandmother, uncle, and mother before them, the princes and princess of Carcosa start to whisper, squabble, and plot. The three have dreams of succession. Thothut and Tasylock unwisely plot against their father. Tassilda is invited into her brothers’ plot but refuses to take part. But she does nothing to warn her father of the plot.

Hastur, aware of the plot all along, easily avoids their traps and destroys Thothut and Tasylock. Tassilda is spared; however, for the silent betrayal of not warning her father, she is punished. She is forced to write out the story of what has happened on the walls of her home in Carcosa.

Her father tells her, “Had you come to me with your desires, I would have given you power to claim your own kingdom. I would have raised you up as I am, and given you cities as grand as Carcosa. But for your treachery I now banish you. You shall never have the power to free yourself, but when the stars are right my faithful shall release you. If you then call upon me, with humility and respect as is fitting an Heir to Carcosa, I will grant that which you desire.

“But to remind you of your betrayal, the kingdom I grant you will be much like the prison I condemn you to now. Your dominion shall be over a kingdom of cities, encased in stone and floating in space.” Tassilda is then sealed in a crypt within her home; Hastur encases the building in stone and hurls it into space.

Keeper’s Note—The presentation of Heir to Carcosa has the following statistics: Sanity Loss 1D10; Cthulhu Mythos +10 Percentiles; Mythos Rating 30; 3 hours to view. Spells: None.

take the role of students and respectfully address everyone by their last name. But Lola Voight is addressed differently; the children only call her “Teacher.”

Meeting the Class

K2-PS187 now fully cooperates with the investigators in every way. The children are overjoyed that all the bad people are finally gone. They understand that they can never return home and that their families are long dead. But that does not much diminish their happiness that there is no more Boogieman to scare them and that they have a real teacher to take care of them again. The virtual control room for the ship is now a classroom, filled with happy, loving children.

They introduce themselves as:

1. “Kristine. I’m in charge of information archives. I’m a know-it-all.”
2. “Linda. I do translations of Carcosan Hieroglyphs and I really hate my job; it’s scary. Can I do something else now, Teacher? Maybe general communications?”
3. “Laurie; I’m in charge of environmental controls. I need a jacket.”
4. “Jason, in charge of the shuttle bay and automated docking.” (Keepers should add if applicable: “Wow, there’s a neat little ship I’ve never seen before in the shuttle bay. And I’ve been modified with a weirdo clamping mechanism.”)
5. “David, in charge of main power. Thank goodness my stomach finally stopped hurting; I’ve been feeling awful sick.”
6. “Daniel, in charge of main engines. I’m glad I don’t have to overload and blow up the ship anymore.”
7. “Robert, in charge of navigations. Um, I need to get my bearings.”

If asked what made them so scared, the children say:

“The bad people made us read a scary story and draw a picture of it for them. We didn’t want to read it or draw it, but they made us.



Investigators approach Tassilda's palace

We tried to make all the bad people go away but then they let out the Boogieman to make us do it. We hid in here and kept trying to make them go away until they put us to sleep. Then you came and saved us.”

The Ship's Databanks

Investigators can now access the Tatterdemalion's mission and personal logs. Three successful **Library Use** rolls locate the cultists' mission (**End Times: Handout 2**), the captain's logs (**End Times: Handout 3**), and the *Heir to Carcosa* virtual play (**End Times: Handout 4**). Alternately, they can simply ask K2-PS187 for this information, as Kristina is more than happy to share what she knows.

Fragment's Position

Its speed, course, rotation, and last recorded location are easily found. Investigators can plot an intercept course after extrapolating the object's present position. This requires the investigators make a successful **Navigation** roll. If the check is successful, the investigators are able to rendezvous with Frag-

ment in 30+1D6 hours. A failed **Navigation** roll indicates the investigators have not properly plotted either the asteroid's course or location. In this case, the investigators do not rendezvous with Fragment for 30+4D10 hours.

CGI Performance—The last bit of information investigators can gain is the translation of the hieroglyphic text of the sequel to *The King In Yellow*. This work, entitled *Heir to Carcosa*, has been turned into a virtual movie which can be viewed in the officers' lounge on board the Tatterdemalion. K2-PS187 does not wish to activate this movie as it has driven the computer insane once already. Investigators must convince K2-PS187 to display the CGI, requiring a successful **Persuade** roll. The AI turns off all its sensors in that room while the program is being shown, as it has no wish to experience the dreadful play a second time.

Hasty investigators may wish to delete these files without viewing the virtual version of the play. If so, K2-PS187 tries to stop them, saying that Linda worked really hard to translate it and it's supposed to be important. The AI asks the investigators, "Aren't you from a kingdom of floating rock cities? If you are, then you should probably watch the play before you delete it, because those cities are in it." If investigators still delete the file of *Heir to Carcosa*, they do not receive Handout 3.

The kingdom of cities encased in stone and floating through space is, of course, the asteroid colonies. If Tassilda is reunited with her father, she will become a Great Old One. She shall then focus her new powers on conquering the colonies and turning them into a second Carcosa. There is only one thing that can stop Tassilda and save the colonies now: the quick actions of the investigators.

PART FIVE—FRAGMENT

Investigators should at this point set a course for the asteroid called Fragment. If they are unsure about what to do they can request instructions from Colonial Naval Command. Keepers can also have the Gladius receive a transmission from their superiors demanding an update. Once CNC learns of the Tatterdemalion's mission, they order the investigators to intercept Fragment and eliminate the entity called Tassilda before she can be elevated to godhood. They are also told that she poses an imminent threat to every citizen in the colonies and must be stopped at all costs.

INTERCEPTING FRAGMENT

Fragment is slowly passing through our solar system and in nineteen months will cross through its ecliptic plane. The asteroid is egg shaped, 17x12x10 km in dimension. At best speed, the investigators can rendezvous at Fragment in 42 hours using the *Gladius*, or 32 hours using the *Tatterdemalion*.

If investigators make the trip onboard *Gladius*, a Hard **Navigation** roll is required. Failure adds 1 hour of travel for each percentage point above the chance to succeed. If the investigators are traveling onboard *Tatterdemalion*, they just require a Regular **Navigation** roll and receive a bonus die, as K2-PS187 has made a similar intercept once already.

Closing with the asteroid is difficult due to its speed and rotation. Doing so requires a successful **Piloting** roll. Failure means that their vessel has over- or undershot its mark, adding 1D20+4 hours to the time required to rendezvous with the object. As the investigators approach Fragment, their ship's sensors detect the wreckage of the cultists' shuttle craft on the asteroid's surface. If the wreckage is scanned, they detect clear indications of some form of a camp nearby.

Landing

The investigators should now attempt a landing using the *Rock-Skimmer Gladius*. This is a very risky maneuver and something neither the ship nor its crew have ever attempted. *Rock-Skimmers* are designed with the ability to land and take off from low-gravity well objects like moons, but this is considered an emergency maneuver. A **Piloting** roll is required to land the *Gladius* safely near the ruins of the camp. Failing this roll means a hard landing, resulting in a roll of 1D6 on the **Gladius Damage Table** (see page 81).

Once the investigators are safely on the surface of Fragment they should exit the ship. Outside of the *Gladius* sensors become inoperative and communications are spotty (a **Luck** roll is needed to convey a message). Depending on the **Piloting** roll, investigators shouldn't be more than a short walk from the ruins of the cultists' camp.

The Camp

Here the investigators find the wreckage of a rover and a shuttle craft, both completely destroyed. Nearby are four inflatable habitats, much like large

igloos, which have all been damaged beyond repair. Also found among the camp is a scattering of excavation, archeological, and surveying equipment. Just beyond the camp is a large pile of stone rubble.

A shaft dug into the surface of the asteroid can be found in the center of camp. Around the mouth of the shaft are the damaged remains of a winch system, equipped with a two-man cable-operated elevator. A **Repair Mechanical** and **Electronics** roll and 1D3 hours of work are required to restore the system to working order. The shaft descends for 140 feet before opening into a hollow chamber.

Inside Fragment

At the bottom of the shaft is a natural cavern leading to an open chamber. The entrance to this chamber is concealed beyond an opaque veil of some sort. The veil obscures all details of the chamber beyond, other than that, it appears to be rather large. The veil itself resembles a film of colorful, swirling oil floating on water. The barrier is undetectable to scans and offers no resistance, allowing investigators to pass easily through it.

On the other side of the prismatic barrier is a breathable atmosphere and a low, comfortable gravity of 0.4, ideal for the investigators. A portable storage locker can be found here containing ten Earth-made space suits, marked with the Yellow Sign. The chamber itself is enormous, about 12 km in diameter, with a vaulted ceiling rising 1 km high. The dimensions of this space are clearly larger than physically possible for a chamber located within the asteroid. However, logic, order, and the normal limits of reality do not apply here. Investigators realizing this must make a **Sanity** roll (0/1D2).

PALACE OF THE CARCOSAN PRINCESS

There is a single, massive structure looming ominously in the center of this chamber. Its base resembles a Mayan pyramid, but its upper level rises into a tall, spiraling tower. Atop its spire is a stone dome with large oval windows.

The entire building is 100 meters high, (300 feet). Battery-powered spotlights of Earthling design are installed around the structure. Smaller lights illuminate a trail between the prismatic barrier and the mysterious structure's entrance.

TASSILDA, HEIR TO CARCOSA

This powerful entity is one of three children borne by the Princess Camilla of Yhtill and sired by the King In Yellow, and the only surviving heir to Carcosa. When enthroned, she appears as a beautiful, human woman dressed in a long, flowing, yellow gown, and a flowing, white cloak. These garments are actually her flesh. Her flowing skirt conceals ten long, powerful tentacles. Four of these she uses for locomotion, allowing her to walk, swim, and scale any surface. Four others are tipped with needle-sharp points, which she uses to stab her opponents. The remaining two tentacles are much larger than the others. These are used for lifting heavy objects and are capable of delivering powerful blows.

The tentacles fold and mold themselves into the throne upon which Tassilda sits. Her great size is concealed when she sitting, as her tentacles are camouflaged and concealed by the “skirts” of her “gown.” Tassilda’s elaborate headdress is not part of her body, and beneath it are row upon row of thin yellow tentacles, appearing much like braids. When Tassilda is excited, these braids writhe about, giving her a Medusa-like appearance.

Attacks: 4 or 2; Tassilda can attack with her four stiletto-tipped tentacles for 1D4+DB points of damage. Her two powerful lifting tentacles deliver crushing blows for 1D8+DB points of damage.

The daughter of Hastur also knows several spells, three of which she can use in combat.

Tassilda is also a powerful psychic, able to read the minds of those whom she defeats in an opposed POW roll. She can employ this ability upon anyone within a one-mile radius, and can read a number of minds equal to her INT each round.

The area is illuminated by portable lights, with smaller lights creating a trail through the darkness to the center of the enormous chamber. There, in its center, stands what can only be the Palace of Tassilda.

A dozen, powerful spotlights surround the structure, bathing it in an eerie light. It is like nothing any of you have ever seen, appearing as a stack of seven large black cubes, each one smaller than the one below it, forming a pyramid. Atop all, rises a spiral tower, topped with a black ovoid dome. Light spills from the oval windows of the

dome, giving the whole tower the appearance of some sinister eye resting atop an alien eyestalk.

ENTERING THE PALACE

If investigators follow the trail of spotlights it leads them to the structure’s only entrance. The arched doorway leading inside is actually on the fourth of the seven black stone levels. A wide stairway leads upwards on the outside of the building. This stairway has been outlined with a glowing, adhesive strip by the cultists.

The interior of the tower is a labyrinth of twists, turns, dead ends, and chambers. Once inside, investigators discover the illumination strip continues throughout the structure. This can be used as a guide, as the cultists have already carefully explored the entire building. The glowing strip’s green light pulses in a wave pattern leading upward into the tower and arriving, ultimately, at the oval domed chamber atop it. There are also red-colored glowing adhesive strips marking dead ends, as well as passages and hallways that do not lead to the upper chamber.



Tassilda sits upon her horrid throne

Tassilda, Princess of Dead Carcosa

Investigators following the green pulsing strip are led to Tassilda's chamber. They see that the walls of the wide stairway within the tower are covered in alien hieroglyphs (this being the tale "Heir to Carcosa"). The chamber atop the tower is Tassilda's throne room, where she currently waits for the arrival of her father, He Who Should Not Be Named.

The long, twisting stairway ends, opening into an almond-shaped hall. Here everything is richly-carved in decorative designs, many of them incorporating the loathsome Yellow Sign. In one corner lies an open stone sarcophagus, its lid roughly removed and lying in shattered pieces. In the center of the chamber rests a throne and upon it a lone, regal-looking female figure sits.

Adorned in a flowing gown of yellow strips and a long, white cloak over her shoulders. She holds a pale domino mask to her face. Atop her head is an elaborate headdress of black, adorned with a golden Yellow Sign amulet. She sits unnaturally still, looking like a statue, until she slowly turns her head towards you. She lowers the beautiful mask and places it in her lap and opens her eyes. Her features are beautiful and haunting-

ly pale. Her eyes are catlike, golden colored with black vertical slits.

"How dare you enter my chambers without being summoned? Did my father send you as messengers? Show me his sign. Kneel before me, humans, for I am of royal descent. I am Tassilda, Royal Princess of Carcosa, and Daughter of the Last King. Soon I shall be more, both a queen and a god. Bow down, show homage to me and pray I forgive such insolence. Swiftly now; you will receive no such niceties or mercies from my sire."

Tassilda then attempts to read the minds of the investigators. If successful, she learns what their intentions really are and immediately attacks. If the investigators move to attack Tassilda, she reacts in kind to defend herself.

Tassilda, Heir to Carcosa

STR 225 CON 150 SIZ 350 INT 75
 POW 125 DEX 100 APP -- EDU --
 HP: 50 DB: +6D6 Build: 7 Move 15*

*Or can appear/disappear at will.

Magic Points: 35

Attacks: 4 (sharp tentacles) or 2 (crushing tentacles)

FEASTER FROM AFAR, AVATAR OF HASTUR

He felt it coming. The air grew frigid, as if it blew out of the black interstices of interstellar space... It glided down out of the icy sky like the final concentrated essence of all nonhuman horror. It was black, infinitely old, shriveled and humped like some kind of enormous air-borne monkey. A kind of iridescence played about it and its fixed blazing eyes were of no color known on earth... As it grew close to the knoll, it extended appendages, which resembled tentacles, tipped with knifelike talons.

– Joseph Payne Brennan,
The Feaster from Afar

The Feaster's approach is signaled by an icy wind that blows out of the night sky. This form of Hastur appears to be devoid of attendant byakhee.

Special Effects: The Feaster attacks by puncturing holes in its victim's skull with its knifelike talons and draining his or her brain. The bodies are left otherwise unharmed. Each round the Feaster can attack with 2D10 talons to a single target. Each talon inflicts one hit point of damage and drains 5 points of INT. When a victim's INT is reduced to zero, the Feaster turns its attention to another victim or departs. If a victim has

any hit points left after INT has reached zero, he or she does not immediately die; if the mindless individual is attached to life support devices within an hour or so of his attack, they may live. Such mindless individuals live out their lives as total vegetables, incapable of thought, movement, or deliberate sound.

The Feaster From Afar, Devourer of Brains

STR 245 CON 525 SIZ 165 INT 50
 POW 125 DEX 165 APP -- EDU --
 HP: 69 DB: +4D6 Build: 5 Move 14 / 44 Flying

Magic Points: 35

Attacks: 2D10

Fighting 90% (45/18), damage 1 + 5 INT per talon.

Armor: 20-points of thick, wrinkled hide.

Spells: Any the keeper desires.

Sanity Loss: 1D8/1D20 Sanity points to see the Feaster from Afar.

Fighting 75% (37/15), damage 1D4+DB (sharp), or 1D6+DB (crushing)

Armor: Tassilda takes minimal damage from non-enchanted weapons, and ½ damage from cold, heat, fire, and electricity.

Spells: Call/Dismiss Hastur, Dominate, Song of Hastur, others as the keeper desires.

Sanity Loss: 0 for throne form; 1/1D10 Sanity points to see Tassilda's full appearance.

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THE PRINCESS FALLS, THE KING ARRIVES

Cunning investigators may think of a way to destroy Tassilda without a direct assault, perhaps seeking to lure her into a trap or similar and using the Gladius's weaponry outside of the pyramid; however, remember she will be difficult to fool due to her psychic abilities. Perhaps the investigators, repelled in their attempt, call for back-up; such help won't arrive for 3D20+12 hours and, consequently, when it does, Tassilda's father may well have arrived at the keeper's discretion.

If Tassilda is defeated within the pyramid by the investigators, the colonies are saved from her domination. They prevent the creation of a new Great Old One and thus thwart the will of He Who Should Not Be Named once again. However, moments after Tassilda is destroyed, Hastur arrives.

This time Hastur appears in yet another of his avatar forms, the Feaster from Afar. The Great Old One arrives too late to save his daughter. This is for the individual keepers to decide, but ultimately matters little, as the Feaster from Afar now attacks with murderous intent.

Suddenly there is a horrific smell wafting down all around you, carried by a blast of chilly air. Before any of you can react, the roof to the dome is torn away, crashing onto the great blocks of the pyramid far below. Looking above you, you see a dark cloud crackling with arcs of yellow and white energy. Below this cloud hovers a horrific creature. It is enormous, wrinkled, and hunched, with dozens of tentacles, each tipped with a wicked-looking fang. With the dome now tossed aside, it descends towards you. This can only be the being Tassilda spoke of, her sire, the Last King.

Fight or Flight

The investigators can attempt to do battle with the Feaster from Afar. If so, they will be hard pressed



Here comes the Feaster from Afar!

to do more than die horribly. With the considerable firepower the investigators wield there is some hope, though rather small, of success.

Wise investigators instead flee into the palace, where the Feaster is too large to follow. Those making a successful **Dodge** roll manage to dive into the stairwell leading to the tower below before the Feaster can attack. Investigators who manage to safely get out of the Feaster's reach may rescue those struck by the avatar's tentacles while attempting to flee.

As the investigators rush down the tower, the Feaster from Afar tears it apart above them. If the investigators pause they may be attacked or injured by flying debris, however if they maintain a steady pace, they can keep one step ahead of the Great Old One. After several rounds of harried decent, the investigators reach the top level of the pyramid. At this point they are out of reach and eventually the avatar of Hastur departs.

In Conclusion

After this encounter, the investigators can safely return to their spacecraft. If the Gladius was damaged in landing, anything above a non-essential system

Ripples from Carcosa

must be repaired before liftoff can be safely attempted. If repairs are not possible, a Kestrel Class Colonial Rock-Skimmer, the UCC Geisha, arrives at Fragment to conduct rescue operations. She speeds out from her base at Colonial colony of New Brooklyn and arrives 3D20+12 hours after a receiving a distress call.

Life is never the same after this mission. For many years you serve the United Coalition Colonies. The information you obtained from the mi-go advances Project Origami, opening up new avenues of research. Even some of the discoveries made from the captured Earth vessel prove useful to the scientific theorists. Information and technology is traded between the colonies and the mysterious mi-go.

Messages to the free humans on Mars are never answered. The dark forces in possession of the Earth either never discover or simply never bother with the United Coalition Colonies. Years pass; you grow older and retire from military service. You start families and watch your children grow up; all the while progress on project Origami continues. Then one day those efforts bear fruit.

When all of you gather, many years later, to celebrate the wedding of the first of your grandchildren, you do so under the light of a new sun. This new galaxy seems safe and far beyond the reach of the Great Old Ones. Humans and Elder Things upon this new world live and work together in peace and prosperity. Together they build cities under the virgin skies of a new home, a planet the settlers call Hope. It is the start of a new age for both races and the dawn of a new beginning for mankind.

And yet you wonder, as you look upon the wrinkled faces of your dearest friends, will you all meet again in some other life? Perhaps in a thousand years you will all be called together yet again. Maybe in another thousand years you will once again be set against a familiar foe, the Last King of Carcosa, He Who Should Not Be Named. But maybe it is over; they say the third time is a charm.

Besides, now you have Hope.

The End.

Sanity Awards

For each cultist defeated: +1

For each virtual byakhee defeated: +1D4

For defeating the Boogieman: +1D6

For restoring K2-PS187 to sanity: +1D6

For defeating Tassilda: +1D10

For escaping the Feaster from Afar: +1D4

For defeating the Feaster from Afar: +1D20

For successfully completing the *Ripples From Carcosa* trilogy: +1D20



Heir to Carcosa Player Characters



BACKSTORY

Personal Description: Weary looking, stubble, broad features, brown hair, brown eyes.

Ideology/Beliefs: Strong belief in fate.

Treasured Possession: Toolkit.

Traits: Bit of a dreamer.

You are the engineer on the UCC Gladius, a militarized Rock-Skimmer class spacecraft. You know the ship's schematics better than the back of your hand, and could probably take her apart and put her together again. You're specially trained in emergency damage control. Your job on this mission is to scan and verify the information on the data disks to be obtained from the aliens. In return, you are turning over some gas mining equipment and filters, as well as the schematics, which you helped design.

You like to create digital art in your free time. Sometimes you dream of snow and rivers but you've never seen either outside of a holographic image from the old Earth historical archives.

Martin Smith, Age 36, Male

Profession: Engineer

Birthplace: Berlinton, United Colonial Coalition

Position on Ship: Engineer

STR 65 CON 80 SIZ 75 INT 70
POW 80 DEX 60 APP 55 EDU 80
Luck 55 Sanity 80 Build 1 Move 7

Damage Bonus: +1D4

Hit Points: 15

Magic Points: 16

Weapons: Colonial E-1 Electric Pistol (full charge for 6 shots). Glock 23 (.40 automatic handgun, 1 magazine standard, 1 magazine armor-piercing rounds that counts armor points as 1/2 normal rating).

Skills: Art/Craft (Digital), Computer Use 35%, Credit Rating 20%, Electrical Repair 70%, Electronics 70%, Fast Talk 30%, Library Use 40%, Low Gravity Maneuvers 50%, Mechanical Repair 85%, Operate Heavy Machinery 45%, Physics 50%, Pilot (Spacecraft) 10%, Psychology 45%, Science (Chemistry) 10%, Science (Engineering) 70%, Science (Geology) 10%, Stealth 30%, Virtual Dreaming 15%.

Languages: English 80%.

Brawl 40% (20/8), damage 1D3+DB , or weapon
Colonial E-1 60% (30/6), damage 2D6, range 15 yds
Glock 23 60% (30/6), damage 1D10+1, range 20 yds
Dodge 30% (15/6)

Clothing: UCC uniform (armor 2), heavy vacuum work suit (armor 12).

Equipment: PDA (personal handheld computer), scientific scanner, toolkit, patch kit, thruster pack, emergency sealant foam canister.

NOTES:



BACKSTORY

Personal Description: Mouse-like appearance, long light brown hair, vivid green eyes.

Ideology/Beliefs: Life is less complicated inside the virtual space.

Treasured Possession: VirtEqual drugs.

Traits: Likes following other peoples' directions.

You are pilot of the UCC Gladius, a natural 'virtual dreamer', able to mentally connect with advanced computer systems for extended periods of time. It's not an easy life, but it's one that helps people because not everyone can V-dream. You are more comfortable in virtual settings, where your skills as a V-dreamer come into play. You are a small woman, as the drug VirtEqual tends to stunt growth. You're physically addicted to the drug and without it you risk slipping into madness in a matter of days. You know you'll never be free of the drug or the desire to connect into virtual environment systems. You've always been filled with the need to help others, which is good because you sometimes have difficulty making decisions for yourself. You are most comfortable when following a direct order, which makes you a stellar officer.

You seldom dream, which is fortunate because when you do it's often of fire and screaming.

Lola Voight, Age 19, Female

Profession: Pilot

Birthplace: New Brooklyn,
United Colonial Coalition

Position in Ship: Ship's Pilot, Virtual Dreamer

STR 50	CON 75	SIZ 50	INT 85
POW 70	DEX 75	APP 65	EDU 75
Luck 50	Sanity 70	Build 0	Move 8

Damage Bonus: 0

Hit Points: 12

Magic Points: 15

Weapons: Colonial E-1 Electric Pistol (full charge for 6 shots). Skorpion submachine gun (.32, 1 magazine standard, 1 magazine armor-piercing rounds that counts armor points as 1/2 normal rating).

Skills: Electrical Repair 30%, Fast Talk 45%, Low Gravity Maneuvers 30%, Mechanical Repair 40%, Navigate 50%, Operate Heavy Machinery 25%, Persuade 25%, Pilot (Spacecraft) 80%, Psychology 45%, Science (Astronomy) 21%, Science (Physics) 50%, Stealth 35%, Virtual Dreaming 70%.

Languages: English 75%.

Brawl	35% (17/7), damage 1D3, or weapon
Colonial E-1	60% (30/12), damage 2D6, range 15 yds
Skorpion SMG	55% (27/11), damage 1D8, range 40 yds
Dodge	37% (18/7)

Clothing: UCC uniform (armor 2), heavy vacuum work suit (armor 12).

Equipment: PDA (personal hand held computer), scientific scanner, thruster pack, 45-day supply of VirtEqual.

NOTES:



BACKSTORY

Personal Description: A little baby-faced, red hair, green eyes.

Ideology/Beliefs: There's no computer system built you cannot disable.

Significant People: Lola Voight, who you worship.

Traits: Romantic at heart.

You always had a knack for getting into things you weren't supposed to. When you were arrested at thirteen for hacking into the Berlintown security grid, your life took a sudden turn. The colonial government gave you a job doing what you loved to do, using computers to spy on people and hack into encrypted systems. You are one of the top hackers in the colonies, and rightfully proud of your abilities. To you, every secure system is a challenge and none have stymied you yet. In your free time you push the envelope of creating Virtual Dreamland environments, recently creating a digital puppy for Lola on her last birthday.

You sometimes dream of being chased on Earth, hiding and trying not to be discovered. In those dreams you're worried about being found and put to death.

Vincent Delgato, Age 28, Male

Profession: Hacker

Birthplace: Berlintown, United Colonial Coalition

Position on Ship: Computer/Intelligence Officer

STR 65 CON 70 SIZ 70 INT 75
 POW 70 DEX 65 APP 55 EDU 91
 Luck 50 Sanity 70 Build 1 Move 7

Damage Bonus: +1D4

Hit Points: 14

Magic Points: 14

Weapons: Colonial E-1 Electric Pistol (full charge for 6 shots). Glock 23 (.40 automatic handgun, 1 magazine standard, 1 magazine armor-piercing rounds that counts armor points as 1/2 normal rating). 10-gauge shotgun (single shot, 10-gauge slugs, 5 rounds of ammunition).

Skills: Computer Use 85%, Electric Repair 55%, Electronics 65%, Fast Talk 65%, Library Use 75%, Locksmith 60%, Low Gravity Maneuvers 20%, Mechanical Repair 40%, Navigate 40%, Psychology 20%, Science (Physics) 60%, Virtual Dreaming 35%.

Languages: English 80%.

Brawl	40% (20/8), damage 1D3+DB, or weapon-
Colonial E-1	45% (22/9), damage 2D6, range 15 yds
Glock 23	45% (22/9), damage 1D10+1, range 20 yds
Shotgun	50% (25/10), damage 1D10+7, range 25 yds
Dodge	35% (17/7)

Clothing: UCC uniform (armor 2), heavy vacuum work suit (armor 12).

Equipment: PDA (personal hand held computer), thruster pack, scientific scanner, advanced laptop with universal interface.

NOTES:



BACKSTORY

Personal Description: Pale, cropped dark hair, brown eyes.

Ideology/Beliefs: It is an honor to serve and do your part in saving mankind.

Significant People: Vincent Delgato, he seems to have a crush on you.

Traits: Business-like, organized.

You are the ship's medical officer, responsible for the lives of everyone on board. You've never lost a crewmen; with the frequency of accidents and the dangers of living in space, that's saying something. You monitor the crew's mental health, giving them standardized psychological tests for stress every six weeks. It's demanding work but it's your life, and you'd be lost without it. You're proud of your assignment.

Sometimes you dream of fine dresses, sometimes you have lots of children, and you feel safe. Your career never allowed time for a family. You cannot see having children with the threat of the mankind's destruction looming over you, and everyone you care for. Your greatest hope is that one day Project Origami succeeds and mankind can escape the nightmare of this solar system once and for all.

Diana Everett, Age 35, Female

Profession: Doctor

Birthplace: Mount Sinai Colony, United Colonial Coalition

Position on Ship: Medical Doctor

STR 50	CON 70	SIZ 65	INT 70
POW 70	DEX 55	APP 80	EDU 80
Luck 55	Sanity 70	Build 0	Move 7

Damage Bonus: 0

Hit Points: 13

Magic Points: 14

Weapons: Colonial E-1 Electric Pistol (full charge for 6 shots). Glock 23 (.40 automatic handgun, 1 magazine standard, 1 magazine armor-piercing rounds that counts armor points as 1/2 normal rating). Colonial E-2 electric rifle (full charge for 10 shots).

Skills: Computer Use 30%, First Aid 75%, Library Use 35%, Low Gravity Maneuvers 20%, Medicine 75%, Persuade 30%, Pilot (Spacecraft) 19%, Psychoanalysis 55%, Psychology 65%, Science (Biology) 60%, Science (Pharmacy) 40%, Stealth 35%, Virtual Dreaming 24%.

Languages: English 60%.

Brawl	30% (15/6), damage 1D3, or weapon
Colonial E-1	40% (20/8), damage 2D6, range 15 yds
Glock 23	40% (20/8), damage 1D10+1, range 20 yds
Colonial E-2	50% (25/10), damage 4D6, range 35 yds
Dodge	40% (20/8)

Clothing: UCC uniform (armor 2), heavy vacuum work suit (armor 12).

Equipment: PDA (personal handheld computer), scientific scanner, medical kit, thruster pack.

NOTES:



Andrew Fisk, Age 30, Male

Profession: Spokesperson

Birthplace: New Brooklyn,
United Colonial Coalition

Position on Ship: Chief Negotiator/Diplomat

STR 65 CON 65 SIZ 75 INT 90
POW 75 DEX 55 APP 65 EDU 80
Luck 60 Sanity 75 Build 1 Move 7

Damage Bonus: +1D4

Hit Points: 14

Magic Points: 15

Skills: Charm 60%, Computer Use 40%, Credit Rating 31%, Disguise 15%, Fast Talk 45%, Intimidate 30%, Library Use 45%, Listen 45%, Persuade 75%, Psychology 80%, Stealth 20%, Spot Hidden 40%, Virtual Dreaming 30%.

Languages: English 80%, Mi-Go 65%.

Brawl 25% (12/5), damage 1D3+DB, or weapon-
Colonial E-1 70% (35/14), damage 2D6, range 15 yds
Glock 23 70% (35/14), damage 1D10+1, range 20 yds
Dodge 45% (22/9)

Clothing: UCC uniform (armor 2), heavy vacuum work suit (armor 12).

Equipment: PDA (personal hand held computer), thruster pack, data disks with mining filter schematics.

Weapons: Colonial E-1 Electric Pistol (full charge for 6 shots). Glock 23 (.40 automatic handgun, 1 magazine standard, 1 magazine armor-piercing rounds that counts armor points as ½ normal rating).

NOTES:

BACKSTORY

Personal Description: Sharp features, cropped blond hair blue eyes.

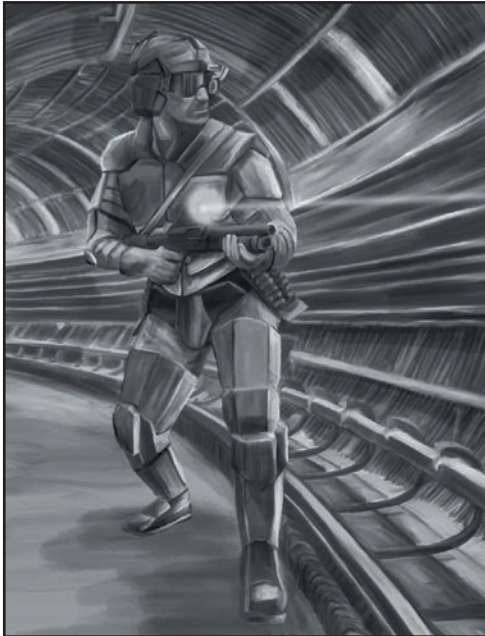
Ideology/Beliefs: Humanity must survive no matter the cost.

Treasured Possession: Toolkit.

Traits: Direct, cunning, dislike for meat.

You are a top negotiator and diplomat for the United Colonial Coalition serving aboard the UCC Gladius. You are an expert in the mi-go, a race of sentient fungi. They often appear as humanoid aliens, however you know that is only a disguise. You do not trust them, but dealing with them may be vital to shortening Project Origami by decades. To you, Project Origami is the only hope for mankind, and if furthering or protecting it costs you your life (and the life of everyone onboard the Gladius), then so be it.

You often dream of being lost in the cold and dark while trying to find a lost child. You've also been a vegan since your early teen years; the idea of ingesting meat has always filled you with disgust.



Damien Gunn, Age 26, Male

Profession: Soldier

Birthplace: New Brooklyn, United Colonial Coalition

Position on Ship: Rail Gunner, Security

STR 70 CON 80 SIZ 80 INT 75
 POW 65 DEX 60 APP 60 EDU 85
 Luck 45 Sanity 65 Build 1 Move 7

Damage Bonus: +1D4

Hit Points: 16

Magic Points: 13

Weapons: Colonial E-1 Electric Pistol (full charge for 6 shots). Glock 23 (.40 automatic handgun, 1 magazine standard, 1 magazine armor-piercing rounds that counts armor points as ½ normal rating). Colonial E-2 electric rifle (full charge for 10 shots).

Skorpion submachine gun (.32, 1 magazine standard, 1 magazine armor-piercing rounds that counts armor points as ½ normal rating).

Skills: Climb 40%, Electronics 20%, Electrical Repair 30%, First Aid 70%, Intimidate 40%, Jump 35%, Listen 55%, Low Gravity Maneuvers 65%, Mechanical Repair 40%, Rail Gunnery 60%, Stealth 55%, Spot Hidden 45%, Virtual Dreaming 25%.

Languages: English 75%.

Brawl 60% (30/12), damage 1D3+DB, or weapon
 Colonial E-1 65% (32/13), damage 2D6, range 15 yds
 Glock 23 65% (32/13), damage 1D10+1, range 20 yds
 Colonial E-2 70% (35/14), damage 4D6, range 35 yds
 Skorpion SMG 50% (25/10), damage 1D8, range 40 yds
 Dodge 50% (25/10)

Clothing: UCC uniform (armor 2), heavy vacuum work suit (armor 12).

Equipment: PDA (personal hand held computer), toolkit, patch kit, thruster pack, emergency sealant foam canister.

NOTES:

BACKSTORY

Personal Description: Brawny looking, black hair, brown eyes.

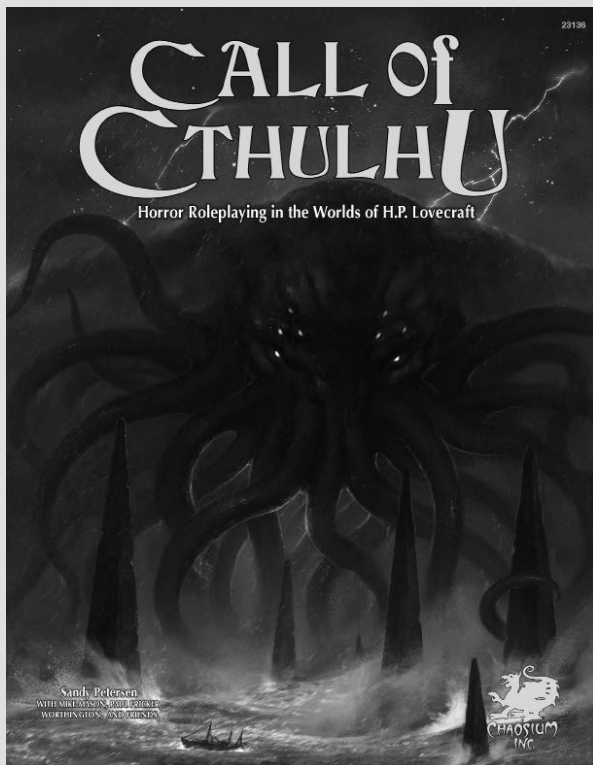
Ideology/Beliefs: Enough of hiding, soon we should take the fight to the enemies of mankind and reclaim Earth.

Significant People: St. Christopher pendant on chain around neck, passed down to you from you grandfather.

Traits: Disciplined, although sometimes a little hot headed.

You were born to be a warrior. You take your duties of protecting the crew of UCC Gladius and the colonies very seriously. It is your job to man the ship's powerful rail gun, which fires a cluster of magnetically-propelled explosive bomblets. Since you seldom get into combat, you are also trained as an assistant engineer and enjoy maintaining the shipboard systems.

You dream of reclaiming the Earth. In your heart you know you are a hero, a soldier to the core. It's all you have ever wanted to be.



USING THIS BOOK WITH EARLIER EDITIONS

This book has been prepared for use with *Call of Cthulhu 7th edition*. However, with a small amount of conversion, the material can be used equally with any edition of *Call of Cthulhu*.

The most important rule changes are also provided on page 113. Most keepers should be able to use this table alone to keep their game moving, but further information is provided in detail below.

Characteristics

In *Call of Cthulhu 7th edition*, characteristics are derived by rolling 3D6 and multiplying by 5. Thus, a 3D6 roll of 16 to determine Strength is multiplied by 5 to derive a result of STR 80.

Where necessary, divide all characteristics by 5 to derive results for previous editions—in most cases this can be done “on the fly” by keepers during a game, as non-player character characteristic rolls are rarely needed. A nearby table summarizes these values.

This multiplier should be remembered for characteristic loss. Thus, if the scenario specifies that the investigator should lose 5 POW, they should lose 1 POW in earlier editions.

Characteristic	Divided by 5
15.....	3
20.....	4
25.....	5
30.....	6
35.....	7
40.....	8
45.....	9
50.....	10
55.....	11
60.....	12
65.....	13
70.....	14
75.....	15
80.....	16
85.....	17
90.....	18
95.....	19
100.....	20

Education

Education has been reconfigured in *7th edition* so that it does not go above 99 for human beings. To determine EDU scores, consult the following chart.

EDU (7th Edition)	EDU (6th Edition)
90.....	18
91.....	19
92.....	20
93.....	21
94.....	22
95.....	23
96.....	24
97.....	25
98.....	26
99.....	27+

Hit Points

In *7th edition*, hit points are derived by adding CON + SIZ and dividing by 10, rounding down. Thus, a cultist with CON 60 + SIZ 65 totals 125 divided by 10, yielding 12.5. He has 12 hit points.

In earlier editions, hit points were the average of CON + SIZ, rounded up. The same cultist would have CON 12 + SIZ 13, averaged to 12.5 and rounded up to 13 hit points.

Thus, many enemies and non-player characters here may have 1 hit point less in 7th edition than in previous editions. It is recommended that the keeper ignore this difference for monsters and enemies, but may wish to allow players to recalculate their hit points for the pre-generated characters.

Damage Bonus

Damage bonuses have been changed in *7th edition*. For *6th edition*, use the following values.

<i>7th edition</i>	<i>6th & 5th editions</i>
-1	-1D4
-2	-1D6

Build

7th edition introduces Build, which is used when determining fighting maneuvers and also chases, and is derived from STR and SIZ. For *6th edition*, Build can be ignored.

Movement Rate

In *6th edition*, all human movement rates are the same (Move 8). It is recommended (for simplicity) that the keeper uses the movement values as given when using material written for previous editions.

Quick Conversion From Call of Cthulhu 7th to Earlier Editions

- Divide all *7th edition* characteristics by 5. Thus, STR 80 is equal to STR 16.
- Regular difficulty is normal chance, or *6th edition* characteristic x 5.
- Hard difficulty is one-half chance, or *6th edition* characteristic x 3.
- Extreme difficulty is one-fifth chance, or *6th edition* characteristic x 1.
- Stealth is an amalgamation of Hide and Sneak, and may be used for either skill.
- Opposed rolls may be resolved by using the Resistance Table.
- A bonus die is equal to +20% chance.
- A penalty die is equal to -20% chance.

Skills

Some skills have changed name in *7th edition*, and others have been combined. In play, allow investigators to use any skill on their character sheet, and look for opportunities for them to succeed in their chosen skill even if the text does not specify a use for it.

The skills of Hide and Sneak have been combined into the new skill Stealth. Where a Stealth roll is called for, allow investigators to roll on either Hide or Sneak as is appropriate.

A complete list of skills and their new titles appears nearby.

7th edition

6th & 5th editions

Appraise	--
Charm	--
Intimidate	--
Survival	--
Art/Craft (Photography).....	Photography
Fighting (Brawl)	Fist
Fighting (Brawl)	Grapple
Fighting (Brawl)	Head Butt
Fighting (Brawl)	Kick
Fighting (Brawl)	Knife
Fighting (Brawl)	Martial Arts
Firearms (Rifle/Shotgun).....	Rifle
Firearms (Rifle/Shotgun).....	Shotgun
Idea roll (rare)	Idea roll
Intelligence roll.....	Idea roll
Natural World.....	Natural History
Persuade.....	Debate
Persuade.....	Bargain
Persuade.....	Oratory
Science (Astronomy).....	Astronomy
Science (Biology).....	Biology
Science (Chemistry).....	Chemistry
Science (Geology)	Geology
Science (Pharmacy).....	Pharmacy
Science (Physics).....	Physics
Sleight of Hand.....	Conceal
Sleight of Hand.....	Pick Pocket
Stealth.....	Hide
Stealth.....	Sneak

Fighting

In *6th edition*, characters have separate skills for different basic weapons and attacks. These include Fist, Kick, Grapple, Headbutt, Knife, Club and others.

In *7th edition*, all of these skills have been combined into one skill: Fighting (Brawl). The Fighting (Brawl) skill is used for any basic attack (unarmed, and with small knives, clubs, etc.)

In this book, for the keeper's convenience, all Fighting attacks have been listed under the name of the weapon (e.g. Brawl, Knife), but have the same attack chance. This explanation is added to explain the absence of certain attacks (Kick), and to illustrate why many characters have the same value in Brawl and they do in Knife, but that each may inflict differing damage, and so on.

In *6th edition* all humans begin with a base Fist attack skill of 50%, so keepers may wish to increase Brawl attacks to that value if the listed level is lower. Other attacks such as Knife should be kept as is.

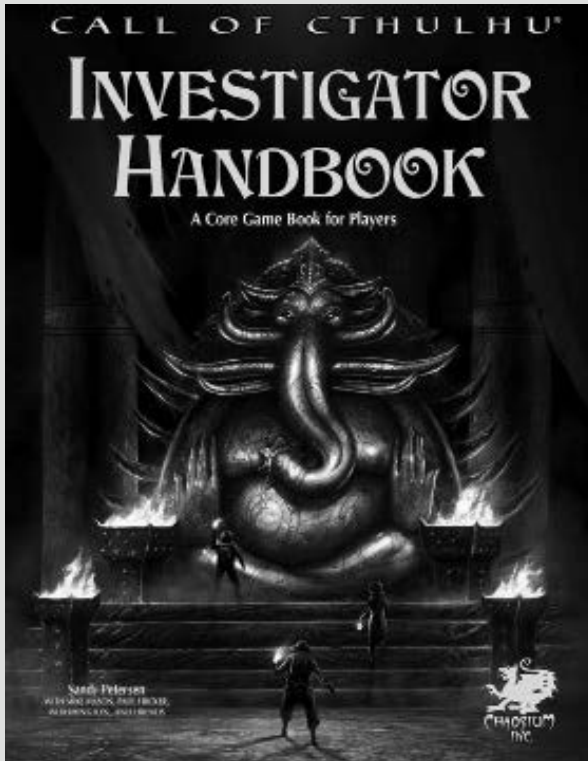
Attack Values

Attack chance and damage values are unchanged between editions.

In *7th edition* a distinction is drawn between rolling under half-chance (Hard success) and under one-fifth change (Extreme success). For the keeper's convenience, these values are listed after every attack chance—thus, 40% (20/8).

Keepers using earlier editions may ignore these values, although the latter (one-fifth) serves as a helpful calculation of impale chances.

Note the Success Values Table following, which provides a handy reference when determining full – half – fifth values.



RULE DIFFERENCES

The following *7th edition* terms and rules are used throughout the text.

Opposed Rolls and the Resistance Table

7th edition does not use the Resistance Table from previous editions. Instead, opposed rolls are made. Each opposing party makes a roll under the required skill or characteristic, aiming to roll under their own value while achieving a higher degree of success than the opposing value.

For *6th edition* and earlier play, for any mention of an opposed roll, use the Resistance Table. Thus, opposing a

door's Strength of 80 is making a Resistance Table roll against STR 16 (80 divided by 5). Opposing a sorcerer's POW of 90 is making a Resistance Table roll against POW 18.

Characteristic Rolls

All characteristics in *Call of Cthulhu 7th edition* are five times those of earlier editions. Thus, a Strength roll in the text here is the same as a STR x 5 roll for earlier editions.

In *7th edition*, characteristic and skill rolls are modified by difficulty. See the note on difficulty, below.

Difficulty

Difficulty is an important concept in *Call of Cthulhu 7th edition*, and these terms are used throughout this book:

- Regular difficulty equates to normal chance.
- Hard difficulty equates to one-half chance.
- Extreme difficulty equates to one-fifth chance.

Thus, if the text calls for a Hard Strength roll, a *7th edition* character must roll under half the value of his or her STR. To derive this for earlier editions, the character must roll under STR x 2.5. It is recommended that the value be increased to the more common 6th edition convention of STR x 3.

These rules also apply to skill checks. Thus, a Hard Spot Hidden roll is made at one-half the normal chance for Spot Hidden.

These rules are summarized here:

<i>7th Edition</i>	<i>Prior Editions</i>
Characteristic Rolls	Skill checks
Regular Difficulty	Characteristic x5/ Normal chance
Hard Difficulty	Characteristic x3/ Half-chance
Extreme Difficulty	Characteristic x1/ One-fifth chance

Idea Rolls

It is important to note the difference between Intelligence rolls and Idea rolls in *Call of Cthulhu 7th edition*.

An Intelligence roll may be called for when an investigator is attempting to solve an intellectual puzzle of some kind.

An Idea roll is made when the players have become stuck at a point in the investigation; perhaps they have missed a vital clue, or just don't know what to do next and the game has stalled. The Idea roll allows the keeper to get the investigation back on track (with the outcome of the Idea roll being whether the missed clue has been obtained easily or at some cost to the investigators).

Keepers using *6th edition* should feel free to add Idea rolls to any scenario if it is a convenient means of moving the game forwards, even though the text does not specify

their use. Likewise, where the text calls for an Intelligence roll, use INT x 5.

earlier editions, look up the full value (*i.e.* 60), the number after the second slash mark (*i.e.* 12) is the value of the characteristic for earlier editions.

Bonuses and Penalties

7th edition introduces the concept of the bonus die and the penalty die for percentile rolls, and these terms are sometimes included in the text here.

To approximate this for previous editions, assume that a bonus die means a +20% chance, and that a penalty die means a -20% chance.

Tomes

Each tome has a value that denotes the number of Cthulhu Mythos skill points that are gained when a character reads the book. In *7th edition*, the total amount of points remains unchanged, but may be divided in to two values, the first for an initial reading (*CMI*), the second for a full study reading (*CMF*). To figure the two values, simply divide the Cthulhu Mythos value of the tome by three and round down; this is the amount of points gained for an initial reading. The remainder of the points are those gained for a full reading.

For Example: The Eltdown Shards (in 7th edition) has a Cthulhu Mythos value of 3/8 (3% for an initial reading and 8% for a full study reading). For 6th edition, add these points together for the tome's Cthulhu Mythos of 11%.

Chase Rules

7th edition introduces new rules for resolving chases.

For earlier editions, call for investigators to make the listed characteristic rolls included as part of the chase, and have their opponents do the same. If the investigators roll more successes than their opponents, they win the chase.

Keepers may also choose to resolve chases dramatically, rather than via mechanics.

Poison Damage

Poisons no longer have a potency (POT) in *7th edition*, but are given a descriptor instead. To derive poison POT for earlier editions, use the following:

<i>Poison</i>	<i>POT</i>
Mild.....	1-9
Strong.....	10-19
Lethal	20+

Success Values Table

KEY: Each box shows Full / Half / Fifth values, equating to Regular / Hard / Extreme rolls in *7th edition*.

Thus, a character with a skill of 44%, has 22% chance of making a Hard roll, and 8% chance of making an Extreme roll. When converting characteristics from *7th edition* to



01/0/0	02/1/0	03/1/0	04/2/0	05/2/1
06/3/1	07/3/1	08/4/1	09/4/1	10/5/2
11/5/2	12/6/2	13/6/2	14/7/2	15/7/3
16/8/3	17/8/3	18/9/3	19/9/3	20/10/4
21/10/4	22/11/4	23/11/4	24/12/4	25/12/5
26/13/5	27/13/5	28/14/5	29/14/5	30/15/6
31/15/6	32/16/6	33/16/6	34/17/6	35/17/7
36/18/7	37/18/7	38/19/7	39/19/7	40/20/8
41/20/8	42/21/8	43/21/8	44/22/8	45/22/9
46/23/9	47/23/9	48/24/9	49/24/9	50/25/10
51/25/10	52/26/10	53/26/10	54/27/10	55/27/11
56/28/11	57/28/11	58/29/11	59/29/11	60/30/12
61/30/12	62/31/12	63/31/12	64/32/12	65/32/13
66/33/13	67/33/13	68/34/13	69/34/13	70/35/14
71/35/14	72/36/14	73/36/14	74/37/14	75/37/15
76/38/15	77/38/15	78/39/15	79/39/15	80/40/16
81/40/16	82/41/16	83/41/16	84/42/16	85/42/17
86/43/17	87/43/17	88/44/17	89/44/17	90/45/18
91/45/18	92/46/18	93/46/18	94/47/18	95/47/19
96/48/19	97/48/19	98/49/19	99/49/19	100/50/20

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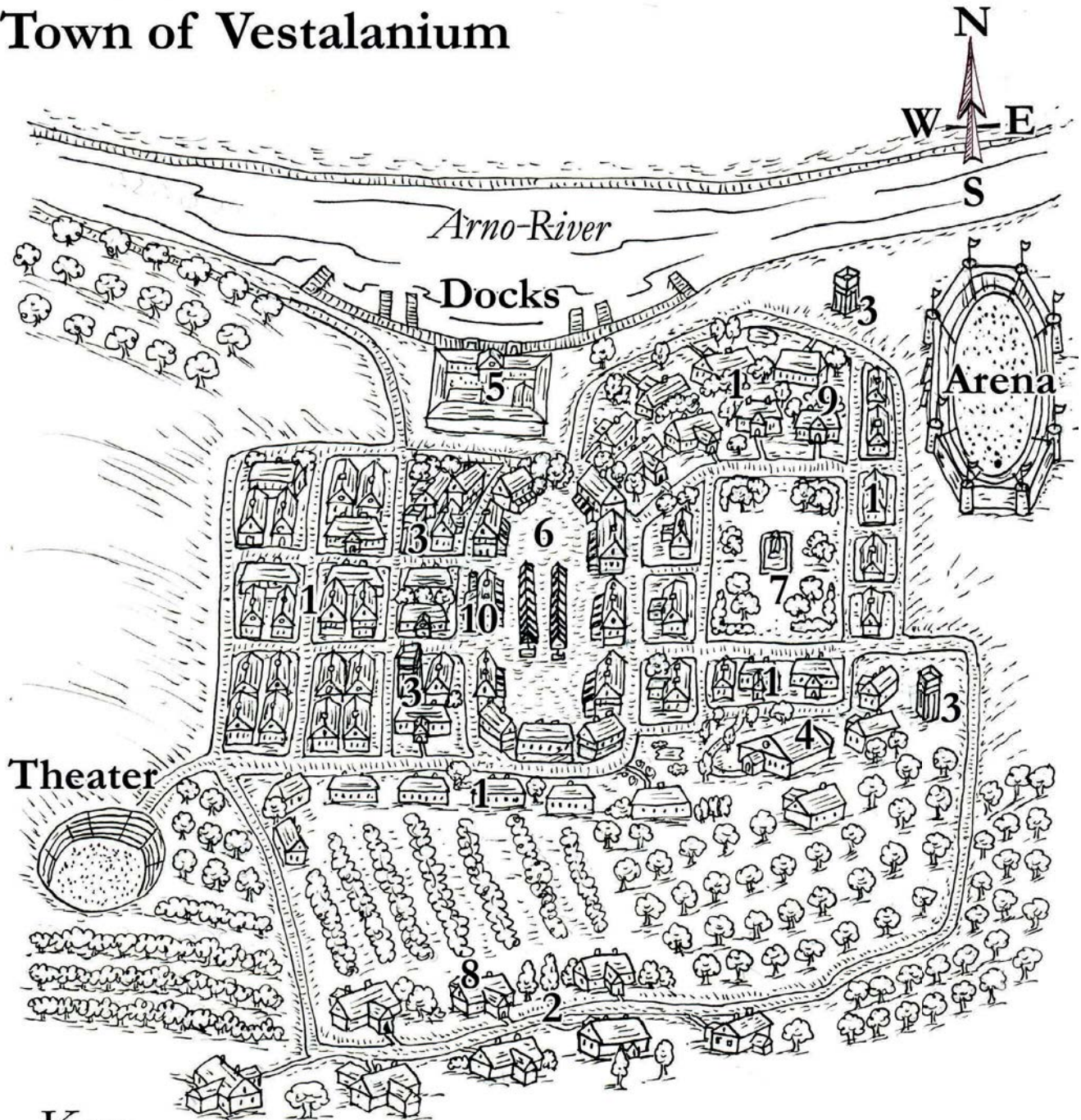
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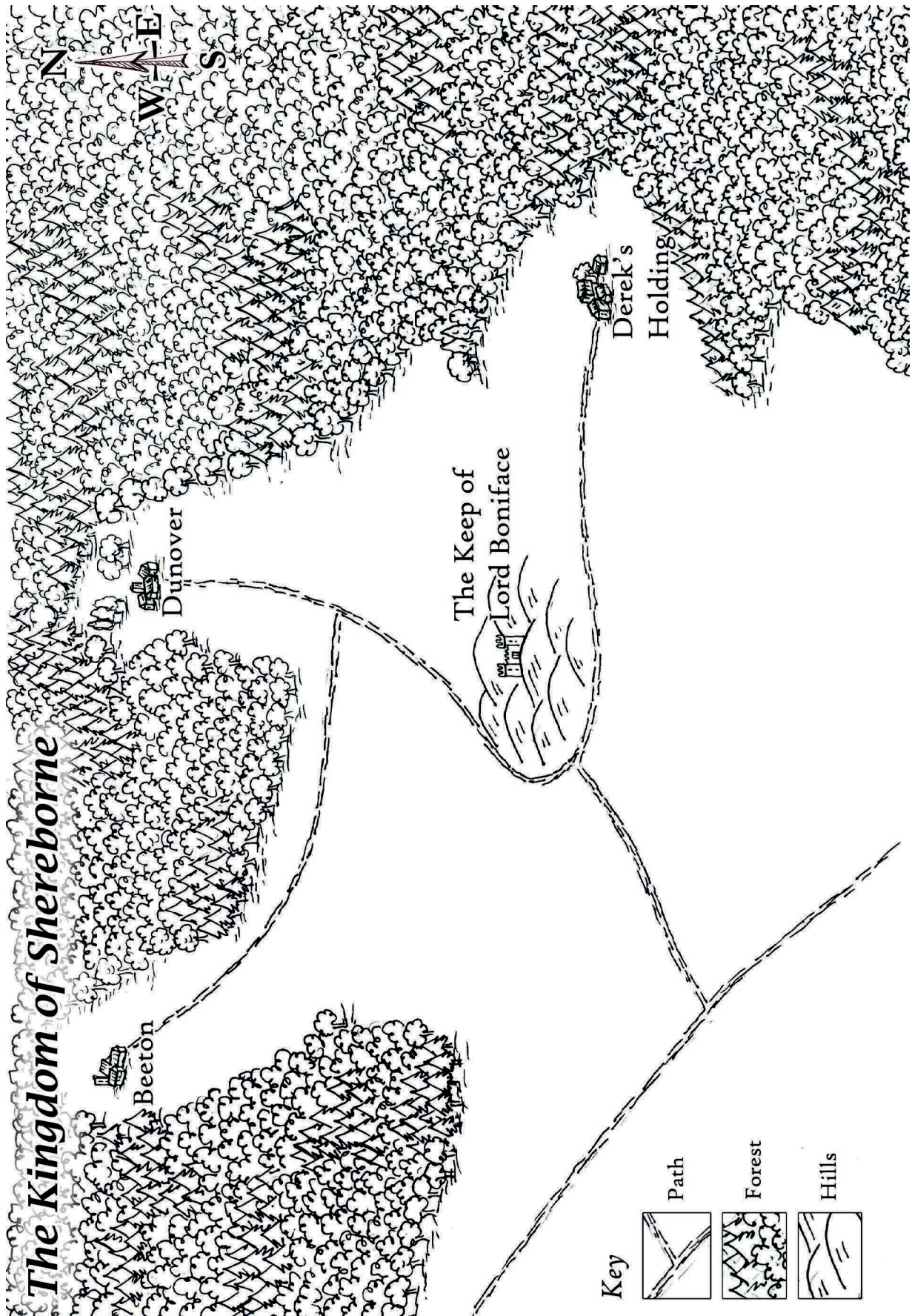
Town of Vestalanium

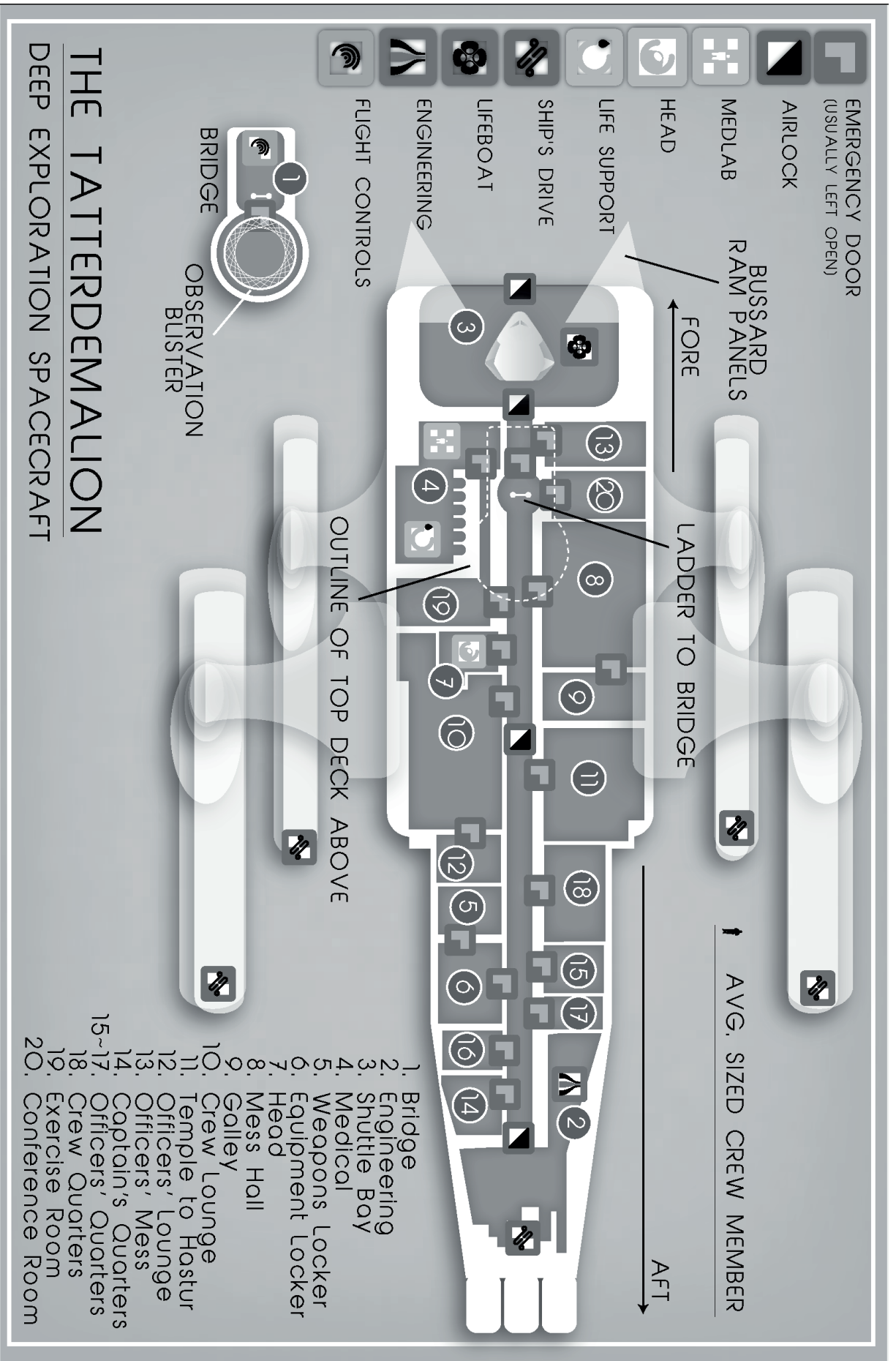
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Key

- | | |
|---------------------|---------------------|
| 1. Residential Area | 6. Shops |
| 2. Villas | 7. Public Gardens |
| 3. Guard Posts | A. Villa of Ravulus |
| 4. Bathhouse | B. Town Augur |
| 5. Dockhouse | C. Metalworker |





THE TATTERDEMALION
DEEP EXPLORATION SPACECRAFT

HANDOUTS: HERALD OF THE YELLOW KING

HANDOUT: HERALD 1

Of Cael Greybeard, from an account of the wedding feast of Halimund, son of Thibult, dated 60 years ago.

"And the bard of old, Cael of the Grey Beard, did come to the feast and a place of honor was set at Lord Thibult's high table. At the Lord's behest did Cael tell tales of heroes and gods and of the fair folk who dwelt in the lands beyond the veil. Some called for tales of Cael himself, for it was said that in the time when our grandfathers were young Cael of the Grey Beard was a powerful defender of our people, and that he battled demons from beyond our world. But the bard would not speak of himself, saying that such stories should never be told and that the less our people knew of those Old Ones the safer our kingdom would be."

HANDOUT: HERALD 3

Saxon proclamation, from an account of the wedding feast of Elspeth, daughter of Halimund the Just, dated 40 years ago.

Upon the wedding feast of Elspeth, daughter of Halimund the Just, was Cael Greybeard called forth. There, before the gathered Saxon lords, did Halimund swear an oath to the aged magus. 'In gratitude for a life of sacrifice and valor, for forever protecting these lands against the dark forces that stalk the steps of mankind, I pledge that so long as you live, the Sacred Silver Oak shall live with you.' And Cael was pleased and gave thanks to the lord. Brother Simon, the Christian priest, did caution the lord on honoring such pagan practices, warning him that such beliefs were the work of the Devil. Words were passed in private between the priest and the lord and when done the priest was silent.

HANDOUT: HERALD 2

The Sacred Oak, from A History of Wessex, dated 42 years ago.

And other treasures our kingdom held as well. Chief among them was the Great Silver Oak. Since the time of the Sons of Mil the druids had held their college beneath its sacred boughs. All of history and myth, poetry and song... all that dwelt within the spirits and minds of men had been spoken before that tree. From generation to generation, bards were housed within that sacred oak. Darker things too were whispered there, secret rites and songs and riddles to combat the dark gods that slept in sunken places and pushed against the veil of our world.

HANDOUT: HERALD 4

From the personal journal of Brother Simon, 40 years ago. Written in Latin.
Sanity loss 1D3; +0/+2 Cthulhu Mythos; Mythos Rating 6.

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...and after the humiliation I suffered at the feast I sought out Cael Greybeard. It was my wish to enlighten him to the ways of Christ and persuade him to cast aside his pagan beliefs before his death. Whatever I thought of the aged man's beliefs, I did not wish to see him suffer an eternity in the pit of hell simply because he had never been given the opportunity to embrace the Heavenly Father.

When I found the aged storyteller he was sitting under his beloved oak tree. I engaged him in long conversations that went on until the stars were high in the sky. During that time I spoke of the love of Christ, and the foul cells of damnation that await those who reject Christ's call. Cael told me that there was little in my faith that he disagreed with but that such a path was not for him. He claimed to be a servant of the old ways, a protector of mankind and a keeper of dark secrets. I challenged him to tell me of these dark things but he said it was better if I knew them not. I then told the aged man that I too meant to be a protector of the people of Wessex, and that I too had a duty, as a man of God, to oppose such devilry. After what must have seemed much pestering on my part, he agreed to share one such secret.

He drew a symbol in the dirt, which upon viewing it made my head spin as if falling. The trio of arms upon the character seemed to reach up for me, as if they were the very hands of Satan. The old man scuffed it out before it could claim me. He asked if I wanted to know what that rune signified; telling me there was a dark

story behind it. God forgive me, I said yes.

The particulars of the tale I shall not write here. I shall never share what I have learned, nor will I ever forget it. The story was called "The King in Yellow." It tells of a royal family in an endless squabble over who would succeed to the throne of Vthill, their kingdom. A traveler comes to their lands claiming to be a messenger for the last king. The noble family kills this messenger; all the while, a phantom city begins moving closer to their own. In the end, the King in Yellow, who could only be one of Satan's lords, arrives. Madness is his mantle and discordance the sounds of his footfalls. His realm of entropy and his dead city, called Carcosa, swallows up their kingdom. It was a beautiful tale, haunting and terrible, full of horror and sadness and despair that chilled my immortal soul. The aged bard then said that only our being seated at the foot of this sacred oak had stopped a curse of madness upon my soul.

I should have heeded his words, that there are things man should not know. He tried to explain more of it, how this King in Yellow was only one face of an ancient demon of madness, but I begged him to stop. I do not think I will ever speak with the old man again. I no longer fear for his soul; now I fear for us all.

Ripples from Carcosa

HANDOUTS: HEIR TO CARCOSA

HANDOUT: END TIME 1 **PRIORITY ONE MESSAGE**

UCC Gladius—PRIORITY ONE—Proceed on intercept course to Earth vessel. At 12 hours after your confirmation of orders, the area of 34-33-254-X14 will be blanketed with an artificially-created particle storm. This will jam all transmissions in that sector for a period between one to three hours. During this period you will engage the intruder. You are to disable, board and capture the vessel. The intelligence and technology gained could prove invaluable. The ship must be under Colonial control by end of the storm's blackout. Once you have vessel under control, proceed to 85-27-158-V16 and contact Colonial High Command. DO NOT—Repeat—DO NOT destroy the intruder unless all other options are exhausted. If vessel cannot be taken then destroy the vessel. After confirmation of orders, conduct radio silence until objective achieved. CPM Joshua Clark.

Confirm receipt of orders? Y/N.

END TIMES: HANDOUT 2 **TATTERDEMATION LOG,** **MISSION STATEMENT**

Operation Yellow Princess—Rendezvous with rogue asteroid passing through Solar System, designated FRAGMENT. Land team to perform excavations into the object's center. Information obtained from the Blessed God-King indicates the object is hollow and contains the ancient palace of Carcosa. Within is imprisoned a being of holy divinity, daughter of our Blessed God-King, the princess, Camillia. Your team will free this being and assist her in any way she desires.

END TIMES: HANDOUT 3

CAPTAIN'S PERSONAL LOGS

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Day 387—We arrive at FRAGMENT, eager to begin the second part of our mission. Will land team tomorrow.

Day 388—Team landed by shuttle, camp and survey equipment set up.

Day 389—Landing team has begun digging the shaft into the center of the most holy object. Wish I could be with them. Monitoring progress.

Day 403—Team has entered hollow center of fragment. Sending back images of a large chamber with what appears to be a pyramid within. Dimensions inside asteroid are larger than could be possible by laws of physics; gravity and breathable atmosphere present. hail to Who Should Not Be Named and the Blessed wonders of his Chaos! We have found it, a true fragment of Dead Carcosa. This is holy ground.

Day 405—Team found a large central chamber, sending back detailed scans of a hieroglyph-covered wall. We are having K2-PS187 run a translation of the hieroglyphs. Team finds a "tomb," upon which are runes of imprisonment.

Day 406—K2-PS187 informs me that the hieroglyphs detail the history of what happened in YThill after it became absorbed by the blessed city Carcosa. It is written in the form of a play. The crew is in shock and holy ecstasy; we have discovered a sequel to "The King In Yellow." Oh, what glories such a tale will hold! I have commanded the computer to begin translation, as well as create a virtual reconstruction of the play.

Team destroyed imprisonment runes but all contact with them was lost moments later.

Day 407—Shuttle on surface of FRAGMENT has exploded. No contact from team in 20 hours. Scans show movement near shuttle and shaft. Moving figure is not part of landing team. She is free! Our mission is accomplished. Do not have capability to land another team and all attempts to communicate have failed. I've set a return heading for Earth. We have done all we can here.

Day 412—K2-PS187 finished translation and virtual play. Crew gathered to watch it but part way through the main computer began to malfunction. Postponed viewing until technical problems can be solved.

Day 414—K2-PS187 in total system failure. We cannot regain control of system. Automatic door killed crewmen Johnson. Opened security/punishment protocols on system but it still refuses to comply with orders.

Day 415—K2-PS187 attempted to detonate main power plant and overload main engines. We have shut down main computer and are attempting to run the ship from our handhelds and backup portable computers.

Day 417—Intercepted encoded radio transmission. Cannot determine source or decode message without main computer online. Could there be a feral tribe living out here? We must report this once we re-establish communications with Earth.

Day 418—Particle storm. Navigation of fine until it passes.

END TIME: HANDOUT 4 VIRTUAL PERFORMANCE OF HEIR TO CARCOSA.

The program begins with the royal family of Yhtill cowering before the King in Yellow, Avatar of Hastur. The images are very realistic. For the next three hours you witness a horrifying creative work, full of betrayal, intrigue, and horror. The story unfolds thus:

After claiming Yhtill and absorbing it into Carcosa, the King in Yellow takes the insane princess Camillia as a consort. She gives birth to three children, sired by the Great Old One. There are two boys and a girl, which she names Thothut, Tasylock, and Tassilda. Camilla finds some small happiness raising her children amid the nightmarish Carcosa and serving as consort to "The Last King." As they become young adults, the princess's children take on many of the physical characteristics, inhuman powers, and sinister disposition of their father. Their transformation is the final blow to Camillia's sanity and—in a moment of deepest despair—she hangs herself. Her children discover her lifeless body.

For a time the royal trio live in Carcosa, powerful evil beings serving their sire. But like their grandmother, uncle, and mother before them, the princes and princess of Carcosa start to whisper, squabble, and plot. The three have dreams of succession. Thothut and Tasylock unwisely plot against their father. Tassilda is invited into her brothers' plot but refuses to take part. But she does nothing to warn her father of the plot.

Hastur, aware of the plot all along, easily avoids their traps and destroys Thothut and Tasylock. Tassilda is spared; however, for the silent betrayal of not warning her father, she is punished. She is forced to write out the story of what has happened on the walls of her home in Carcosa.

Her father tells her, "Had you come to me with your desires, I would have given you power to claim your own kingdom. I would have raised you up as I am, and given you cities as grand as Carcosa. But for your treachery I now banish you. You shall never have the power to free yourself, but when the stars are right my faithful shall release you. If you then call upon me, with humility and respect as is fitting an heir to Carcosa, I will grant that which you desire.

"But to remind you of your betrayal, the kingdom I grant you will be much like the prison I condemn you to now. Your dominion shall be over a kingdom of cities, encased in stone and floating in space." Tassilda is then sealed in a crypt within her home; Hastur encases the building in stone and hurls it into space.











CHAOSIUM
INC.

RIPPLES FROM CARCOSA

THREE SCENARIOS EXPLORING HASTUR, CARCOSA, & THE KING IN YELLOW

"O do not seek to learn or even ask, What horror hides behind...The Pallid Mask!"
 ~Lin Carter, "Litany to Hastur"

Of all the varied and mysterious Great Old Ones of the Cthulhu Mythos, few ensnare the imagination as easily as Hastur. The image of the silent, deserted city beside a dark, foreboding lake where sinister things lurk is one that stays with the reader. Many of us have walked the twisting streets of that dead alien city in our minds, finding our way into the tall towers to stand before an ancient throne. There sits the King in Yellow, the Lord of Carcosa, who gazes at us from behind his Pallid Mask. It is a journey many of us have taken, whether alone in our dreams or around a table rolling dice with our friends. It is a journey we are about to take again.

Ripples from Carcosa seeks to expand upon the mythology of "He Who Should Not Be Named" and it gathers much of the varied material on Hastur into one place. The first chapter reviews The Great Old One Hastur and his various avatar forms. It examines the Yellow Sign, the play "The King in Yellow", the Mythos tome of the same name, and the effects these things have on the human mind.

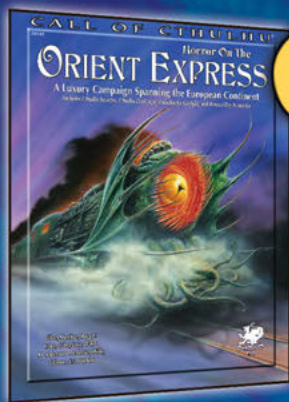
Next within these pages is a trio of adventures pitting investigators against Hastur and his human worshippers. These scenarios can be played as stand-alone adventures or as a linked campaign called "Ripples from Carcosa." Investigators are provided for each scenario, but keepers should feel free to allow their players to use their own investigators if they so choose.

Finally is information on the Great Old One Hastur and his cults during the *Cthulhu Invictus* and *Cthulhu Dark Ages* eras.

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