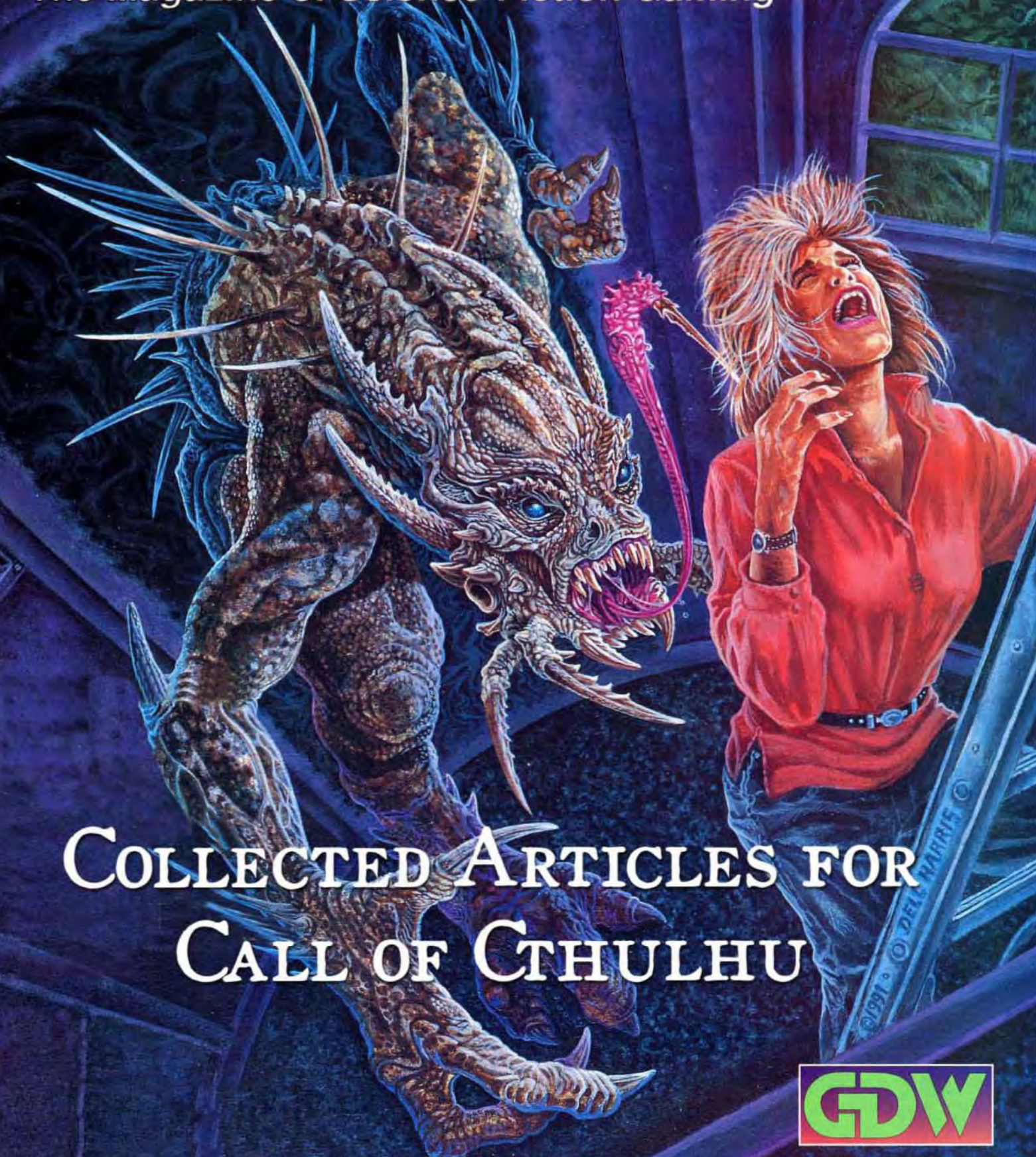


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CALL OF CTHULHU

GDW

Beings and Mythos: The Space-Eaters

Frederick Paul Kiesche III



At first I didn't see anything but the tall trees, all white and glistening with the fog, and above them a thick, white mist that hid the stars. And then something long and white ran quickly down the trunk of one of the trees.... It ran so quickly down the tree that I couldn't see it clearly. And it was so thin anyway that there wasn't much to see. But it was like an arm. Whoever heard of an arm as tall as a tree? I don't know what made me compare it to an arm, because it was really nothing but a thin line, a string.... But it gave me the impression that it was looking for something that it had dropped. For a minute the hand seemed to spread out over the road, and then it left the tree and came toward the wagon. It was like a huge white hand walking on its fingers with a terribly long arm fastened to it that went up and up until it touched the fog, or perhaps until it touched the stars...."

The fog was like a living thing. Its long fingers reached up and slapped us relentlessly on the face. It curled about our bodies and ascended in great, grayish spirals from the tops of our heads. It retreated before us, and as suddenly closed in and enveloped us.... It was the shape that towered above the trees, the vast formless shape that moved slowly to and fro across the sky.... "If we see it clearly we are lost!..." "Pray that it remains without form!"

From "The Space-Eaters" by Frank Belknap Long

The Space-Eaters are a race from another dimension, only rarely connected with ours. They are an immensely cunning and evil race, filled with a vast and relentless hunger for the minds and souls of other beings. When an intelligence other than their own travels through the dimensions and contacts them by accident (nobody wants to contact the Space-Eaters on purpose!), they attempt to follow that intelligence back to its home dimension. There they feed on that dimension's life forms until the Space-Eaters are full (usually when all the life in that dimension is consumed) or until they are driven away.

When encountered, whether in another dimension or in a character's home dimension, a droning sound will be heard by the character (actually, it will be heard telepathically, but until a character is able to deduce this, every impression should be given that the droning is heard with the ears). A character who is first encountering the Space-Eaters (or is encountering them at one of the "binding times") may attempt to escape contact by winning a POW vs. POW struggle on the Resistance Table. These attempts should be made by the Keeper without the knowledge of the player character, as in this example:

Keeper: "You hear a droning sound, as if a vast hive of bees were approaching you."

Player: "Where is it coming from? I search the area around the house."

Keeper: (Rolls POW vs. POW; the Investigator is free.) "The sound vanishes when you attempt to locate it."

Player: (Not knowing how lucky he is.) "Damn!"

A successful match for the PC means that the Space-Eater has lost contact with the character. If the creature wins the match, it will be able to find the character no matter where he goes—across time and space to the character's home dimension or physically in whatever dimension he and the creature happen to be in. 1D6 Space-Eaters will be able to bind themselves to one character (or NPC) at a time, following that person to his own dimension and manifesting themselves within 2D6 miles of the character in a

randomly determined direction. (Roll 1D8. 1: N 2: NW 3: W 4: SW 5: S 6: SE 7: E 8: NE.) After a first encounter with a Space-Eater in the physical sense, the drone is recognized as what it is—the hunting/tracking call of a Space-Eater!

LIFE CYCLE

A Space-Eater cycles through three forms, called (because of their rough resemblance to these familiar earthly things) the fog form, the hand form, and the brain form. Unless the Space-Eater is successfully attacked by physical or magical means (see below), a creature of this race will arrive in a new dimension in its fog form and start to change on the following schedule:

Hours 1-3: Space-Eater in fog form.

Hours 4-6: Space-Eater in hand form.

Hours 7-9: Space-Eater in brain form.

It is suggested that the Keeper make a sliding scale to help him keep track of what form the Space-Eater in question is in. This could be done simply by making a line with 24 divisions (to represent the hours of a day) and another line with nine divisions (broken up into three sections, to represent each subcycle of the overall life cycle). These two lines are made so that you can move them around (i.e., make one on one piece of paper and another on a second piece of paper), so that the smaller nine-hour cycle can be moved around on the 24-hour cycle.

At the end of the ninth hour (unless the Space-Eater has been successfully attacked, see below), the cycle will start over again with the fog form and work its way around again. This will continue until one or another of two goals is reached: the complete destruction of all life in the dimension the Space-Eaters are in or a successful attempt at driving away the Space-Eaters.

During all stages of the cycle, the Space-Eater will attract an unnatural amount of moisture to its body. The closer you get to the creature, the thicker the fog will be (in the case of the fog form, this would be the center of the fog bank, as the creature is then so diffuse that you can actually walk into the body).

FOG FORM

The Space-Eater has no solid physical appearance; it is unorganized, and its molecular "structure" exists in a highly incoherent fashion. The only way to determine where the creature is would be to walk through the fog that is attracted to it. The Space-Eater will be at the center of the fog bank (the place where the fog is thickest).

Attacks against the Space-Eater in the fog form and against a character by a fog Space-Eater are outlined below.

CHARACTERISTICS

STR	1D6+2
CON	4D6+4
SIZ	8D6+8 (varies—gas form)
INT	3D6+3
POW	3D6+3
DEX	1D6+1
MOVE	4

Weapon Attack

Damage

Smother* 20%

Paralyze

Bind** POW vs. POW

No damage, but if successful, the Space-Eater is now able to track the character.

*The fog will attempt to condense around a character (unless it is



wounded, see below) and cut off his breathing. This will paralyze the character for 2D6 minutes and temporarily drain 1D6 from the character's CON. Essentially, this slows a victim down to make it easier to catch later.

**A fuller explanation of binding is provided under Binding and Space-Eaters.

Armor: Because of the highly unorganized and incoherent nature of the Space-Eater while in this form, knives, spears, bullets, etc. have no effect on it. Explosions will have only one-quarter of their full effect on the creature (for a fuller explanation, see below). Primal Signs will have full effect. (Primal Signs are discussed under Attacking Space-Eaters, below.)

SAN: Seeing a Space-Eater in fog form will cost the viewer no SAN, primarily because there is nothing for the viewer to focus on and lose SAN over!

HAND FORM

The Space-Eater is becoming physically coherent and organized when it obtains this form. It resembles a long, thin, white arm or rope, ending in a "hand" of many fingers or tentacles. The exact size and thickness of the arm and fingers will be hard to determine—because the creature still attracts a lot of moisture (and is still wrapped in fog) and because the shape and thickness, as well as the total number, of the "fingers" constantly change. They become thicker and thinner, grow and decrease in number, etc.

At this stage, the creature spends much of its time in trees or other thick vegetation. A favorite hunting trick is to remain in a tree (or similar organic structure) until a victim walks underneath it, then jump down. A Keeper could make good use of this habit, especially with the proper (ahem) atmospheric use of the thick fog.

CHARACTERISTICS

STR	3D6+3
CON	4D6+4
SIZ	4D6+4
INT	3D6+3
POW	3D6+3
DEX	2D6+2
MOVE	6 crawling/8 leaping

Weapon Attack	Damage
Sting*	Automatic 1D3 of STR and POW
Bind**	POW vs. POW No damage, used to "track" victims
Whip***	40% 1D6 CON

*With this attack, the Space-Eater drills into the forehead of a bound victim, making a hole in the forehead and going all the way through the brain (without coming out of the other side). This attack will happen painlessly and instantaneously, like a hot knife going through butter. Note that although the attack is automatically successful, *it can only be used against victims that are bound to that particular creature* (that is, those on whom it has executed a successful bind attack). If a character is not bound to that particular Space-Eater, this mode of attack cannot be used.

Bound characters are still allowed an attempt to break away from a bound state at the beginning of the Space-Eater's sting. A dodge must be made by the character (using a DEX roll). If successful, the creature then physically misses the victim, and the victim must win a successful POW vs. POW struggle to escape his bound state. The Space-Eater will continue to strike until the character fails his DEX roll or escapes the bound state.

When a character finally fails at a dodge attempt, the Space-Eater begins to penetrate his skull. At this point the character can make a last-ditch POW vs. POW attempt on the Resistance Table to escape his bound state. If the Space-Eater's victim fails in his POW vs. POW attempt, the victim will not lose blood, but will lose 1D3 points of STR and POW. The Space-Eater will gain these points of POW and STR, but only on a

temporary basis. When its form shifts again, the gain will be lost, and the creature will only have whatever STR and POW it would normally have for its form. In addition to the loss of STR and POW, within a period of 3D6 minutes, the character's brain will begin to feel "cold"—a burning cold that will cause him to shake and shudder constantly. This shaking and shuddering will be so bad at times that the character will have to roll against his DEX to keep from falling down (Keeper's discretion).

If the victim is able to break his binding at the start of the penetration, the Space-Eater will let him go. The referee should roll for STR and POW loss (1D3 points each), but the victim will be able to regain back some but not necessarily all of the lost characteristics within 10 minutes. (Roll 1D6. 1-2: 1 point 3-4: 2 points 5-6: 3 points. Roll for POW and STR separately.) Whatever is not regained is permanently lost. The brain chill described above does not occur.

**A fuller explanation of binding is provided under Binding and Space-Eaters.

***The whip attack occurs when the Space-Eater uses its body to physically strike an intended victim. This attack can be used against bound or unbound victims: It is used to keep the victim within easy reach of the creature by paralyzing him until the Space-Eater changes form again. The whip attack is similar to the fog form smother attack in that it temporarily drains 1D6 points of CON when it paralyzes the victim for 2D6 minutes.

Armor: The Space-Eater still has no armor, but it is not yet coherent and organized enough (the shifting of size and density, as well as the variable number of fingers is an indication of this) for attacks to have full effect. Knives, spears, bullets, etc. will have one-quarter of their full effect, and explosions will have one-half of their full effect (see below). Primal Signs will have their full effect. (Primal Signs are discussed under Attacking Space-Eaters, below.)

SAN: Seeing a Space-Eater in the hand form will cause the PC to lose 1D10 points of SAN, unless he is able to make his SAN roll, whereupon the character will lose only one point of SAN.

BRAIN FORM

The Space-Eater obtains its most coherent and dense shape during this stage of its life cycle. It resembles a brain, with a tail made up of the nerves of the spinal cord. The brain is approximately one foot in size, and the tail is about six feet in length. The brain moves by edging on a trail of slime extruded by a supple forefoot, much in the same manner that a snail moves along the ground. The brain also has the ability to leap while attacking, as well as being able to crawl up walls or trees, or hang from branches, ceilings, etc., by means of suction. The Keeper should delight in describing this form of the Space-Eater to his players: its slimy form, the shiny trail it leaves, the sucking sound it makes when it moves, the pulsating "veins" on the exterior.

Once a Space-Eater has attacked a victim and killed him, it will remain by the body until it changes back into the fog form, making no attempts at movement unless it has to defend itself or desires to paralyze another potential victim if that victim approaches closely.

CHARACTERISTICS

STR	4D6+4
CON	4D6+4
SIZ	2D6+6
INT	3D6+3
POW	3D6+3
DEX	3D6+3
MOVE	8 crawling/10 leaping

Weapon Attack	Damage
Drain*	Automatic Full drain of STR, POW and SAN, as well as consumption of all nervous tissue in skull and spinal column (see below).
Bind**	POW vs. POW No damage, used to "track" victims.
Whip***	50% Paralyzes



*This attack can only be used against victims that are bound to a particular Space-Eater. If another victim is approached, even if it is bound to another creature, it cannot be attacked in this fashion. Victims who are drained must have been successfully stung.

A character that is bound will feel the cold in his brain and the droning grow in intensity. If a controlled character is attacked by a brain form Space-Eater, the Space-Eater will leap from the ground and wrap its tail around the neck of the character. The character may throw it off in a STR vs. STR struggle, but *only* if he also is able to make his DEX roll (the "cold" will make his shaking increase, so movement will be more difficult). If the Space-Eater manages to hold on, it will insert its tail into the hole made previously and drain the characteristics of STR, POW and SAN. It will then cut a circular section out of the top of the skull, remove that section, and eat the

brains and spinal tissue of the victim.

If the bound character is able to throw the Space-Eater to the ground, he will have a chance to attack it physically or engage it in another POW vs. POW struggle in an attempt to shake the binding.

**A fuller explanation of binding is provided below.

***The whip attack can be used against bound or unbound victims. In this attack, the brain leaps and uses its tail to lash around the victim's throat in a paralyzing attack. This will cause the character to lose 1D6 points of CON and to be paralyzed for 2D6 minutes. This attack is similar to the whip attack of the hand form and the smother attack of the fog form.

Armor: The Space-Eater is at its highest stage of coherency and organization during this form. Bullets, knives, etc., will have one-half of their normal effect, and explosions of any kind will have their full effect. Primal Signs will have their full effect. (Primal Signs are discussed under Attacking Space-Eaters, below.)

SAN: SAN loss at this stage is greatest. A character who sees a Space-Eater in the brain form will lose 1D20 points of SAN if he fails a SAN roll. Even if a character is able to make a successful SAN roll, the character will lose 1D6 points of SAN. If a bound character is successfully drained, he is killed, and all SAN is lost (of course).

BINDING AND SPACE-EATERS

Binding is what sets the Space-Eaters apart from other creatures in the Cthulhu Mythos. It is similar in operation to the binding used by the Cthonians or the hunting ability of the Hounds of Tindalos; however, it does not cost a Space-Eater any POW to bind itself to a character, and the character can still move (the binding acts more like a tracking device than anything else).

There are several times during its life cycle that a Space-Eater can attempt to bind itself to a victim, and several times that a bound victim can attempt to break free. Note that if a Space-Eater is sent back to a fog form, this counts as one of the times that a bound victim can attempt to break free. Space-Eaters can bind any victim in any part of the world. They will usually only bind victims within reach (because of their slow form of travelling) for ease of feeding. A Space-Eater may bind up to 1D100 victims during each binding time, and more than one Space-Eater can attempt to bind to a single victim (although the Keeper should be merciful in this respect). However, of course, each victim can make an attempt to escape at each stage mentioned below. And, of course, the Space-Eater can only physically attack one victim at a time.

To break free, in all cases, the victim must successfully do battle with the Space-Eater in a POW vs. POW struggle on the Resistance Table. Note that at certain times, a victim may have lost POW, and the Space-Eater may have gained POW during the time a character was bound, so the odds can gradually stack up in favor of the Space-Eater!

The first stage at which a Space-Eater can attempt to bind a victim and that a victim can attempt to break free is when a Space-Eater is initially contacted—either in the creature's home dimension (prior to an attempt on the part of the Space-Eater to track the visitor back to his dimension) or in the victim's home dimension. This first stage is also considered to exist (for purposes of breaking free) when a Space-Eater is reduced to its fog form as a result of an attack.

The second time a victim may attempt to break free is when the Space-Eater shifts from fog form to hand form. This is also the second time the creature may attempt to bind new victims.

The third attempt at freedom comes when a Space-Eater tries to attack a bound victim and drill a hole in the victim's forehead. This must be coupled with a DEX roll in which the victim successfully dodges the hand on its first (and subsequent) passes, until the Space-Eater either successfully attacks or the victim is able to break away. The creature is unable to bind new victims in hand form after 15 minutes to half an hour past the time in which it changed from fog form.

Midnight	Noon	1.00 Hours Fog
1 a.m.	1 p.m.	2.00 Hours Fog
2 a.m.	2 p.m.	3.00 Hours Fog
3 a.m.	3 p.m.	4.00 Hours Hand
4 a.m.	4 p.m.	5.00 Hours Hand
5 a.m.	5 p.m.	6.00 Hours Hand
6 a.m.	6 p.m.	7.00 Hours Brain
7 a.m.	7 p.m.	8.00 Hours Brain
8 a.m.	8 p.m.	9.00 Hours Brain
9 a.m.	9 p.m.	
10 a.m.	10 p.m.	
11 a.m.	11 p.m.	

Sliding Scale

This sliding scale is designed to help you keep track of the life cycle of the Space-Eater. Photocopy the page, then cut out the two 12-hour scales and tape them end to end (so that 11 a.m. meets with noon). Also cut out the smaller nine-hour life cycle scale. Next, determine when the Space-Eaters arrive, and match that time with Hour 1.00 Fog on the Life Cycle scale. At the end of the ninth hour, the cycle will start over again with the fog form. This will continue until all life in that dimension is destroyed or the Space-Eaters are successfully driven away.



The fourth time a victim may attempt to break free is when the Space-Eater shifts from hand form to brain form. Note that at this point, a bound victim has lost some POW and the creature has gained some POW. The struggle takes place during the transition from one form to another, when the creature still has its temporary gain. This is also a time when the creature may attempt to bind a new victim.

The fifth time a victim may attempt to break free is when the Space-Eater is attacking him in the brain form. The process is similar to the one outlined above—a dodge must be made using the DEX roll. The creature will then physically miss the victim, and the victim must win a successful POW vs. POW struggle. If the victim is not successful in his POW struggle, the creature can make another leap, the victim make another dodge, etc., until the combat is resolved one way or another. The Space-Eater is unable to make an attempt at binding new victims after 15 minutes to half an hour past the time in which it changed from hand form.

At each point where a character can make a POW vs. POW struggle, the Keeper must do it for him unless the character fully understands what is going on. The Keeper should be fair when doing this for the character, and allow the character every chance to break loose from the creature. After all, the object of the game is to scare people and make them sweat, not to kill them all off without any chance of surviving!

ATTACKING SPACE-EATERS

A variety of methods can be used to attack Space-Eaters.

Physical Attacks in Fog Form. The Space-Eater starts out highly unorganized and incoherent in nature in fog form. Physical attacks will have the following effectiveness: All knives, bullets, etc. (penetrating attacks) have no effectiveness against the Space-Eater. All explosions have one-quarter effect.

Physical Attacks in Hand Form. In the hand form, the Space-Eater increases in organization and molecular coherency. Physical attacks with knives, spears, bullets, etc., have one-quarter of their normal effect; all explosions have one-half of their normal effect.

Physical Attacks in Brain Form. When a Space-Eater has transformed into the brain form, it has reached the highest amount of coherency and molecular density. All bullets, knives, etc., will have one-half of their normal effect, and all explosions will have their full effect.

Interrupting the Life Cycle. If a physical attack is carried out which reduces a Space-Eater's hit points to zero, the creature will *not* be killed, nor will it be sent back to its home dimension. Its life cycle will instead be interrupted. No matter what form it is in, the creature will be changed back into the fog form. It will remain that way for the rest of the current cycle (i.e., if it is in the second hour of the hand form, it will remain in fog form for the next four hours—during which it would have normally transformed into the brain form), plus the full range of the next cycle (another nine hours), making, in this example, a full 13 hours in the fog form. When recovering from a physical attack, a Space-Eater will be unable to move, bind, or use the smother attack to defend itself. A bound character may make an attempt to free himself by use of a POW vs. POW struggle on the resistance table. If successful, the victim will have all the creature's recovery period to make an escape or to find some way of driving the Space-Eater back to its own dimension.

Magical Attacks. When attacking Space-Eaters by magical means, all magical attacks will have their normal effect, except that whenever the word "kill" is used in the magical damage descriptions or when the effect of death would occur, substitute the effect of having the Space-Eater return to its home dimension or being disrupted to the fog form as mentioned above under Interrupting the Life Cycle. The fate of the creature is determined by using a percentile die: On a roll of 1-75, it is disrupted; on a roll of 76-100,

the creature must return to the dimension of the Space-Eaters. If this attack is taking place in the home dimension of the Space-Eaters, then the Space-Eater is rendered essentially harmless, and the character will be permitted to leave without being tracked (unless another Space-Eater is tracking him!).

Primal Sign: The only way to drive a Space-Eater back to its home dimension, using "magical" means that will not cost a character points of SAN or POW is to use what is known as a Primal Sign. If the character is searching for clues and makes a successful Idea or Cthulhu Mythos roll, he will realize that he must make an impression of a primal religious sign: a Star of David, a Christian Cross, an Egyptian Ankh, a Pentagram, an Elder Sign, or some other form. The character must make some sort of somatic, physical, or visual representation of the sign. The effectiveness of the different methods of sign making are indicated as follows:

Physical Sign: The character uses a cross, ankh, etc., in physical form (i.e., the character takes a cross from around his neck and holds it in front of him). This has a 20% chance of working.

Motion Sign: The character makes the sign somatically (with hand motions). For example, a character crosses himself. This has a 20% chance of working.

Motion Sign with Artificial Light: Making the hand motion with a flashlight or another artificial light source. This has a 30% chance of working. In addition, being near an artificial light source alone with the first two methods mentioned adds 05% chance of the sign driving the Space-Eaters back to their home dimension.

Motion Sign with Flame: This can be any kind of flame—match, burning newspaper, lantern, bonfire, torch—as long as a character can outline the sign with flame. This has a 70% chance of working. "Outline" means that a character would take a torch and make the sign of the cross, for example.

Physical Sign with Flame: Taking a Primal Sign and setting it on fire. For example, a church catches on fire and the cross burns. This has an 80% chance of working.

Making a Primal Sign several times (crossing oneself several times in rapid succession) will add +01% to the chance of success. (As an example, our character is using flame. That will give him a base chance of 70% of driving away the Space-Eater. He waves the flame in the shape of a cross four times. This gives him a +04% bonus—a total of a 74% chance of the sign working.)

The Keeper should realize that physically confronting a Space-Eater—especially one in the hand or brain form that is attempting to choke a character or drill a hole in his brain—may excite a character so that panic and desperation set in. If the *player* is acting in such a fashion (showing signs of fear), make the *character* attempting to form a Primal Sign roll his DEX or under. An unsuccessful roll means that, in his panic, the character has fumbled (dropped the torch, for example). A really good roll means that the character was able to master his panic and face the Space-Eater with a steely glint in his eye, driving the creature back to where it belongs!

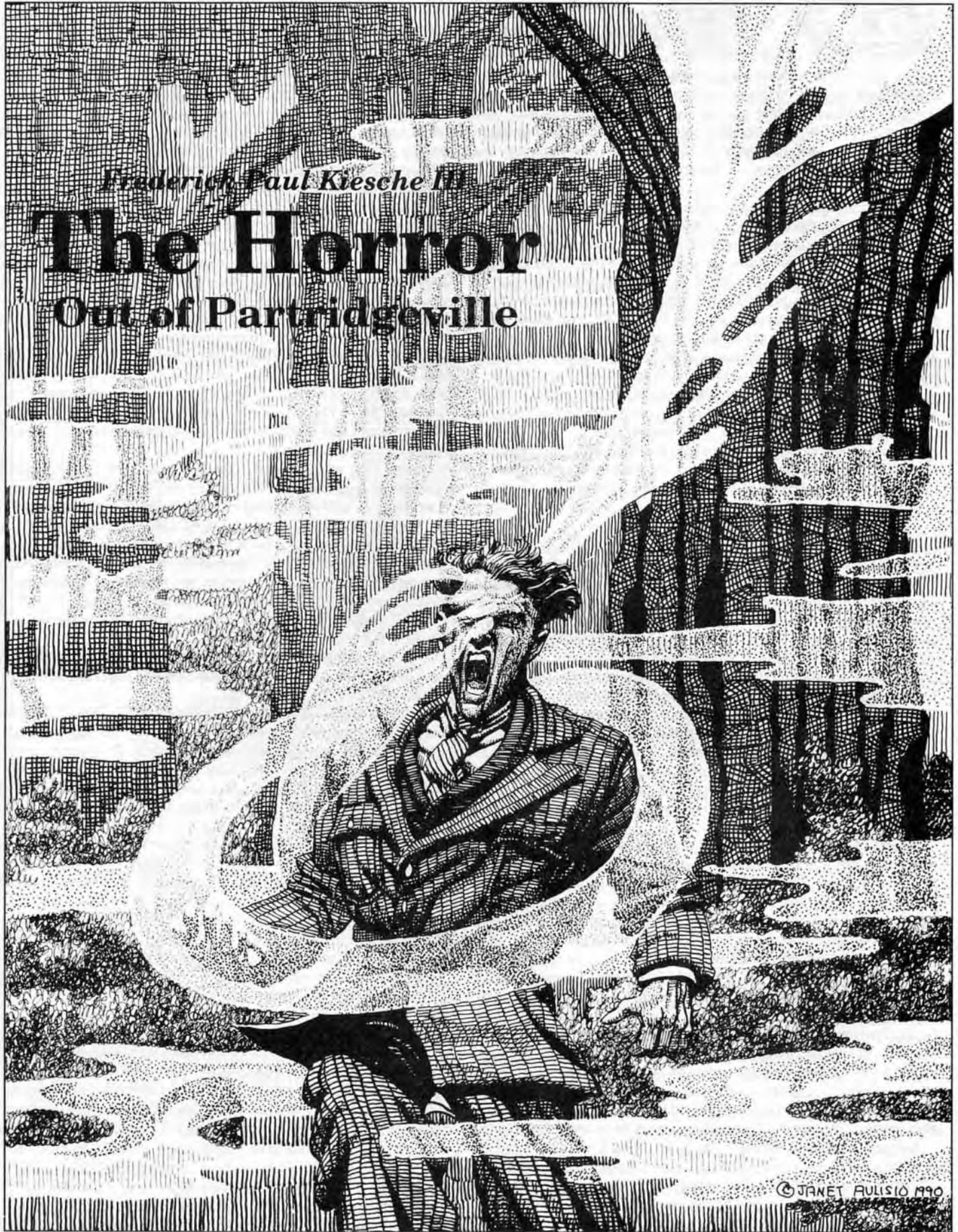
If a PC succeeds in driving away a Space-Eater in this fashion, a primal, psychic scream is heard, and the Space-Eater is returned to its home dimension to lick its wounds and plot revenge. The PC should receive a 1D20 boost to his SAN (provided he feels that Space-Eater problem has been resolved—meaning that no more are in evidence). His character has helped save the universe and may have learned not to poke around in obscure dimensions without a road map! Ω

The creatures in this article are taken from "The Space-Eaters" by Frank Belknap Long (as collected in Tales of the Cthulhu Mythos, edited by August Derleth, and published by Arkham House and Ballantine Books). The Space-Eaters are a Lesser Independent Race.

For an adventure involving the Space-Eaters, don't miss "The Horror out of Partridgeville" in this issue!

Frederick Paul Kiesche III

The Horror Out of Partridgeville



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In September 1920, a casual acquaintance of the investigators (Dr. Henry Armitage, chief librarian of Miskatonic University) receives a bizarre letter from a writer friend. A few days later, the friend is found dead—apparently of murder, but a murder of very strange form and circumstance. Dr. Armitage thinks—on the basis of that letter—that supernatural forces are at work, forces that caused the death of his friend!

KEEPER'S INFORMATION

The writer, Harold Langley (a noted author of occult fiction for popular magazines and local newspapers) was killed while experimenting with the occult. He accidentally contacted the Space-Eaters, an obscure independent race of beings in the Cthulhu Mythos. Three of the Space-Eaters broke free from their dimension, killing Langley, and are now wandering the area, looking for more food.

The adventure takes place at or near Miskatonic University, but Keepers may alter the location and time. The Keeper should show the PCs a newspaper article outlining the facts in Langley's death. That night, while gathered in the Student-Faculty Club (if the investigators are connected with Miskatonic University) or a local social club, they will be approached by Dr. Henry Armitage, who will ask for their help.

Langley's was killed the night before the characters learn of the murder. Determine the exact time of the death and start the "clock" on the cycle of the Space-Eater's form-changing life cycle. Emphasize to the PCs that a heavy fog has covered the area since the death (it will remain throughout the adventure, starting in the morning of the first day). For a more detailed explanation of the fog, see Fog below.

CLUES

Certain clues will give the players insight into the mystery before they encounter the Space-Eaters. The first clue should be the article in the *Arkham Advertiser*, the local newspaper. From there the players should encounter the fog, then meet with Dr. Armitage and read the letter he carries.

An article appearing in the Arkham Advertiser on September 23, 1920:

Writer Murdered in His Home

Harold Langley, a local occult writer, was killed in a bizarre murder last night in his home. Langley was 42.

Police state that the investigation is proceeding "smoothly," but they have no leads at this point. Two Miskatonic University professors are reported to have found the body when keeping an appointment with Langley.

Langley wrote occult fiction for popular magazines and local newspapers. Some of his more famous stories are "The House of the Worm," "Shadows of Yog-Sothoth," and the infamous "The Defilers," which set a record last year when it was published by this periodical and caused 110 letters of indignation to be written by local readers.

Details of the murder are being held pending notification of family. No relatives are presently known, so police are making official inquiries.

The investigators will be approached by Henry Armitage (M.A., Miskatonic, Ph.D., Princeton, Litt.D., Johns Hopkins) of the Miskatonic University Library. Armitage was a friend of Langley's and assisted him in his research on the occult (the Miskatonic University collection of occult books is known around the world).

Armitage received a letter from Langley shortly before the murder. On the basis of the letter, several conversations with Langley, and Langley's strange behavior before his death, Armitage thinks the murder was not committed by humans, but by something from the Cthulhu Mythos. He shows the investigators the letter, and asks for their help:

Excerpts from the Letter

It is the shadowy terrors that lurk behind and above them that are mysterious and awful....

Our little brains—what can they know

of vampire-like entities which may lurk in dimensions higher than our own, or beyond the universe of stars? I think sometimes they lodge in our heads, and our brains feel them, but when they stretch out tentacles to probe and explore us, we go screaming mad....

Coldly malign intelligence from beyond the stars—suppose there were a greater horror? Suppose evil things from some other universe should decide to invade this one? Suppose we couldn't see them? Suppose we couldn't feel them? Suppose they were of a color unknown on Earth, or rather, of an appearance that was without color?

They would not exist for us? They would exist for us if they could give us pain. Suppose it was not the pain of heat or cold or any of the pains we know, but a new pain? Suppose they touched something besides our nerves—reached into our brains in a new and terrible way? You cannot oppose what you cannot see or feel....

Suppose they should eat their way to us through space!"

Langley's Behavior

Armitage will state that Langley always struck him as an odd chap and that he was always talking of places other than our own time and space. Langley believed it was possible to travel to other dimensions or other times by freeing one's mind/spirit/essence from the body and allowing it to roam through time and space. Langley spent a lot of time in the Miskatonic University Library and studied the many occult books that are found there—including a rare edition of *The Necronomicon*. A few days before Armitage got the letter, Langley claimed that he was on the verge of a big breakthrough in dimensional travel. Then Armitage heard nothing, got the letter, and again heard nothing—Langley ceased his usual daily visits to the library and did not call or write. Then Armitage heard of the murder.

FOG

By now the investigators should be ready to venture outside. The Keepers should keep careful track of where the Space-Eaters are and their current form—this will help to determine what "random" events and clues the investigators will find in order to help them to unravel the mystery. As the Keeper tracks the creatures' movements, and as the investigators move through the countryside, the Keeper should indirectly indicate their current location through talking about the thickness of the fog (i.e., it gets thicker as the investigators move toward the Space-Eaters and thinner as they move away from them).

ARKHAM ADVERTISER

At the office of the *Arkham Advertiser*, the investigators may learn the following for each successful Fast Talk or Oratory roll: A reporter will say, Langley was killed in "a horrible fashion—his head," then the reporter will shut up and refuse to talk any further. If the PC is successful with another roll, he will learn that "it looked like he was shot in the head, but it was peculiar—everything was gone." What "everything" is the reporter will refuse to disclose. On further successes, the reporter will reveal that the police are unofficially "very puzzled" by the murder. He will also reveal the names of the two professors who found Langley's body: Melvin Giles of the Department of Anthropology and Welles Keddig of the Department of Economics. Both were close friends of Langley and visited on a regular basis for tea and conversation.

MELVIN GILES' HOUSE

If the investigators visit Giles' house, they will find a very shaken person. Giles will not be able to reveal much more than the reporter

CALL of CTHULHU

at the *Arkham Advertiser* did—other than that he and Kedding went for their usual Sunday night visit and found the house apparently empty. They noticed that things seemed disturbed and that the house was full of fog. Thinking that Langley had gone for a walk and left a window open somewhere (allowing the fog to enter), they looked around downstairs, checking all the windows, then went upstairs. There they found the body. After revealing this, Giles will shut up and refuse to talk any further.

WELLES KEDDING'S HOUSE

If the investigators check Kedding's house, they will get even less information than from Giles. Kedding will refuse to talk to the investigators unless they have brought Armitage along. He will then talk to Armitage in a secretive fashion. If questioned later, Armitage will reveal only that Kedding thought the police were on the wrong track and that perhaps "there was something to Langley's stories of vast and unknown powerful forces in the universe."

SHERIFF

At the county sheriff's office (in Arkham, in the County Complex, along with the coroner, the courthouse, etc.), no information will be available—the police are very curt and abrupt. They will resist all attempts at Legal, Fast Talk, Oratory, Bribery, etc. They will say the investigation is "proceeding" and that details will be released to the public if necessary. If the investigators persist in questioning the police, they will be threatened with arrest for interfering with police business. If the investigators persist further, the police will arrest them, and they will spend a night or three in jail (someone, perhaps Armitage, will eventually get them out if the police don't just release them—having "learned their lesson"—by then).

CORONER

At the county coroner's office (located at the County Complex), players will only be admitted on a successful roll of Oratory, Law, or Bribe. Fast Talk attempts will only result in having the doors shut in their faces, and further attempts at the former skills will become

more difficult (impose an appropriate modifier). If the investigators reveal that they are friends of Langley (a slight lie if Armitage is not there), the coroner will grudgingly show them the body.

Langley is pale and waxen. There is a small hole in the upper left portion of his forehead, like a bullet hole, but no blood is present. The hole is utterly smooth—no jagged skin or bone—as if whatever made the hole was so powerful and fast that it cut through skin and bone before it had a chance to splinter the bone or tear the skin. The skull cap is missing from the top of the head, and the brain is gone. Upon questioning, the coroner will reveal the following:

- The "bullet hole" was made approximately three hours before the skull was removed.

- There is no exit path for the hole, unless one counts the removal of the skullcap. However, that can't contain the exit path because of the nature of the wound and the angle of the hole, which would indicate an exit somewhere at the base of the skull.

- The skullcap was removed in much the same fashion as the hole was created—no tearing of the skin and no splintering of the bone are evident (the skullcap was found near the body). Although some blood was spilt, the amount that one would normally expect from such a massive wound was not present.

- Not only is all of the brain missing, but a good portion of the nerves that go through the spinal column are missing as well.

- Langley lived for about three hours between the "bullet hole" wound and when his brain was removed!

NEIGHBORS AND RANDOM CLUES

At any of the houses in the neighborhood, either in Partridgeville, Mulligan's Wood, or the surrounding area, NPCs will talk (on a roll of Oratory, Fast Talk, Law, or Bribery) about the fog, the death, Langley, etc.—in general.

The Keeper should be keeping track of the Space-Eaters (and their life cycle). At the proper time, he should attempt to ensnare the investigators or NPCs with them in the psychic trap of the Space-Eaters' binding attempts. Therefore, it is possible for investigators or NPCs to have encountered the Space-Eaters in a variety of ways at this point.

If the investigators encounter the creatures, the Keeper should determine actions and results as explained below. If only NPCs have been "approached" and bound/attacked, the investigators will have to search and question before they start learning strange things. Neighbors and NPCs will reveal that they have seen strange shapes. Some people will appear shaken and refuse to talk, and some may even have the "bullet hole" marking.

Finally, if the Space-Eaters' life cycle brings about a murder, the investigators may discover (or hear of) another body—with the same grisly characteristics as Langley's!

MULLIGAN'S WOOD

In Mulligan's Wood, the fog will be especially thick (at least one Space-Eater should stay in the wood). The Keeper should use all his storytelling skill in building an eerie atmosphere and may even wish to use extra props (eerie music, incense, candles, wind chimes, "dry ice" and water to make fog, etc.) to help to sustain the spell. The investigators should encounter the Space-Eaters here first if possible—the trees (draped with moss and dripping with condensation), sick and dead plants, and ever-present fog should make it an ideal place for an encounter.

As the investigators make their way through the wood, they will also discover more clues. Dead animals and possibly one or more dead tramps are present, all with mutilations similar to Langley's—even squirrels with tiny little "bullet holes," and the missing brains and skull-caps! But be sure not to overdo the number of bodies strewn about. Follow the life cycle of the Space-Eaters exactly. It is permissible to have some dead animals and NPCs—if the Keeper wants more dramatic clues, then he can allow a few of the attacked NPCs to escape the grasp of the Space-Eaters. There should never be more bodies than the number of Space-Eaters (in this case, three) plus the number of "life cycles" that have passed could account for.

The Fun Of Role Playing

Important moments in history

499,998 BC—Ten minutes after the first humans come out into the open, Kharll the mutant Bobcat devours five of them.

124,999 BC—Humans invent the Axe.

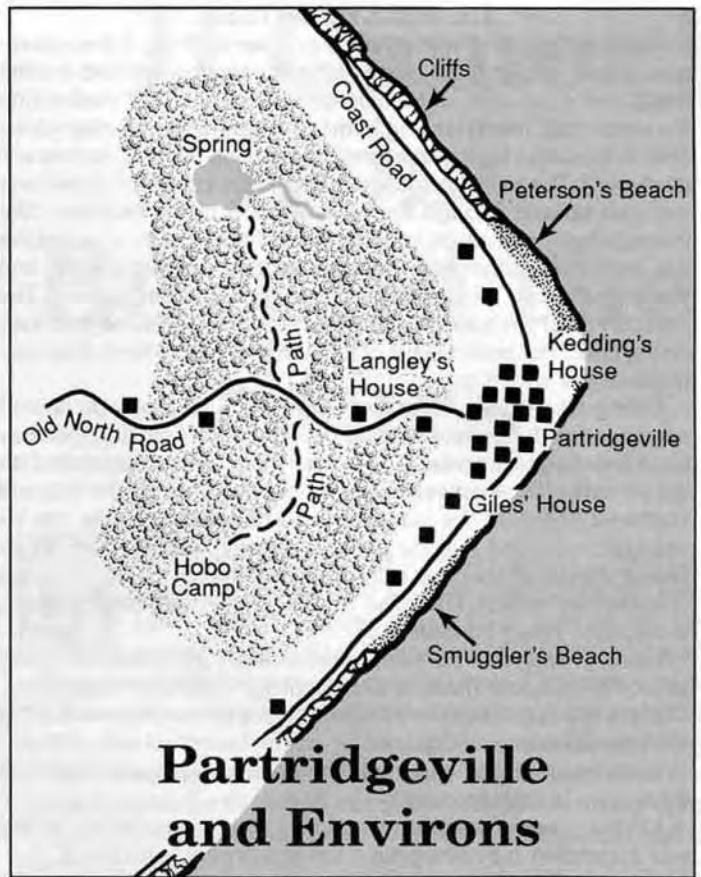
124,998 BC—Tides turn in human's favor and cat skin coats are all the rage.



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Apprentice Games





Harold Langley's House

Second Floor

Exterior

First Floor

Key

- Door
- Open window (second floor)
- Closed windows (both floors)
- Chair
- Table
- Stairs
- Books

LANGLEY'S HOUSE

Howard Langley's house will be in disarray. First, if the investigators look around the outside of the house, they will find a slime trail (about a foot wide, with indications of a smaller "tail" mark inside the wider "foot" mark) leading from the woods to the Langley house (this is indicated by the direction the grass is pushed, leaves are piled, etc.). The trail will proceed to the side of Langley's house and continue up and through the open window of the bedroom (the investigators need not be told that this is the bedroom, only that the trail leads through an open window—if they eventually enter and search the house, they will be able to deduce this themselves). The PCs can enter the house without any problems, as there is no lock on the door. The house is full of fog. On the ground floor, they may discover the following:

Living Room: The living room contains a fireplace, table, and some random furniture. A chair to the right side of the fireplace has been knocked on its side, facing right; the fireplace set located on the left side of the fireplace has been knocked over (to the left) and scattered about—if the contents are examined carefully, the investigators will find that the poker is missing. Finally, a lamp has been knocked off the table in the middle of the room (another lamp remains there intact). The fallen lamp is lying on the floor, shattered, in a pool of slowly spreading oil.

Library: This room contains approximately 800 books on a wide variety of subjects (history, anthropology, science, fiction, etc.). There are few books on the occult—Langley preferred to work at the Miskatonic University Library.

Bathroom: This is a normal bathroom, except for the fact that there is no (gasp!) hot water.

Kitchen: The kitchen looks normal. It is a little messy (after all, Langley was a bachelor), but nothing out of the ordinary will be apparent.

Storage Room: Access to the storage room is through the kitchen. The room is situated under the stairs which lead up to the second floor. It is filled with a variety of canned foods, dried meat, dried and fresh vegetables, dried and fresh fruit, etc.

Stairs: Due to the heavy fog, unless the PCs have a light, they will find

it difficult to go up to the second floor without tripping on the stairs. (Call for DEX rolls, and see if the investigators drop anything if they fail.) Oil lamps can be found in the living room, library, and kitchen.

Second Floor: Looking down the hall, the PCs will notice that all the doors, except for the one leading to the study, are closed. The door leading to the room with the open window will be immediately to their right when the PCs reach the top of the stairs.

Langley's Bedroom: Upon opening the room, the investigators can see a bed, wardrobe, dresser, and chair. The window is open, and a slime trail leads from the window to the middle of the room. A few drops of blood are scattered on the floor near the chalk outline of a body. If the PCs examine the wardrobe, they will find nothing but clothing. In the dresser, the PCs will find a box containing \$50, several cufflinks and rings, and two items of some importance—an ornate gold cross and a green, five-pointed, star-shaped piece of soapstone with an Elder Sign engraved on it (this is an Elder Stone). They will also notice that the door leading from Langley's bedroom to his study is partially open.

Langley's Study: This room is messy, mostly due to a lack of cleaning. If the room is searched, the investigators will find many books and papers scattered around. They will also find a pile of papers on Langley's desk that has some relevance to the case. Reading these papers will add 8% to the reading Investigator's Cthulhu Mythos skill and will cost 1D4 points of SAN. Those investigators who read the papers will find that the notes discuss Langley's attempts to travel into other dimensions, as well as some of the outlandish creatures he contacted on his trips.

Second Floor Bathroom: An ordinary looking bathroom.

Guest Bedrooms One, Two, and Three: These bedrooms obviously have not been used in many years; they are shut up and dark, and smell very musty.

ATMOSPHERE

While the investigators are in the Langley house, the referee should emphasize the eerie atmosphere of being in a murdered person's house. If the investigators spot the slime trail while looking around outside, the thought should occur to them that whatever killed Langley might still be inside the house! After all, there are no slime trails moving away from the house (the Space-Eater that killed Langley returned to fog form before the police arrived). A careful Keeper could really raise the blood pressures of the investigators as they *creep* from room to room looking for the killer.

EVENTS

Much of this adventure is linked to the unique life cycle of the Space-Eaters, so the adventure has deliberately been kept very open-ended. The Keeper will have to keep track of game time and the corresponding subcycle that the Space-Eaters are in. Also, the Keeper must keep tabs on where the Space-Eaters are so that he can indicate to the PCs how thick the fog is at the moment (and how close the players are to actually finding the Space-Eaters). If a Space-Eater binds to an NPC, the death of the NPC should be announced in the papers the next day. Or, if the Keeper feels additional clues are needed, the investigators could also run into an NPC being attacked, one who is experiencing the buzzing sound associated with the Space-Eaters' binding ability, or even one who has the "bullet hole" marking.

If more and more time passes and the PCs have not yet been able to solve the mystery behind the deaths, the Keeper may want to intervene more strongly and drop a few blatant clues. One possibility is to have an NPC relate to the investigators how he was able to drive off the "monster" when he "pulled the holy cross from around (his) breast and drove it away!" Ω

The adventure is inspired by "The Space-Eaters" by Frank Belknap Long, as collected in Tales of the Cthulhu Mythos, edited by August Derleth, and published by both Arkham House and Ballantine Books.

For background information for use with this scenario, see "The Space-Eaters" in this issue.

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Dr. Elwyn Darke, a prominent occultist and an authority on folk superstitions, has been murdered in the tiny Louisiana town of Bayou Perdu. The local police have no suspects in the killing. The investigators may elect to look into the matter on their own or may be asked by one of Darke's colleagues at Marshall University in Indiana to find out what really happened. Or the player characters may simply be travelling in the area. The investigators should not be well acquainted with the late Dr. Darke.

KEEPER'S INFORMATION

Bayou Perdu is the site of a strange annual ritual performed by the inhabitants at a circle of standing stones just outside town. The purpose of the ritual is to reinforce the power of a mystic sign that keeps a horrible Shoggoth imprisoned beneath the stones. Darke was attempting to break the spell and release the monster when he was killed by the local deputy sheriff, Breaux.

This adventure is intended as a change of pace and a way for Keepers to surprise players who have become so paranoid and reactionary that they reflexively annihilate anything out of the ordinary. In this case, the "sinister townsfolk" are the *good guys*, and the murdered man was an evil cultist.

BAYOU PERDU

Bayou Perdu (population 1022) is a small hamlet deep in the swamp country of Louisiana. It is located 15 miles southwest of Houma and 50 miles from New Orleans. It can be reached by a single poorly paved road or by boat along the bayou for which it is named. The town's chief industries are rice farming and fishing.

The town consists of a small cluster of houses and shops where the road crosses Bayou Perdu. The town is surrounded by swamps, which are thickly wooded with skeletal cypress trees wreathed in Spanish moss. The buildings are all shabby and run-down looking. Bayou Perdu has a drugstore with a lunch counter (Landry's Drugstore), a doctor's office (Dr. Mouton), a deputy sheriff's office, a church (Our Lady of Eternal Vigilance), and a general store with gas pumps (Mouton's General Store). As the PCs enter the town in the middle of the afternoon, they will see few people about. Several young men are lounging around on the porch of Mouton's General Store, but otherwise the streets are deserted.

Unfriendly Reception: The investigators will not exactly be welcomed to Bayou Perdu with open arms. The cajuns are fairly suspicious of outsiders to begin with

The Bayou Ritual

By James L. Cambias

(especially since such outsiders generally try to force them to abandon their native language and culture, tax their meager incomes, or take away their wine and beer). In Bayou Perdu, the inhabitants have even more reason to be unfriendly. If the player characters attempt to talk with anyone on the street, the natives will claim to speak only French. The loungers at the store will be downright hostile and will not very subtly encourage the PCs not to linger in Bayou Perdu.

There is one house with rooms for rent, but the landlady, Mrs. Landry, will demand the outrageous sum of \$10 per person to stay the night. A successful Bargain skill roll may persuade her to reduce the rate to \$7 per night. She warns the PCs that she wants no trouble of any kind in her house. The rooms are small but very clean, and all the beds have mosquito netting to keep guests from being bitten as they sleep.

Deputy Sheriff: Deputy Breaux is the local representative of the authorities. He is a conscientious official and will do his best to be fair and polite to the player characters, although he warns that if he gets any complaints from the townspeople, he'll lock them up.

If the PCs ask Deputy Breaux about Darke's murder, he can provide the following information in a very businesslike manner: Darke was found dead, shot to death with a shotgun at close range, among the standing stones just outside of town. The estimated time of death was 2 a.m. It was a rainy night, so no footprints were found. It is impossible to trace the weapon.

Breaux says he suspects that Darke stumbled across a group of bootleggers and was murdered. He claims to have no knowledge about the stones or what Darke might have been doing up there. A Psychology roll will reveal that Breaux is probably lying and seems to be afraid of something.

Darke's possessions are being kept in Breaux's office. If the PCs want to examine them, they will have to make a suc-

cessful Debate or Fast Talk roll. The property consists of some ordinary clothing, a wallet containing an Indiana driver's license and \$200 in cash, a book entitled *Occult Sites in North America*, and a strange gold ring. The ring is decorated with a little face that anyone with any Mythos knowledge at all will recognize as being the visage of mighty Cthulhu itself.

The book is a listing of all Indian sacred spots, haunted houses, and places where strange phenomena occur in the United States and Canada. It is very complete. From the standpoint of an investigator it is too complete, for it lists 10 bogus occult sites for each genuine one. The listing for Bayou Perdu says the following:

"Bayou Perdu, Louisiana, has a fairly interesting stone circle, said to have been built by Indians. A legend of the vicinity claims that the Devil frequently plays the flute among the stones."

Dr. Mouton: Doctor Albert Mouton is the local general practitioner, and performed the autopsy. He will confirm Deputy Breaux's account of the murder almost exactly word for word. Mouton is a bit more friendly than the other townspeople and has a large collection of books at his house. He can answer questions about local history.

If the PCs ask Mouton about the stones or the annual ritual, he will give factual, but undetailed, answers. The ritual is performed every year at about this time. It is an old tradition handed down from the Indians. The stones seem to have been put up by the Indians. Beyond these meager facts, he will not go.

CIRCLE OF STONES

Just outside of town is a small rise crowned with oak trees. (This kind of rise is common in swamp country and is called a *chenier*.) This chenier is unusual, for at the top is a circle of 13 large, upright stones, about 100 yards across. A successful Geology roll will determine that these stones are not from the area; they occur naturally in the Appalachians.

Scene of the Crime: The spot where the body was found is roped off, and frequent rains have obliterated all traces of the shooting. A successful Spot Hidden roll, however, will allow the PCs to notice a book lying under some bushes. Apparently Darke dropped it when he was killed. The book is a facsimile edition of the *Psakotic Manuscripts*. It is damp and starting to get mildewed, but is quite readable. An examination will show that one set of pages is spattered with blood, indicating the place Darke had it open to when he was killed.

One passage on that page is particularly noteworthy:

"The Sarsen-circles are places of mighty Power, and therein may be confined Those who come from Without. But the stones weaken from season to season and must be strengthened again when the skies are right. The stones must have their blood, and the ancient words must be said, else the Power that is in the stones will falter."

Tante Marie: Not far from the stone circle is the cabin of "Tante Marie" Breaux, an incredibly ancient old lady. She speaks only a little English and will at first be very suspicious of outsiders. If addressed in French, she will be more friendly, and a successful attempt to Fast Talk her will result in her inviting the PCs inside for coffee.

If the player characters ask Tante Marie about the stones, she will tell them the following:

"Oui, les rochers, they are very old. The Indians raised the stones, or perhaps the ones before them. Beneath them lives one of the old bad ones. It is bad luck to speak of such things at this time of year."

She will say nothing more about the stones.

If asked about the murder, she has this to say:

"Just before dawn, it was. Julien killed him up among the stones. C'est triste, but he was a bad man and shouldn't have been there."

She shrugs fatalistically and will not answer any more questions.

LIBRARY RESEARCH

If the players use the library of Tulane University in New Orleans or L.S.U. in Baton Rouge, they can learn that Bayou Perdu was settled by Acadian refugees from Canada in 1761 and has a population of 1022.

There are only two other mentions of interest: One of the early French Jesuit visitors to the area in 1695 noted the strange circle of stones and described a barbaric pagan ritual performed by the Indians there at this time of year. In 1875, a historian visited the area and noted with amusement the "quaint folk festival" held each year on the same date.

There is no library in Bayou Perdu, but at the town church Father Boudreaux has some old chronicles kept by his predecessors. The priest is one of the group that maintains the spell at the stones, so the PCs will have to convince him that they are on his side. A player character would have to succeed by rolling under half of his Oratory skill in order to convince Boudreaux. The local chronicles are written entirely in French and only mention the ritual once. In 1825, they note:

"An attempt was made by certain persons to prevent the annual rite at the

stones. They ceased their opposition when the truths of the matter were explained to them."

If the PCs pretend to be some sort of evil cultists, there is no way they can get anything from Father Boudreaux, and he will inform Deputy Breaux. After that, everyone will be even more unfriendly, if that seems possible.

STRANGERS IN TOWN

The investigators are not the only strangers interested in Bayou Perdu. The day after the PCs arrive, two men will come to town. They are Mr. Gray and Mr. Waite, and claim to be friends of the late Mr. Darke. They will occupy the remaining rooms at Mrs. Landry's house and will start asking many of the same questions as the PCs.

They will be friendly with the investigators, sharing any discoveries they make about the town, but not revealing very much about themselves or their connection with Dr. Darke. At their first meeting with the player characters, Gray and Waite will make a curious remark: "Soon night will fall." (They will say this even if it is morning.)

A successful Cthulhu Mythos roll will recognize the words as part of a verse from the *Seven Cryptical Books of Hsan*. The correct response is, "And Darkness will spread its wings across the world." If the investigators give this response correctly, Gray and Waite will be more communicative. They still won't tell exactly why they are in town, but they will tell the PCs that Darke was attempting to discover how the stones were enchanted, and what purpose they served, when he was killed.

If the player characters try to search the strangers' room, they will find a copy of the *Snakotic Manuscripts* (identical to the one Darke was carrying) and a peculiar dagger engraved with writing in no known alphabet. There is also a letter from Darke, which says:

*Brothers,
A great discovery. The circle of stones here at Bayou Perdu contains something of enormous power. I will attempt to dissolve the enchantment on the sarsens tonight. If I fail, you must prevent the local idiots from renewing the containment. Soon it will be Night.*

E.D.

THE NIGHT OF THE RITUAL

On the night of the ritual, about three days after the PCs arrive in Bayou Perdu, 13 townspeople will gather at the stones at midnight.

Father Boudreaux and Dr. Mouton will be among them, and the ceremony is

CALL of CTHULHU

guarded by Sheriff Breaux and four other local toughs armed with shotguns. Under the direction of Father Boudreaux, who reads from an ancient copy of *True Magick*, the 13 participants chant and spatter the stones with the blood of a freshly killed goat. The rite takes an hour to complete and temporarily drains one point of POW from each participant. Player characters overhearing the rite will note a similarity to the spell Create Elder Sign, if they know the spell.

Waite and Gray will attempt to interfere with the ceremony in order to release whatever is being kept bound. They won't try a frontal assault on the circle—the townspeople have too much firepower. Instead, the two men will summon a Hunting Horror of Nyarlathotep, using Mrs. Landry as a blood sacrifice. Any of the investigators remaining at the house will undoubtedly hear the chanting and the muffled screams coming from the backyard. If the PCs do nothing, the Hunting Horror will swoop down upon the stone circle and devour those performing the ritual.

If the ritual is not performed before midnight, then at 1 a.m. the chenier will tremble, the stones will topple, and the ground will erupt as a titanic Shoggoth bursts forth, smashes the village, devours anyone who does not escape, then oozes into the bayou and disappears.

NPCS

The characters will have an occasion to interact with the following NPCs in this adventure.

Deputy Sheriff Breaux

Julien Breaux is a rugged-looking man in his early thirties. He served in the army during the Great War and returned home with a bad lung after being gassed. He is a good policeman and keeps order in Bayou Perdu. But he understands that there are some occasions when the laws of the state of Louisiana just don't apply, and killing Darke was one of those situations.

Breaux is normally quite friendly, but the Darke incident has made him suspicious of strangers, and the investigators will find him very brusque and uncommunicative. Breaux is always armed with his .38 revolver and carries a 12-gauge pump shotgun in dangerous situations.

STR 15, CON 6, SIZ 15, INT 14, POW 11, DEX 12, APP 10, EDU 14, SAN 65, HP 8.

Skills: Speak French 85%, Read/Write Latin 60%, Speak Latin 50%, Psychology 40%, Debate 20%, Occult 20%, Cthulhu Mythos 10%.

Dr. Mouton

Pascal Mouton is the only doctor in Bayou Perdu and the surrounding area. He is a heavyset, red-nosed man who is quick to prescribe a little red wine for medicinal purposes. He isn't sure if he believes this stuff about the stones, but is willing to keep the facts hidden to protect Deputy Breaux. Mouton doesn't generally go armed, but if pressed he will defend himself with a surgical scalpel (treat as a small knife).

STR 8, CON 7, SIZ 14, INT 15, POW 12, DEX 10, APP 6, EDU 16, SAN 60, HP 10.

Skills: First Aid 90%, Diagnose Disease 80%, Treat Disease 75%, Speak French 75%, Treat Poison 70%, Read/Write Latin 50%, Knife 35%, Pharmacy 30%, Chemistry 25%, Psychoanalyze 15%.

Mrs. Landry

Clair Landry is a stout widow in late middle age. She rents out rooms to visitors and owns some land which her nephew farms. Darke rented a room from her, and she noticed something odd and unpleas-

ant about him. Since then, she has been suspicious of strangers, particularly those asking questions about things which should be left alone.

STR 6 CON 8, SIZ 12, INT 10, POW 16, DEX 14, APP 11, EDU 6, SAN 80, HP 10.

Skills: Speak French 75%, Listen 75%, Bargain 60%, Sneak 40%.

Young Toughs

These young men work as fishermen or trappers in the swamps around Bayou Perdu, but their chief love in life is lounging around outside Mouton's General Store, drinking home-brewed wine. They are basically friendly, but are suspicious of outsiders—especially nosy ones. They all have effectively identical attributes and abilities. All carry hunting knives, but they prefer to fight with fists and clubs. On the night of the ritual, four of them will be around the chenier, armed with 20-gauge shotguns.

STR 16, CON 16, SIZ 12, INT 8, POW 10, DEX 12, APP 8, EDU 4, SAN 50, HP 14.

Skills: Speak French 80%, Punch 70%, Track 65%, Climb 65%, Swim 50%, Club 45%, Shotgun 40%, Sneak 40%, Rifle 30%, Camouflage 20%, Sing 20%, Occult 5%.

Marie Breaux

Tante Marie is well over 80 years old and

has lived all her life in the tiny cottage near the chenier. She knows an astonishing amount about the plants and animals of the region, and has a great many charms and hexes to ward off evil. Her native language is French, and her English is heavily accented.

STR 4, CON 8, SIZ 6, INT 14, POW 17, DEX 12, APP 6, EDU 4, SAN 70, HP 7.

Skills: Botany 65%, First Aid 60%, Speak English 50%, Zoology 45%, Diagnose Disease 40%, Occult 40%, Treat Disease 35%, Cthulhu Mythos 15%. She knows the spells Heal (which costs three Magic Points and

no SAN, and which halves the recovery time for damage) and Elder Sign.

Mr. Gray

Edward Gray is a member of a sinister cult called the Brotherhood of Night, which serves Nyarlathotep. Darke was also one of the Brotherhood, and Gray and Waite have come to Bayou Perdu to find out why he was killed. Gray is a small, dapper man with piercing eyes. He owns a .45-caliber automatic and will not hesitate to use it.

STR 9, CON 11, SIZ 9, INT 13, POW 16, DEX 12, APP 10, EDU 15, SAN 0, HP 10.

Skills: Read/Write Latin 65%, Cthulhu Mythos 65%, Occult 40%, Archaeology 35%, Sneak 30%, Handgun 30%, Debate 20%. He knows the following spells: Summon Hunting Horror, Bind Hunting Horror, Contact Nyarlathotep, Voorish Sign, Contact Deep One.

Mr. Waite

Frederick Waite is a very fat, slow-moving man whose placid expression conceals the fact that he is a dangerous fanatic devoted to serving the evil will of Nyarlathotep. Mr. Waite always carries a large, sharp knife with him, and enjoys using it.

STR 13, CON 6, SIZ 16, INT 14, POW 16, DEX 9, APP 8, EDU 16, SAN 0, HP 11.

Skills: Read/Write Greek 60%, Knife 55%, Cthulhu Mythos 50%, Anthropology 45%, Spot Hidden 40%, Archaeology 30%. He knows the following spells: Summon Hunting Horror, Bind Hunting Horror, Contact Nyarlathotep, Shriving.

Hunting Horror

This hideous servant of Nyarlathotep is a huge, black winged serpent, whose form continually shifts and changes.

STR 30, CON 12, SIZ 30, INT 15, POW 22, DEX 15, HP 21, Move: 7/11 flying, Armor: 9 points.

Skills: Bite 65% (for 4D6 damage), Tail 90% (Grapples). The Hunting Horror cannot be impaled by normal weapons. It knows the following spells: Shriving, Contact Nyarlathotep, Create Gate. Seeing the Horror costs 1D10 SAN on a failed SAN roll.

Shoggoth

The Shoggoth is a huge, formless mass of tissue with malignant eyes opening and disappearing constantly on its surface. It will seek to destroy the town before escaping into the swamps.

STR 45, CON 12, SIZ 45, INT 6, POW 12, DEX 4, Move: 10.

Skills: Crush 100% (doing 3D6 of damage, plus an additional 6D6 per subsequent turn as it tears its victims apart). It takes minimum damage from physical weapons, cannot be impaled, takes half damage from fire, and regenerates two points per turn. Ω

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DEEP Trouble

By Dan Snuffin

New York City, NY: Police are investigating the theft of a rare book from the private collection of C. Arthur Locke. The thieves broke into the residence early in the evening and stole a rare copy of *Daemons of the Fire*.

Locke shot and killed one of the burglars, but the other escaped with the book. The value of the stolen book was not known.

One of the PCs stumbles upon the above article, dated September 8, 1926, while reading the morning newspaper.

A successful Cthulhu Mythos roll will reveal to the characters that *Daemons of the Fire* is a Mythos book.

This adventure is located in Boston, but the referee may adjust the location to fit his campaign. The referee will have to decide how to involve the characters based on their situation and history. If one of the PCs is a professor, Miskatonic may send him to investigate. Or possibly one of the characters knows C. Arthur Locke or is interested in the stolen book.

KEEPER'S INFORMATION

A horde of Deep Ones is plotting to melt the Arctic ice by summoning Cthugha. The rise in sea level will expand their underwater domain while causing serious disasters for the surface dwellers. The Deep Ones have stolen *Daemons of Fire* because it contains the Summon Cthugha spell. They have hijacked the freighter *Blue Star* to carry them and the more human members of the horde up to the Arctic Sea. After all, that's a long way to swim!



NEW YORK CITY

Locke will not conduct any interviews over the telephone, but he will invite the investigators to his home to discuss the theft. Travel by train from Boston to New York City will cost \$5.70 and will take seven hours.

The Locke residence is a two-story mansion of weathered brick surrounded by a large, well trimmed lawn. C. Arthur Locke is a tall, healthy looking man in his early fifties who wears a green sweater of questionable taste. He will cooperate with the investigators after a successful Oratory roll has been made.

Locke will tell the investigators that he was sitting in the den when he heard noises coming from the reading room where he keeps all his books. He pulled a revolver from his desk drawer and went to investigate. He saw two men sneaking down the hallway toward an open window, one carrying the book. He yelled at the men to stop, and the first turned toward him while the second continued down the hall. When the first made as if to attack him, Locke shot the man in the chest. The other jumped out the window and escaped.

Locke is not aware of the Mythos value of the book, nor is he aware why that particular book was stolen. He will explain that he tried to read it once, but the messy old English text required too much effort.

If the PCs ask to see the rare book collection, Locke will proudly oblige. There are many rare titles, but no Mythos books.

If asked about anything unusual that may have happened or about the man killed, Locke will remark. "The man looked very unhealthy. His skin was dry and scaly, and he had no hair."

A Fast Talk or Oratory roll will get the PCs into the city morgue to view the body. Gunshot wound aside, the man looks unhealthy indeed. His skin is dry and scaly, and he appears to have lost all of his hair. His ears are set close to his head, and his eyes are a little large. His identity is still unknown. A successful Cthulhu Mythos roll will tell the PCs that this man is halfway through the transformation from human to Deep One.

DISAPPEARANCE

The next day, the party will get an alarming phone call. If one of the inves-

tigators is a journalist, it will be from his editor. Otherwise, the caller will be a journalist contact acquainted with one of the characters. The caller will inform them of the mysterious disappearance of the whole population of Rockport, a small coastal village in Massachusetts. Approximately 125 people completely vanished with no trace. The disappearance was discovered late last night.

Rockport is about 35 miles from Boston, two and a half hours away by car. It is a remote fishing village of old, weathered wooden buildings and shacks in various states of disrepair. Most smell only of fish, and everything looks undisturbed. A Fast Talk or Oratory roll will get the party past the loose security surrounding the area.

Although very old and warped, the docks of Rockport are very strong. Boats are still tied up on most docks. While looking in this area, anyone making a successful Spot Hidden roll will notice a life ring caught in some cattails right off shore. The white ring has the words "Blue Star" on it, and the preserver looks relatively new.

One building in Rockport is identified by the sign over the door as the "Esoteric Order Of Dagon." Those making a successful Cthulhu Mythos roll will know who Dagon is. Inside are many old chairs leisurely organized in rows facing a bare stone altar. The building is otherwise completely empty, as everything of importance was taken on the voyage. Obviously this is a very poor excuse for a house of worship. While looking in this area, anyone making a successful Spot Hidden roll will notice a small scrap of paper lying beneath one of the chairs. The paper contains the word "tar," with anything once preceding that inscription torn off.

Rockport has a grocery store, but there is no food here—the shelves are bare. The inventory records are missing, but there are many empty crates and boxes in the back room. If the PCs check the labels to see what was once in the crates and boxes, they will find three labeled "fur parkas." The rest of the boxes are labeled "candles," "oars," different types of food, etc.

BLUE STAR

A call to the Boston Port Commission (BPC) will reveal that the *Blue Star* is a

cargo freighter that left Boston harbor on September 2 for Libson. One day later, all contact was lost, and it was presumed that the freighter may have sank in the heavy storms that hit at the time radio contact ceased.

If the PCs ask the BPC for details about the *Blue Star*, a successful Fast Talk roll will reveal that the captain of the freighter was Samuel Westhouse. A total of 32 crewmembers were on board. The cargo was wheat, various foodstuffs and tobacco.

If the PCs mention that they found a life ring from the *Blue Star* in Rockport, the BPC will say that's not possible, considering the ship's position and the currents concerned.

If the PCs investigate the matter further, they may discover that two of the crewmembers were from Arkham. This is a red herring, but it might lead the characters on an interesting wild goose chase.

MISKATONIC UNIVERSITY

The best place to find information about the Esoteric Order of Dagon or *Daemons of the Fire* is Miskatonic University. At the library, many hours of work and a successful Library Use roll (or a suitable contact, if the PCs have one) will reveal that Dagon is an extremely large, fishlike humanoid and leader of a race of similar beings smaller than himself. The Esoteric Order of Dagon is not mentioned.

The rare books section of the library where *Daemons of the Fire* or more sensitive information on the Esoteric Order of Dagon can be found may only be accessed if a PC is a professor at the university or the PCs are accompanied by a professor. A translation of *Daemons of the Fire* is available to those with the proper clearance.

If the investigators try to find out more about the Esoteric Order of Dagon, *Daemons of the Fire* or cult activity at Rockport through the faculty, they will eventually be referred to Dr. Jim Aarensen, professor of Anthropology. If any of the characters either teach or attend Miskatonic University, assume they know Dr. Aarensen. Aarensen will tell the investigators that he is not surprised to hear of cult activity in Rockport



because Dagon is often worshipped by simple fisher-folk in remote coastal villages. He can give the adventurers the same general information as the library but will be hesitant to say much more. He is all too familiar with the Mythos and does not wish to subject anyone else to the horrors of that knowledge. However, if the PCs show him that they already know the Mythos, he will open up to them. If the PCs mention the possible connection with the Blue Star, Aarensen will show sudden interest in the case and will be more than eager to help.

SIGHTING

Six days after they begin their investigation, the PCs will learn that the *Blue Star* has been sighted by a trawler off the coast

of Greenland. The ship, which appeared almost lifeless, was heading northeast, possibly toward the Arctic Sea.

Three days after the sighting, the International Ice Patrol (IIP—an organization set up to monitor icebergs after the *Titanic* disaster) will report that it has found the *Blue Star* loosely locked in the Arctic Sea off Greenland. Heavy storms prevent the IIP from investigating further.

If the PCs do not decide to travel to the Arctic, Miskatonic may ask them to join a team sent to investigate the apparent link between the *Blue Star* and the mysterious disappearance at Rockport. In either case, Aarensen will want to accompany the group.

Dr. Jim Aarensen, Professor of Anthropology

STR 10, CON 12, SIZ 09, INT 17, POW 17, DEX 11, APP 12, EDU 18, SAN 66,
Hit Pts 11.

Skills: Anthropology 95%, Archeology 55%, Chemistry 25%, Cthulhu Mythos 33%, Debate 45%, Dodge 22%, First Aid 40%, Geology 20%, History 65%, Library Use 90%, Make Maps 30%, Occult 80%, Oratory 75%, Spot Hidden 45%.

Spells: Call Cthugha, Call Ithaqua, Create Gate, Powder of Ibn-Ghazi, Summon/Bind Byakhee, Voorish Sign.

Aarensen is 47, although he looks like he is in his sixties. His hair is gray and thinning, his skin wrinkled, and his voice low and raspy. He habitually polishes his sunglasses when talking, and, yes, he does love his work.

The professor's office is a small archaeological museum and library. Fossils, stones and ancient tools line the shelves of one wall, and a complete library fills another wall and the space above his desk. Everything here is neat and orderly.

Daemons of the Fire

Language: English.

+ to knowledge: =5%.

Spell Multiplier: ×3.

Effect on SAN: -1D8.

This book was written in the early 1800s by a man who identifies himself in the text only as "William." It is primarily about Cthugha, his existence on Fomalhaut, and the cult around him. It also contains two spells: Call Cthugha and Summon/Bind Fire Vampire. A day of browsing through the book will reveal these general details:

Cthugha resembles an enormous burning mass continually varying in shape. Its place of origin is the star Fomalhaut, but it may be summoned to earth. Once summoned, Cthugha will blast and burn the area with intense heat and flame, destroying it completely. The book also contains a 21-page postscript. It mainly discusses the fabled existence of the City of the Old Ones and of strange creatures referred to as the Elder Things that existed before the dawn of life on Earth. It hints that what remains of this city is still locked somewhere in the ice, great secrets frozen within it. (Of course, this postscript is thrown in only to mislead and confuse avid Lovecraft readers.) This knowledge will add +1% to the reader's Cthulhu Mythos skill and cause a SAN loss of 1D4.

ARCTIC

Travel by plane will take approximately four days. The closest settlement to the *Blue Star's* reported location is Hudsonland, a small fishing community on the coast of Greenland. The Greenland Sea is frozen at this time of the year—everything is covered with snow and ice. Temperatures are generally in the teens, and the wind chill factor may bring the actual temperature close to zero degrees. A PC not equipped with warm clothing can survive outside a number of minutes equal to his CON before taking a point of damage. This cycle is repeated until the PC loses half of his hit points in this manner, at which time he falls unconscious. If unattended, he will freeze to death quickly thereafter.

A small store here carries most essential supplies, charging 150% of the normal price.

If the PCs contact the IIP, they will learn that fierce snowstorms have prevented the organization from investigating the freighter's condition. Luckily, the weather is much more hospitable today. Travel by sled to the site of the *Blue Star* will take three hours. The freighter has been ransacked, and the whole ship smells of dead fish. Much of the floor is covered in slime. Aarensen will tell the PCs that this is a sure mark of the Deep Ones.

The Deep Ones have not strayed far from the ship; they are camped only five miles away. For each hour after one hour that the characters search, there is a 25% chance of discovering the Deep Ones, and there is also a 20% chance that the Deep Ones will discover them. If the characters are discovered, 35-50 Deep Ones will chase them 3-4 miles and will post guard around their settlement thereafter. Otherwise, the party should be able to find a suitable vantage point from which to observe the Deep Ones. There are 115 Deep Ones and 74 humans present. The sight of 115 Deep Ones will cost the PCs maximum SAN (six points) if they fail their SAN roll—one point if the roll is made.

What happens after the discovery of the Deep Ones depends upon when they were discovered. If they were discovered within a day of the discovery of the abandoned boat, they will be at-



tempting to summon Cthugha. If the PCs arrived at any later time, the investigators will be around just in time for Cthugha to appear.

If the PCs try to take on the Deep Ones as a group, they will have the element of surprise, but they will nonetheless be ripped to shreds unless they come up with something very clever. If the PCs do succeed in disrupting the ritual, the Deep Ones will try the summoning again in three days. Only death will stop the fanatic cultists from eventually completing the summoning. If the PCs are unable to interrupt the ritual or just wait around to see what happens, Cthugha will arrive five minutes after the chanting is completed.

CTHUGHA ARRIVES

Only four of the Deep Ones actually know the spell, and they will be leading the Deep Ones in the casting. The cultists are ringed around a large bonfire. They will have to chant for 25 minutes, but the spell will be automatically successful. Suddenly, the flames turn blindingly white, and an intensely

bright point of light floats up from the fire. When it reaches a height of about 22 feet, it erupts into the huge flaming ball that is Cthugha, while fire vampires begin to jump from the bonfire. All present must make their SAN rolls or lose 1D20 SAN. Those making the roll lose 1D3 SAN.

Suddenly, it is very hot. The Deep Ones will flee, running back toward the freighter. The hard-packed Arctic ice instantly begins to melt.

The characters will only have one chance to try to banish Cthugha. Aarensen will lead them in the banishment spell, expending full magic points. Each character who knows the spell may also expend all his magic points, while others may only contribute one magic point. Nine points must be expended to match Cthugha's POW, and each additional point will give them a 5% cumulative chance of dismissal. If the spell succeeds, Cthugha will leave in a blinding flash of light before doing any serious melting. The PCs will gain 1D20 SAN. They will also gain 1D10 SAN, realizing that they have saved the

world from disaster.

If the spell fails, the PCs will have to run to avoid being burnt to a crisp. The PCs have failed, and Cthugha will gleefully turn most of the Arctic ice cap into water, causing numerous weather problems, plus worldwide coastal flooding as sea level rises about 60 feet. The horrified PCs will lose 1D20 SAN, and life on earth will be changed forever.

CLEANING UP

If the PCs successfully prevent Cthugha from melting the ice cap, the Deep Ones will not try to summon it again, thinking that they somehow lost favor with the being.

If our heroes let it get out that they were responsible, they can expect many Deep One revenge encounters in the future.

Finally, when the PCs return to Boston, they will be contacted by C. Arthur Locke, who wishes to hire them to recover *Daemons of the Fire*. Regardless of whether the book survived (keeper's option), this could be the beginning of a completely new adventure. Ω



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HORROR on the Borderland

By Jane M. Lindskold

One of the PCs receives the news that he has inherited a country estate in the west of Ireland from a distant relative. The executors will provide keys, deeds and maps showing the location of the house. Conditions of the inheritance are that the heir must personally take possession of the property for at least five years. The executors will not have any additional information. If relatives are questioned, the heir will discover that the deceased was wealthy and eccentric. Several other relatives received similar bequests. The heir will be encouraged to accept the inheritance.

The house is located outside the fictional hamlet of Kraitthen, about 40 miles from Ardrahan. PCs will find conversation difficult in Ardrahan, near impossible in Kraitthen. In the 1890s and 1920s, Gaelic was still the main language of the western peasantry, and most other Irish could not understand it. Treat Gaelic as a separate language proficiency; even a character with Linguist skill should have to struggle to communicate with the locals. Through the 1990s, the hamlet of Kraitthen remains behind the times. Ardrahan is the closest rail station to Kraitthen. Trains stop twice daily. A car and driver can be hired to take the investigators to Kraitthen.

The terrain is desolate. To borrow Hodgson's words: "(Kraitthen) is situated, alone, at the base of a low hill. Far around there spreads a waste of bleak totally inhospitable country; where, here and there at great intervals, one may come upon the ruins of some long desolate cottage—unthatched and stark. The whole land is bare and unpeopled, the very earth scarcely covering the rock that lies beneath it, and with which the country abounds, in places rising out of the soil in wave-shaped ridges."

Kraitthen is a very primitive town—even in the 1990s, there are no hotels or inns. If the PCs arrive too near dark to go out and seek the house and are without camping gear, they may rent space from a family.

Even if the language barrier is crossed, none of the locals will know where the house is. If a very elderly resident is patiently questioned, he will recall fragments of old legends about the house. No details will be available, but the informant should utter vague comments about the house being a "queer place, unholy and dreadful, a place that is shunned."

The estate's map shows that the house is located on a river some miles downstream from Kraitthen. As there is no road, the river is the only guide. The trip will take about two-thirds of



a day's walk due to the roughness of the terrain. Neither vehicles nor riding animals can be hired or purchased in Kraitghten. If the PCs have a car, travel will still be slow, and the referee should check for tire punctures and other appropriate nuisances.

PARK

Much to surprise of the PCs, the river will suddenly vanish beneath a high embankment, apparently stranding them without a guide. If they continue over the embankment, they will see that the terrain has completely changed. The valley below holds a green tangled mass of trees and shrubs, a verdant contrast to the rocky waste.

PCs who roll against Geology or Botany skills will deduce that the river runs underground in a network of smaller branches and so more effectively waters this limited area. There is no immediate sign of the house, but a roll on Botany will recognize a good number of the plants and trees as domestic or ornamental varieties (fruit and nut trees, rose tangles, mint and other perennial herbs). This wild, tangled wood is the remains of an estate's park.

There are no paths in the park, but a Spot Hidden roll will discover a large column of haze-like spray near the center of the wood. If the day is sunny, tiny rainbows will reflect from the spray, creating a strange and wonderful display. Any PCs with appropriate professions should be permitted an Idea roll to realize that what they are seeing is probably the spray from a waterfall.

HOUSE

The PCs will find the house on a small rise at the center of the grounds, about 300 yards in front of the ravine into which the waterfall crashes. The building is a strange edifice, apparently built outside of any particular architectural tradition, though there is something of both the solid fortification and the gingerbread Victorian about it. It stands high (interior investigation will show an attic and a basement as well) and is basically square, with a wrap-around porch. From the roof, a small, almost Arabesque tower needles forth.

On first impression, the house looks utterly normal. But under close scrutiny, one begins to notice strange exceptions. For instance, the house is built of a dense greenish stone that even a successful Geology roll will fail to identify. The roofs are tin. The windows are of heavy, transparent leaded-glass set in decorative geometric patterns. The windows on the lower floor are covered with heavy iron bars set six inches apart. The exterior doors are all solid, iron-studded oak. The house is in very good repair except for the rampant vegetation which, although it grows right up to the house, does not touch it any point.

INTERIOR

The house is no more dusty than if tenants had just left. All of the floors on the porch, ground floor and basement are of the same green stone as the exterior. On the ground floor, the stone is polished smooth, resembling green marble. The floors on the upper stories and stairs are of oak. In rooms with fireplaces, the chimney and hearthstone are constructed of the same stone as the house. A white variety has been used for variation and patterning.

Curiously, given its apparent age, the house features simple in-door plumbing. A pump in the kitchen yields slightly rusty-tasting water. On the upper floor is a bathroom with a simple toilet, sink and tub.

The house has neither gas nor electricity. In a storeroom off the kitchen is a supply of oil for lanterns (two 10-gallon drums), as well as wicks, lantern chimneys and candles.

The house is furnished, although there is no evidence of personal items. Each room contains good quality furniture appropriate to the room's function, including running clocks on many mantelpieces. Although at first glance the decor appears to be early 1880s, contradictions and anachronisms are apparent to anyone who bothers to look closely.

Closet: The linen closet on the upper floor is stocked with ample linens. Curiously, none of these smell at all musty, or show any sign of moths or insects. In fact, throughout the house there is no evidence of any vermin—insect or rodent.

Kitchen: The kitchen is stocked with pots and pans. A fire is prepared, but remains unlit in the hearth.

Study: The study contains many books of general interest (science, history, literature, etc.), though none were written any later than 1850. On an excellent Library Use roll (-30% after at least a half hour's study; +5% for each additional half hour, not to exceed the PCs' skill percentage), the PCs will notice that about 25% of the books deal with odd subjects (history of countries no one has heard of, strange scientific theories, etc.) or are written in languages no one has ever heard of. There are no personal papers or books of magic occult lore. Over the fireplace in the library, elaborately framed, is a piece of needlework bearing the following couplet:

*Those are not dead who let their dust lie.
Disturb your dust and certain death die.*

Besides being reminiscent of a certain famous couplet, these words will mean nothing to the PCs. If the PCs do not notice the needlework at this time, they should be encouraged to notice it before the start of the spin through time.

Attic: The attic is an empty storage area with some small rooms partitioned off.

Basement: The basement contains three



rooms: a wine cellar, a root cellar and an empty storage room. With a Spot Hidden roll, on the storage room floor the PC will find a trap door. If it is lifted (resistance 09) by means of a large iron ring set in the stone, it reveals empty blackness and no steps. If the PCs listen, they will hear the sound of rushing water. On a successful Listen roll, the PCs will also hear a faint but unmistakable titter: If they continue to listen, the titter will grow to a raucous, mocking laughter for a moment before fading to tittering again. If light is lowered, the only things the PCs will see are reflections as off water or wet stone. If the light remains down the trap door for more than a few minutes, it will be smashed (by a stone thrown by a swine-demon).

TIBBS

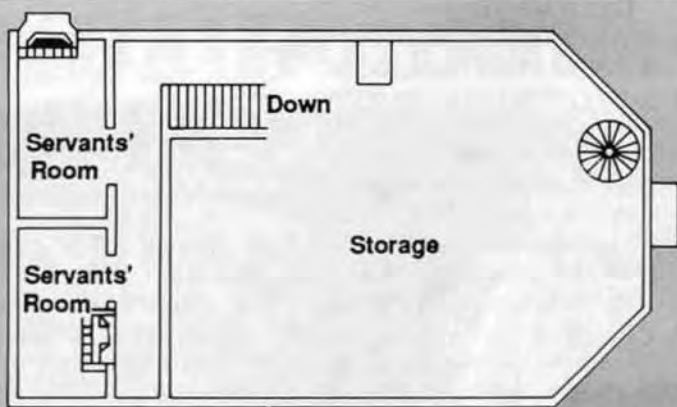
When the PCs have been in residence about an hour, their exploration will be interrupted by an unearthly wailing moan. This wail will start on a low pitch and rise, then drop and start again. A Listen roll will identify the noise as coming from the kitchen. A successful Idea roll by any PC familiar with domestic animals will identify the sound as the cry of a cat.

When the kitchen door is opened, in will march a matronly calico cat. She will be trailed by five kittens, all about six weeks old. The cat's collar reads "Tibbs," matching the basket by the fire. She will rub against the legs of the PCs, meowing to be fed. If the PCs feed her, Tibbs and her litter will stay and behave like normal cats (which they are—they were "suspended" by the spell that held the house until the house was reoccupied, where upon many things started waking).

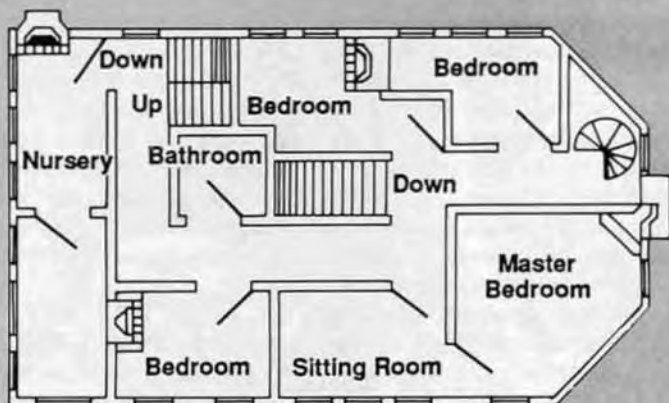
PIT

This deep, dark ravine is where the river emerges to form a small rocky waterfall that runs for a brief way before vanishing again underground. The pit is mostly a tangle of growth so thick that it canopies the shallow river (which can be waded in most spots).

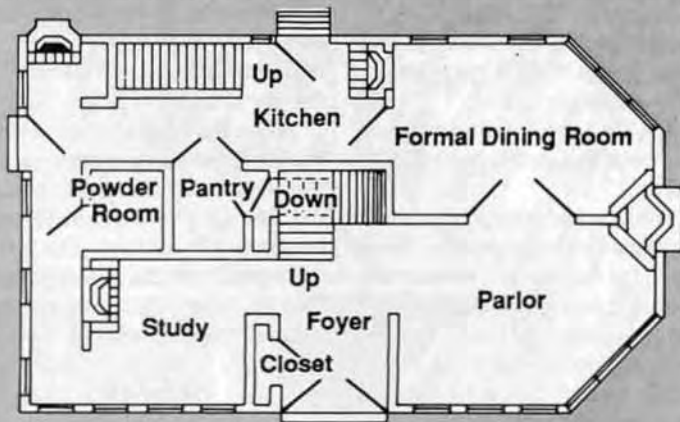
The distance from the top of the pit to the bottom is about 150 feet—there is no easy trail, but the PCs can pick their way down along the side. Have each PC roll (Dexx4) +Climb for each 50 feet. If the PC fails, have him roll a jump. If the PC succeeds, no damage is taken. If the roll is failed, the PC takes 1D6 falling damage. If the PCs have tied a safety line, there is no damage. To leave the pit, PCs must roll against the same



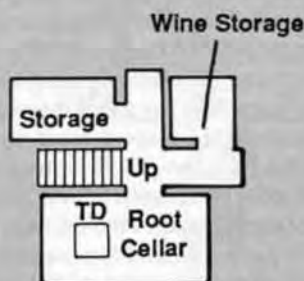
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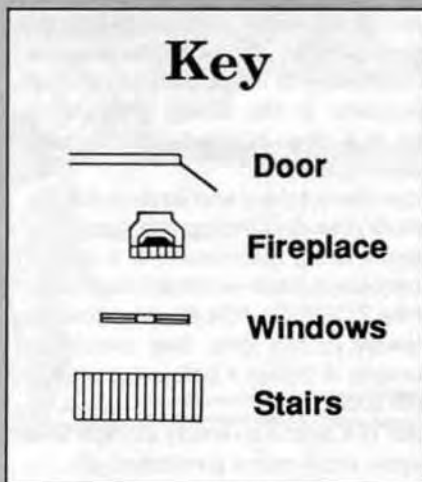
Second Floor



First Floor



Basement



percentage, with the same consequences for failure.

If the PCs decide to explore the pit before entering the house, they will see nothing more than a vegetative tangle. However, if they explore after the house has been opened, they have a 50% chance of encountering 1-6 swine-demons. These will not join battle unless provoked and will usually retreat before they suffer fatalities. The longer the PCs explore, the greater chance they have of at least seeing signs that something is living down in the pit (broken branches, rough trails, footprints, etc.).

The river eventually vanishes again into the rocky ravine wall, but the opening the water vanishes into has been enlarged by the swine-demons (roll against Spot Hidden or Geology to notice the marks). This cave opening is only about three feet tall and opens into a maze of low-roofed tunnels. These eventually run underneath the house.

If the PCs decide to check out the tunnels, they will soon discover that the going is rough. For the first 100 yards, the roof is never higher than four feet (the swine-demons go on all fours) and the corridors rarely wider than five feet. The floors are damp with run-off from the river, mold and rotting vegetation. The chance of attack by the swine-demons rises to 75% here, and before any attack the PCs will hear the tittering chuckles of the swine-demons.

If the PCs penetrate deeper than 100 yards, they will find that a wide ravine bisects a large cavern. The river water spills into this ravine, creating a rapidly flowing subterranean course. Without a boat, crossing the ravine would be impossible.

Any PCs who explore the pit should emerge with the realization that the house is vulnerable from below. They may also realize that the swine-demons were restraining themselves in any attack.

SPIN THROUGH TIME

The spin through time is an increasing acceleration of time, part of mystical rites used by the Great Old Ones to separate the house and its inhabitants from their own time and bring them to the Arena. During the spin, common physical urges are suspended. Mostly, it is simply disorienting. However, it can be dangerous.

The spin will begin with the twilight of the day selected by the referee. In the early stages, only an incredibly observant PC would notice that anything is different. However, by the arrival of full dark, PCs will be given an Idea roll -20% to notice that the clock's hands are moving faster than they should be. With the arrival of daylight, the PCs only need to make a normal Idea roll to notice that the clock's hands are spinning visibly faster. Soon, days and nights pass so

quickly that the sun and the moon appear to chase each other across the sky, becoming mere blurs of light and then not even visible, then the seasons will change, slowly at first, then faster and faster.

The PCs can watch the kittens mature with incredible rapidity, then all the cats, starting with Tibbs, will die, turning to skeletons and then pillows of dust.

By now the PCs should notice themselves growing older, more slowly than the cats but definitely changing: beards and hair grow; wrinkles form; clothing wears thinner and tatters. In time, they will actually see their bodies die and, like those of the cats, become heaps of dust. Their spirits stand separate, however, and are able to move things in a poltergeist-like fashion.

At this point, players should make a SAN roll for their characters. Characters who fail should be treated as zero SAN for the duration of the spin.

Gradually, the house itself will deteriorate. Referees may detail as they wish the cracking and falling of plaster, the breaking of glass, the crumbling of stone, etc. Then, from the spot where the house stood, the PCs will see the very sun and solar system age and die. They will feel their spirits rushed through nothingness toward a green sun into which they are sucked to whirl around a bit and then be spat out into the Arena.

Dangers: Leaving the house once the spin begins will be nearly impossible, as doors and windows seal, etc. Any PC who manages to leave the house once the spin has started will be lost, killed by maleficent magic. On a successful Occult roll, the PCs should realize that the house is protected and that staying inside is a good idea.

Remember the couplet over the fireplace? It's meaning may now become clear: If the piles of dust (the PCs' remains) are disturbed, the PCs will die, regardless of the events in the Arena. If the PCs have no idea what to make of the couplet, the referee may offer hints on the completion of a successful Occult roll.

ARENA

When the PCs are regurgitated from the green sun, they will find that everything is apparently back to normal. Any PC who has gone insane will be back to pre-spin condition.

The illusion of normality lasts until the PCs look out the window. Then they will realize that they, the house and a portion of the park have somehow been transported into a broad chasm between circling mountains. The chasm bottom is a perfectly flat circle 10 or 12 miles in diameter, framed by unclimbable mountains,

It is doubtful that anyone would want to climb those mountains, for lounging among the peaks, like spectators on bleachers, are

enormous representations of ancient gods of evil. Some are easily recognizable by those who make a theology, occult or anthropology roll: Set, Kali and others. Some are known to those with appropriate Cthulhu mythos knowledge: Cthulhu, Hastur, Yig, etc. Still others are wild and alien beast-like horrors of unknown races.

While the PCs study the scene, they may notice an ear flick or a tentacle wiggle—they will soon realize that these are not statues, but somehow forms of the gods themselves. PCs need to make a SAN roll, losing D3/D6.

The reason for the relatively low SAN loss is that the gods are distant and shadowed, so their full horror is not apparent. Also, these are spirit projections (similar to those PCs) not the gods themselves.

A 20-foot-tall, black-robed figure will approach the PCs from the foot of the mountains. The shape is human, but the features are hidden by the cowled robe. Any PCs familiar with Nyarlathotep should feel an unpleasant tingle of recognition. The PCs will hear the following speech:

In days not long past, a sorcerer sought to create a way through which the Old Ones could come through to your world at will. He was successful to a limited extent. With stone brought from beyond your plane, he crafted a house that stood on the borderlands of time and space. Through this house, he sought to bring the Old Ones and their minions to serve him.

His early summons brought him creatures to serve him, but they also brought the house to the attention of those who oppose the return of the Old Ones. They destroyed him and sealed the house in spells, it being beyond their power to destroy it.

When you entered the house, you broke some of those spells. But, for the house to be completely freed from the guardian magic, the minions of the old sorcerer must win the house.

Thus, you are brought here. For 24 hours, as you measure them, the house will be besieged by the minions. If you keep the house, at the end of that time you will be returned unharmed to your time and place. If you fail, the house will be returned, but the minions will be free to do with you as they wish.

Nyarlathotep's dry chuckle gives no doubt that the PCs would not be likely to survive what the minions have in mind for them. Then he will step back and, with a thunderbolt clap of his hands, announce, "Begin!"

BATTLE FOR THE HOUSE

Each battle for the house will be as individual as the PCs who defend it. Following are notes on what will and will not work.

Defense: All weapons, ammunition and other gear brought by the PCs will work as normal.



Spells will function as follows. Summon, Call, and Contact spells will not work. Gates will not work. The Elder Sign will work, but these are not quickly drawn. Other spells will work as usual, as long as they do not involve employing the energies of another being.

The house is apparently in the same shape as when the PCs took possession, no longer the decayed hulk of the spin. This means furnishings, etc. are available as barricades, projectiles and whatever other uses creative PCs can come up with. The referee should be reasonable but not liberal about what is available. This is a furnished house, not a store or warehouse.

The house can be exited now, so the outdoor resources of the park are available. If the PCs leave the park and try to cross the Arena, they will find that the surface is similar to a desert made of salt. Variant wind currents make flight over the Arena's surface impossible. Also, the minions will take possession of the house in their absence, and the PCs will be lost.

Offense: The swine-demons and the Thing will attempt to enter the house first by breaking in the doors. The outer doors (if barred and locked from within) have a resistance of 18. If this does not work, the minions will become more subtle.

Possible tactics include attacks from multiple sides at once, attacks from beneath the basement, climbing to the roof, burning the house (it won't burn, but the smoke will be an irritant and provide cover), etc. The referee should use these as guidelines, not as a blue-print for how the minions will attack.

The minions are not very bright, but they are determined to win back the house, and there are a good number of them. While the PCs need to rely on intelligent planning, the minions can "fuzzy-wuzzy" the opposition. They are not suicidal, but they will sacrifice members of their group to win. The morale of individual units can be broken by large losses.

Swine-demon weapons are primitive: thrown spears, slung rocks and hand-to-hand combat, but they do know what guns are and will use them if they can capture any.

SWINE-DEMONS (Lesser Independent Race)

Hodgson describes the physiology of the swine-demon: "It had a grotesquely human

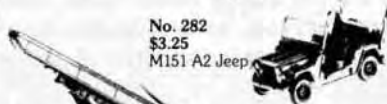
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mouth and jaw; but with no chin of which to speak. The nose was prolonged into a snout; this it was, that, with the little green eyes, gave it such extraordinary swine-like appearance. Of the forehead there was little, and the whole face was of an unwholesome white color."

The referee should assign a base force of 30 swine-demons, plus 10 additional for each PC.

Characteristics	Average
Str: 3D6+2	12-13
Con: 3D6+2	12-13
Siz: 2D6+8	15
Int: 2D6+2	9
Pow: 2D6	7
Dex: 3D6	10-11
Hit Points: —	14
Move: 9	9

Weapons	Attack%	Damage
Claws	30	1D6+1D4
Spear (melee)	25	1D6+1D4
Spear (thrown)	25	1D4+1D2
Sling	20	1D4

Armor: 1 point (hide)
Spells: None
SAN: 0/1D6

THE THING (Lesser Independent Race)

The Thing looks much like a swine-demon but stands 40 feet high. Its eyes scin-

tillate red and green. Its claws contain a poisonous phosphorous (potency 14) that glows even in daylight and spreads to cover its victim. Victims makes a resistance save each day. If the save succeeds, the poison retreats, taking the same number of days to vanish as it did to spread. When the victim is covered (3-6 days), it dies. One Thing is an ample threat unless the PCs have a large number of distance weapons; then the referee should consider adding others.

Str: 50
Con: 50
Siz: 60
Int: 9
Pow: 14
Dex: 20
Hit Points: 55
Move: 12
Weapons: Claws: 4D6+6D6 and phosphorous poison (see above)
Armor: 4 points due to thick, rubbery skin
Spells: None
SAN: 1D3/1D8 Ω

This adventure is freely adapted from William Hope Hodgson's novel, The House on the Borderland. This story, while not one of the Cthulhu mythos tales, was praised by Lovecraft as "a classic of the first water."

Hodgson, William Hope. The House on the Borderland. Carroll & Graf Publishers: New York, 1983.

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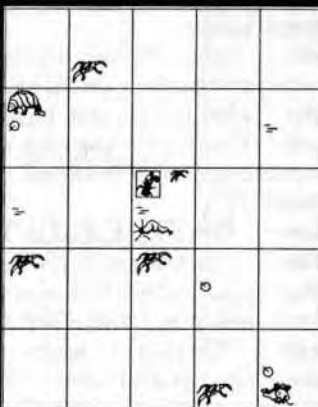
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Ghost Writer

By James L. Cambias





BOSTON—Police have “few clues” to follow in the unexplained death of Michael E. Trout, editor of *Stupefying Stories*, a popular fiction magazine. Trout was found dead in his home Thursday, the victim of severe burns. The house showed no signs of fire.

Police Captain John O'Banion was unwilling to comment on any possible connection between Trout's death and the Friday night fire which damaged the offices of Acme Publications, publisher of *Stupefying Stories*.

Trout, 43, had edited *Stupefying Stories* for six years, building the magazine's reputation for entertaining stories of adventure, “science-fiction” and horror. Acme President George D. Wilson said, “Trout was the best editor I've ever known. I'm not sure if *Stupefying Stories* will continue without him at the helm.”

Wilson declined to speculate about the fire at Acme. “The fire marshal is still gathering evidence,” he explained. “I have nothing more to say.”

Something peculiar is going on at Acme, and George Wilson, the company president, wants to know why. He is prepared to offer the PCs reasonable pay, plus expenses to find out.

Acme is located in a shabby, four-story building in Boston's Back Bay area. The bottom floor is occupied by bales of paper and bundles of magazines awaiting shipment. Minor fire damage is visible at the rear of the building, and many of the paper bales are still soaked with water. The second floor is filled with printing presses. The third floor holds the editorial offices for *Stupefying Stories*, *Thundering Western Adventures*, *Passionate Tales of Romance*, *All-Star Sports Stories* and *Two-Fisted Crime Action* magazines. The top floor holds the business offices for Acme Publications, including Wilson's office.

Wilson is a large, cynical man. He never reads his magazines and has only contempt for those who do.

“Poor Mike used to knock himself out, trying to get good pieces for SS,” Wilson tells the PCs. “The readers would ask for ‘less high-brow stuff, more blood.’”

I still let him slip in a quality story every so often just so he wouldn't get depressed. I'm not even going to look for a replacement for Mike. S.S. was only breaking even anyway, and with him and three of our regular writers dead, I doubt it can keep going.”

If asked about the authors who died, Wilson can provide the following information: Dale Guthurste died about three months back—fell and broke his neck. Richard Black got food poisoning in Chicago about a week after that, and Celia Abbott was in a car accident a month ago.

If the PCs ask Wilson about the fire, he will become defensive. “I keep telling those apes in the warehouse not to throw cigarette butts around. But do they listen? A whole building full of paper, and they throw cigarettes around. And that fire marshal trying to make it look like maybe I started the fire for the insurance. If I wanted to burn the place, why did I just put in a \$2000 sprinkler system, eh? That sprinkler saved the whole building.”

STORIES

The PCs may wish to read some of the stories written by the dead authors. Of particular interest are the pieces which appeared just before each author died. Summaries of the stories are given below.

After reading the three tales, any PC making a successful Read English roll will notice that the writing style of the stories is very similar.

“**Statue of Koor**” by Dale Guthurste (May 1925): A man inherits a strange Egyptian statue of a horrible mouthless monster. He gradually becomes obsessed with the statue, hears voices and has strange dreams of ancient Egypt. Finally, utterly possessed by the statue, he attacks his wife with a knife. She flees and tries to topple the statue onto her husband. The statue shatters, breaking the evil spell controlling his mind.

“**Feast of Blood**” by Richard Black (July 1925): A young man finds a secret door in his basement leading to a hidden network of tunnels. He explores the tunnels and finds a chamber where sinister cultists are sacrificing a victim

to a huge stone image. The cultists spot the hero and pursue him through the tunnels until he emerges in a cemetery. He tells the police, but is then unable to find the door in the basement.

“**Terror in the Museum**” by Celia Abbott (September 1925): A beautiful young college co-ed is kidnapped by an insane archaeologist who worships an ancient idol in a museum. Just as the professor is about to sacrifice her to the statue, the girl is rescued by her fiancé. The professor kills himself, screaming that the idol must have a victim. The two students are horrified to see that the statue moves to lap up the spilled blood. The fiancé smashes the image with a fire axe.

ABOUT THE AUTHORS

The PCs may wish to contact the families of the three dead writers.

Richard Black: Black lived alone in a cheap apartment in Chicago. According to neighbors, he was a quiet fellow with no family who typed a lot late at night. His landlord has rented out the room but has kept Black's things in the basement. It will require a successful Fast Talk or Oratory roll (or a small bribe) for the PCs to get access to Black's stuff. An inspection of his property reveals a number of story manuscripts and drafts, but none for “Feast of Blood” except for a single, perfectly typed final draft.

Celia Abbott: Abbott lived in Tulsa, Oklahoma, with her mother, who is still in mourning. According to Mrs. Abbott, her daughter was killed by a hit-and-run truck driver while crossing the street. Unfortunately, Mrs. Abbott knows nothing about Celia's work. “I always thought it was a waste of time, writing those peculiar stories. I kept telling Celie to get out more often, maybe meet some nice boy.” She has already thrown out all of Celia's manuscripts.

Dale Guthurste: Guthurste lived in Sheboygan, Wisconsin, with his wife. Mrs. Guthurste will be very suspicious of anyone asking questions about her husband. Attempting Fast Talk will only make her more suspicious, but a successful Oratory roll might convince her to speak with the PCs. Mrs. Guthurste will say she is nervous because some



men came around asking questions about her husband right before he died. She knows his death was just an accident—he fell down some stairs at work—but it still makes her uneasy. All Mrs. Guthurste can recall about the men was that they were nicely dressed in black suits and drove a big black car.

If the PCs are polite and show enough interest, Mrs. Guthurste will let them see her husband's papers. Dale Guthurste apparently kept everything neatly filed. In the folder marked "Statue of Koor" the PCs will find a final draft copy of the story and a letter from Phillip H. Valecroft. The letter reads as follows:

Enclosed is the final revision of your tale, which I have retitled "Statue of Koor." I have altered your original in a number of respects, removing the more conventional eldritch elements—the living mummy, the curse, et cetera—substituting some more cosmic and original concepts in their place (in this case the idea that the evil influence of an inanimate object might cause the hero himself to attack his wife). I have also renamed the statue, as I think your suggestion of King Amen-Ra lacks a certain poetry. I believe my changes will give the story a needed freshness and ensure its publication. My fee, as agreed, is \$10.

REFEREE

Insane cultists attempting to bring an ancient statue to life have murdered the three authors and the editor of *Stupefying Stories*. The authors were murdered because they wrote stories which almost exactly described the actions of the cult. What the cultists do not know is that all three stories were actually ghost-written for their authors by Phillip Valecroft, a reclusive writer living in Arkham near the cultists' meeting place. Valecroft has been having vivid dreams depicting the cult's activities and has turned his dreams into stories, unaware of their basis in fact.

As they conduct their investigation the PCs will be approached by a young man calling himself Charles Ramsey, who claims to be an avid reader of weird fiction and a great fan of the dead writers. Ramsey will confide in the PCs that he suspects something sinister in

the recent rash of deaths and will offer to help them find the truth. If they accept his offer, Ramsey will accompany the PCs, running errands and making himself useful. If they decline his assistance, Ramsey will still tag along, friendly and cheerful, always turning up when the PCs least expect him.

Ramsey is actually an agent of the Brotherhood of Night. He hopes the PCs can lead him to whatever source is leaking information about the cult's activities.

VISITING VALECROFT

Phillip Valecroft lives alone at 66 College Street in Arkham. The neighborhood is home to a number of Miskatonic University faculty. Valecroft's house is huge and decaying, with an overgrown yard and peeling paint.

Valecroft is a confirmed recluse and tries to avoid dealing with people face-to-face. His eccentric lifestyle makes him seem very much like a sinister servant of the Great Old Ones.

If the PCs pay him a visit, he will refuse to see them, saying through a closed front door, "I'm busy right now. Send me a letter, and I'll give it my complete attention. Now please leave."

If the PCs attempt to force their way, Valecroft will flee to his study to call the police.

If the PCs keep the house under observation, they will learn that Valecroft only goes out at night, when the streets are mostly deserted. He buys groceries at a seedy all-night store and never receives any guests.

If the PCs attempt to communicate by mail or by phone, they will find Valecroft both interested and helpful—he only dislikes dealing with people in person. If the PCs can establish friendly relations with Valecroft in this manner and convince him of the importance of what is going on, he may even agree to see them in person.

The PCs may eventually get into Valecroft's house, either by invitation or by breaking in. Most of the rooms are empty—Valecroft has had to sell the furniture to supplement his tiny income as a writer. The place is poorly maintained and in need of a good cleaning. Many of the windows are broken, and

most of the upstairs rooms have leaky ceilings.

Entrance Hall: This room still has a beautiful Oriental rug and some ornate Victorian furniture. Valecroft keeps this room fairly tidy, as it is the one room which visitors might occasionally see.

Bedroom: Valecroft is using the old dining room as his bedroom. The room is filled with books piled on the floor, the chairs, even the bed. A huge steamer trunk filled with old clothes serves as Valecroft's wardrobe.

Kitchen: The kitchen is a mess. The sink is piled high with several weeks' worth of dirty dishes; the stove is encrusted with grease; and the floor is sticky. Valecroft will not willingly let anyone enter this room. A door in the corner leads to the basement stairs, but it is partially concealed by a pile of boxes filled with canned vegetables.

Basement: The basement is mostly empty. A few boxes of junk are piled against one wall. There are no secret passages or tunnels leading out of the basement.

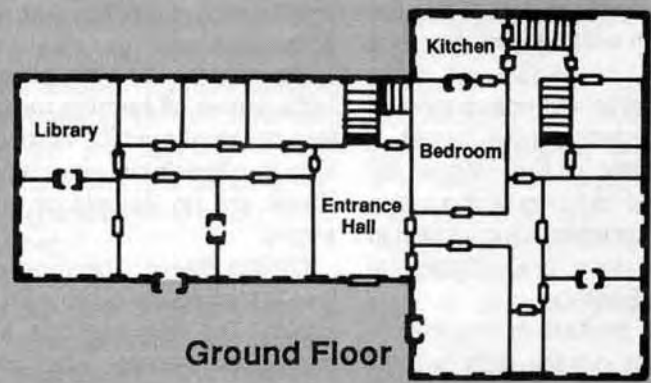
Library: This huge room is where Valecroft works. It holds the possessions most dear to him—his collection of books. Many of the volumes on the shelves are rare first editions, but they share space with cheap paperbacks and damaged books bought second-hand. Valecroft has the works of all the great horror writers (Poe, Machen, Stoker, Hearn and others). He also has numerous books on the occult, ancient history, astronomy and Massachusetts history. There are no Cthulhu Mythos books.

The library also holds Valecroft's desk, which is heaped with manuscripts and papers. The PCs can find early revisions of the stories by Abbott, Black and Guthurste, along with material by several other writers. There are also some original stories by Valecroft; his work tends to be confusing and dream-like, with vivid images but no real plots. In his typewriter is a sheet of paper bearing some typed phrases:

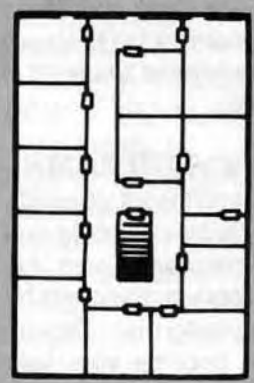
Khoorgolan walks the earth. The sky is dark and streaked with red. Arkham burns. The Miskatonic is red with blood—panicked crowds. A new God walks the earth—men and women bow



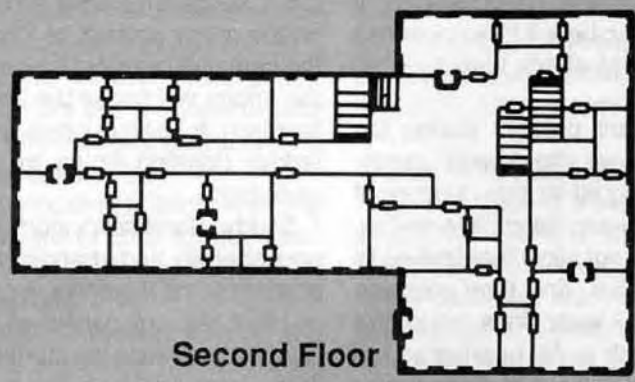
Valecroft's House



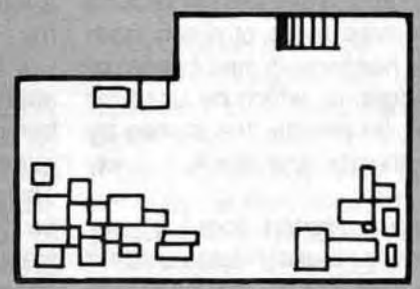
Ground Floor



Third Floor



Second Floor



Basement

Sandison's House

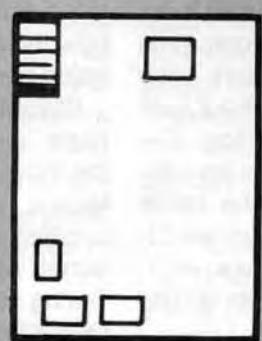
Ground Floor



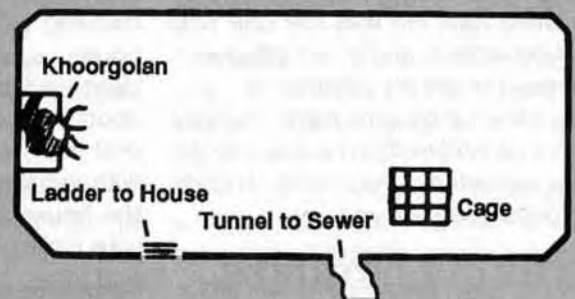
Second Floor



Basement



Temple Chamber





down. It feeds on blood and flesh, and breeds a horde of awful spawn. Earth cleared of life—soon it will split like a rotten fruit. Khoorgolan and all its spawn will tread the paths beyond space (?) in search of new prey.

VALECROFT'S DREAMS

If the PCs are asked to visit Valecroft, they will find him faultlessly polite and strangely old-fashioned. Even his speech sounds slightly archaic, yet he is obviously still a young man. Though reclusive, he can become very talkative.

If the PCs ask where he gets his ideas for stories, Valecroft will explain that he derives most of them from dreams. He has recently had a series of very vivid dreams, which he used for ideas when he rewrote the stories by Abbott, Guthurste and Black. He explains:

The dreams started about a year ago. I began to have nightmares about a horrible stone statue—an image with no mouth and huge, terrible eyes. Somehow I knew it was from Egypt, though it didn't look like any Egyptian statue I'd ever seen. I could tell it was infinitely evil, and when I dreamed of those eyes boring into my brain, I would wake up screaming. Then I began to see the statue in a dark room, somewhere deep underground. Robed figures were worshipping it and chanting. They were killing people and pouring their blood out over the statue. Just a few weeks ago, I began to dream that the statue moved. It would bend down and drink the blood with the tentacles on its head. Those terrible eyes would shine when it drank, and I could see that it was evil and totally insane. A man was there, leading the chant—a tall bearded man with white hair. He was the one who killed the victims, and all the other worshippers obeyed his commands.

Recently the dreams have changed again. I've written down some impressions—sometimes they come in handy for stories. (See above.)

THE CULT STRIKES

After the PCs find Valecroft, the Brotherhood of Night will attempt to eliminate him. Four cultists will break into

Valecroft's house and attack him with knives.

If the PCs are not present during the attack, Valecroft will be killed. Any PCs later making a Spot Hidden roll at the scene of the crime will notice several small pink blossoms on the carpet. A successful Botany (or Knowledge) roll will identify them as being from a crape myrtle tree. Such trees are common in the south, but they are ornamental shrubs in New England.

If Ramsey is present during the attack, he will not join the fight but will instead try to maintain his cover story. If he can slip away, he will try to summon a Fire Vampire to attack Valecroft and the PCs.

If the PCs are present during the attack, the referee should add a number of thugs equal to the number of guards, just to keep things interesting. The cultists will not allow themselves to be captured alive, and they carry no identification. All wear rings made of a strange greenish metal bearing an image of a mouthless face surrounded by tentacles (the face of Khoorgolan).

PCs making a successful Idea roll after the attack will note that any assassins killed have small pink blossoms adhering to their shoes. If Valecroft is alive, he will recall that a house down the street has some crape myrtles in the yard. If Valecroft is dead, any PCs making a successful Idea roll will notice this. The house, located at 112 College St., belongs to Dr. Peter Sandison, a noted Egyptologist at Miskatonic University.

SANDISON'S HOUSE

Sandison lives alone and spends most of his time at home when he is not teaching classes at Miskatonic. His dwelling is a modest two-story brick house, surrounded by well-kept gardens and a white picket fence. The doors and windows (even on the second floor) are locked from the inside with very strong dead-bolt locks. Inside, the house is very tidy and well-kept, with furnishings of the highest quality and taste.

When Sandison is gone or is in the temple hidden beneath his house, the dwelling is guarded by a Dimensional

Shambler, which has orders to slay anyone who does not wear a green metal ring bearing the image of Khoorgolan.

Basement: The small basement contains a new oil-burning furnace and a few old trunks which hold equipment from Sandison's last expedition to Egypt. There are no tunnels or secret passages.

Dining Room: This room contains a lovely mahogany table with matching chairs. The fireplace has a beautiful carved mantelpiece. Characters making a successful Spot Hidden roll will notice a tiny portrait of Khoorgolan in the center of the mantelpiece. Pressing the image will cause the bottom of the fireplace to swing open, revealing a ladder (leading down to the temple chamber).

Study: Sandison's study is lined with bookshelves, and a handsome oak desk stands by the windows. In one drawer of the desk are copies of *Stupefying Stories* containing the stories by Abbott, Guthurste and Black. The bookshelves hold an impressive array of tomes on Egypt and ancient history, as well as a copy of Lord Wendy-Smith's *G'harne Fragments* on loan from the Miskatonic Library's special collection.

HIDDEN TEMPLE

The underground temple is where Sandison and the other cultists make their blood sacrifices to Khoorgolan. The chamber is a large rectangular room, adorned with Egyptian hieroglyphics. At one end is a steel cage containing victims for Khoorgolan, and at the other end is the petrified god. Behind the cage is a tunnel leading to the Arkham sewer system, which is how the cultists come and go without being observed.

Cultists: When the Brotherhood of Night is not worshipping Khoorgolan, the temple is usually left empty except for one attendant who takes care of the sacrificial victims. The attendant is armed with a club and a .38 revolver. During sacrifices, a dozen cultists will be present, along with Sandison. The cultists will be armed with knives, and Sandison will have his pistol. All will fight to the death.



Victims: Four victims are locked in the cage. All are healthy young men kidnapped from New England towns by the cultists. All suffer from temporary insanity as a result of having witnessed Khoorgolan feeding. Two are catatonic; one is stupefied and babbling incoherently; and the fourth has become maniacal, raging and tugging madly at the bars of the cage.

Ritual: If the PCs enter the temple at night, they are quite likely to witness a sacrifice. The cultists will begin a droning chant that gradually becomes more and more frenetic. The victims will be brought forward from the cage and flung to the ground before Khoorgolan. Sandison will cry out a mystic phrase and slit the throat of one victim, spilling the life blood on the floor.

Then Khoorgolan will begin to move, bending forward to suck up the blood with its tentacles. Slowly, Khoorgolan will transform from a statue to a hideous living monster. Gibbering with delight, the thing will snatch up the remaining victims, draining them of blood. It may also seize a few cultists to feed upon, sucking them dry and discarding the bodies. The chanting will reach an insane peak as the cultists collapse and Khoorgolan drains 1D6 Magic Points from each of them.

Khoorgolan will remain in an active state for a few minutes, then petrify. The cultists will gradually recover and shuffle away, the ritual at an end.

DEFEATING THE MENACE

To neutralize the cult, the PCs will probably have to kill Sandison or find have him put in jail. Without Sandison to lead them, the Brotherhood of Night won't make any further attacks on Valecroft (assuming he survives). It is impossible to permanently destroy Khoorgolan, but smashing the statue and scattering the fragments, or entombing it in the temple chamber would certainly prevent the Old One from causing any trouble for awhile.

PHILLIP H. VALECROFT

Valecroft is a tall man in his early thirties, very thin and pale. He dresses in threadbare, out-of-date clothing older

than *he* is, and affects an archaic style of speech reminiscent of the 18th century. He is very eccentric and hates to leave his house. Valecroft is fascinated by horror and the occult, but has no knowledge of the Cthulhu Mythos. If the characters are friendly and take the time to gain his trust, he will be very helpful. Threats and violence will make Valecroft uncooperative and frightened.

STR 7, CON 7, SIZ 11, INT 16, POW 7, DEX 11, APP 10, EDU 15, SAN 35.

Hit Points: 9.

Skills: Read/Write English 95%, Library Use 65%, Occult 55%, History 45%, Read/Write French 20%, Speak French 20%, Astronomy 20%, Psychology 15%, Archaeology 10%.

DR. PETER SANDISON

Dr. Sandison is a well-respected archaeologist on the faculty of Miskatonic University. Two years ago he excavated the vault holding the statue of Khoorgolan and gradually fell victim to its sinister influence. Finally, his mind snapped, and he became an insane worshipper of the ancient being. Sandison now leads the Brotherhood of Night, and Khoorgolan has taught him powerful magic and mind-twisting knowledge.

Sandison is a dignified-looking man with white hair and a beard. He dresses impeccably and now wears a strange greenish metal ring bearing the visage of Khoorgolan. He always carries a .38 pistol in his coat pocket.

STR 5, CON 8, SIZ 10, INT 17, POW 21, DEX 10, APP 8, EDU 18, SAN 0.

Hit Points: 10.

Skills: Archaeology 60%, Cthulhu Mythos 60%, History 50%, Revolver 50%, Library Use 50%, Read/Write Latin 40%, Occult 30%, Debate 25%, Anthropology 20%, Chemistry 20%.

Spells: Contact Nyarlathotep, Shriving, Voorish Sign, Contact Cthonian, Contact Khoorgolan.

CHARLES RAMSEY

Charles Ramsey is a tall, gangly young man with unruly red hair, thick glasses, and a bow tie. He always seems cheerful and eager, full of enthusiasm and helpful suggestions.

Actually, Ramsey is an insane cultist

dedicated to the destruction of life and sanity. His hair is dyed; his glasses are fake; and he carries a .22 revolver in an ankle holster.

STR 14, CON 15, SIZ 11, INT 16, POW 18, DEX 12, APP 9, EDU 10, SAN 0.

Hit Points: 13.

Skills: Fist 60%, Move Quietly 60%, Fast Talk 45%, Debate 40%, Cthulhu Mythos 40%, Library Use 40%, Hide 35%, Track 35%, Revolver 30%, Oratory 25%, Occult 20%.

Spells: Summon Fire Vampire, Bind Fire Vampire.

KHOORGOLAN (GREAT OLD ONE)

Khoorgolan is a large reptilian monster with a long tail and no arms. Its mouthless head bears a dozen tentacles, each ending in a mouth, surrounding two huge, mad eyes. When not in its petrified state, Khoorgolan is covered with a translucent reddish slime.

Khoorgolan remains petrified most of the time. It can only become active when it is given a blood sacrifice, and it then remains active for one minute for each 10 SIZ points of the sacrificial victim. While petrified, Khoorgolan cannot move and can only use its psychic attack.

STR 40, CON 40, SIZ 30, INT 20, POW 30, DEX 10.

Move: 10.

Hit Points: 35

Armor: Khoorgolan has four points of armor and cannot be impaled. It regenerates two hit point per turn, even after it is reduced to zero hit points.

Weapon	Attack%	Damage
Tail strike	50%	4D6
Kick	40%	3D6+1D10
Tentacles (6)	40%	1D6 per turn

Attacks: Khoorgolan can attack physically by kicking with a clawed foot, lashing its powerful tail or striking with up to six of its tentacles. The tentacles have sucking mouths at the ends, and a hit from one inflicts 1D6 damage. The tentacles will remain attached, doing an additional 1D6 per turn, until the victim successfully overcomes a Strength of 15 on the Resistance Table.

Spells: Khoorgolan knows all Sum-



mon and Contact spells, but cannot use them while petrified. In that form it can attack psychically, matching its Magic Points against its target's on the Resistance Table. If Khoorgolan can overcome the target's Magic Points, then the target loses 1D6 Magic Points. Khoorgolan will keep up the attack until the target loses all its Magic Points and collapses unconscious.

SAN: Seeing the statue of Khoorgolan costs 1D6 SAN on a failed Sanity roll; otherwise, it has no effect. Seeing Khoorgolan in its living state costs 5D10 SAN on a failed roll and 1D6 SAN even if the roll succeeds.

CULTISTS/ASSASSINS

Members of the Brotherhood of Night are all normal-looking people, perhaps a little glassy-eyed or degenerate. During the hideous rituals underground, they wear black, hooded robes.

STR 14, CON 12, SIZ 12, INT 8, POW 10, DEX 10, APP 9, EDU 7, SAN 0.

Hit Points: 12.

Skills: Fist 60%, Stealth 50%, Revolver 40%, Knife 40%.

DIMENSIONAL SHAMBLER

The Dimensional Shambler is a hideous creature that wanders between the universes. Its skin is loose and wrinkled, and it has huge chitinous claws.

STR 20, CON 18, SIZ 20, INT 6, POW 9, DEX 6.

Move: 7.

Hit Points: 19.

Weapon	Attack%	Damage
Claws (2)	30%	1D8+1D6
Grab	50%	None. Can carry off victim

Armor: The Dimensional Shambler has three points of armor.

Special Powers: The Dimensional Shambler knows no spells.

The creature does have the ability to travel at will to other dimensions by expending four Magic Points.

The transition to another dimension takes five rounds. During this time, the creature can act normally, except for the first round, when the Magic Points are spent.

By using one extra Magic Point per 10 SIZ points of a victim, the Shambler can take others with it when it journeys to other dimensions; this accomplishment requires a successful Grab attack. Anyone carried off by the creature is gone forever.

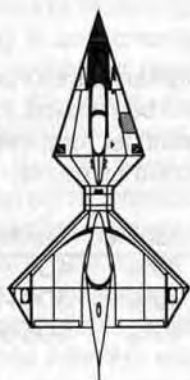
SAN: Seeing the Dimensional Shambler costs a character 1D10 points on a failed SAN roll, and none on a successful roll. Ω



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By Patrick Sheats
MADNESS
from the mythos

Shape Demons, also known as shapeshifters or doppelgangers, are beings of energy from another dimension. Their physical manifestations in our dimension are simply a 3-D facet of their polydimensional existence, and they can only be summoned from a 2-D surface. Although they are very intelligent creatures within their own realm, the process of altering their forms to conform to a 3-D universe drives them insane, and they become dangerous beasts within our dimension.

Shape Demons cannot be commanded to "stop eating," and they will attack and devour any person when they become hungry, usually after 1D6 hours have passed since their last feeding.

When summoned, Shape Demons lose their own identities, so they must constantly consume sentient beings to satisfy their hunger for identity of their own. This is impossible, of course, but they continue to try until they are released back into their own dimension. The "natural" form of the Shape Demon, the shape taken before consuming a living creature, is that of a huge tentacle ending in a gaping mouth. Their bodies are composed of energy, although they immediately take on the outer skin of whatever substance they are summoned from.

RETURN TO THEIR OWN DIMENSION

Shape Demons can only return to their dimension in one of two ways. They must either consume 500 points of POW to reform themselves in their own dimension, or they must kill their summoner.

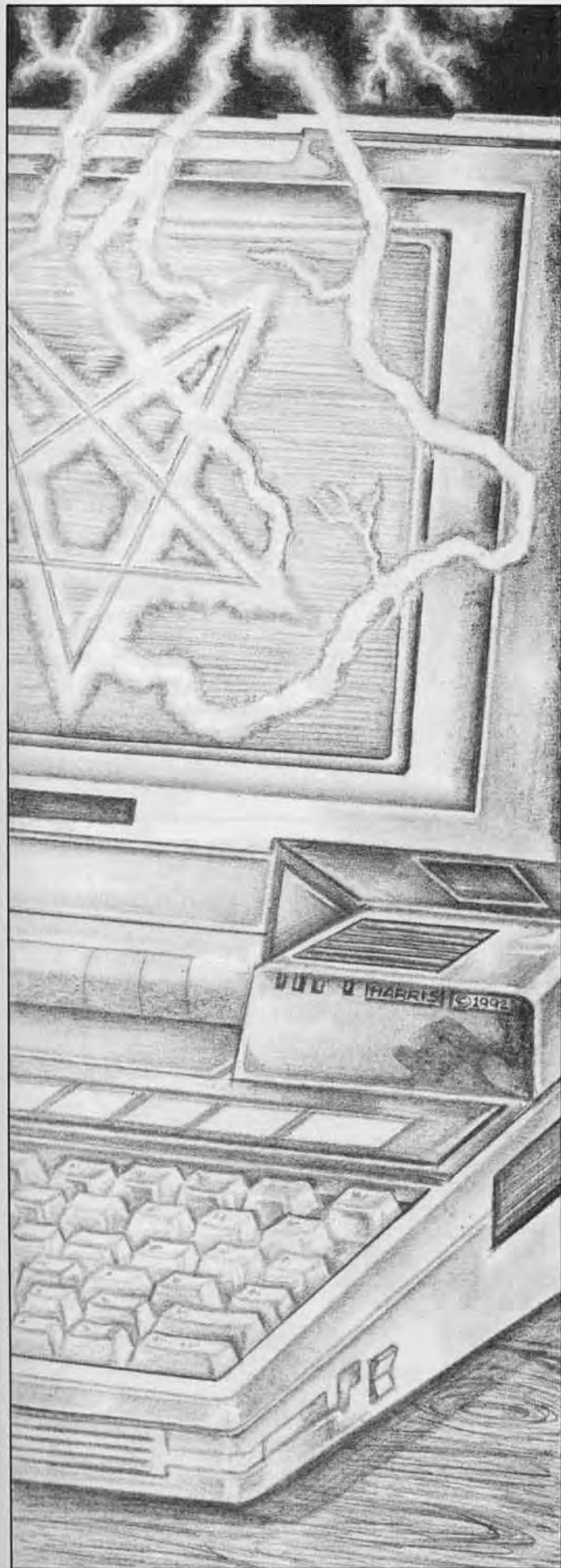
Consuming POW: Shape Demons detect magical energy in the same way humans hear sound, and they attempt to devour any sources of POW they find.

When Shape Demons attack a living being, they try to drain the being's POW while digesting the material form of the being in order to understand its biological and chemical structure. Once that is done, they form themselves into the being they have consumed.

Killing their Summoner: This method of returning to their dimension is the most appealing because of its simplicity. Shape Demons can read mystic auras and immediately discover the particular aura of the creature which has summoned them.

Since Shape Demons do not like being summoned, they immediately seek out and devour their summoner unless they are bound. Thus, a wizard that summons one must either move around a lot or continually cast binding spells upon the creature.

The binding spell was once forgotten by history, but the Shape Demons' appetite for human minds (i.e., human brains) has made them of particular interest to Nyarlathotep's wish that demons be loosed to eradicate humanity and prepare the earth for the return of the Great Old Ones.



SHAPE DEMON CHARACTERISTICS

Characteristic	Average
STR: 5D6=20	29-30
CON: As POW	—
SIZ: As victim	—
INT: 5D6	17-18
POW: 6D6	21
DEX: 4D6	14
Hit Points	35
Move	12

Weapon	Attack%	Damage
Bite	80%	See below
Fist	75%	4D10

A Shape Demon's bite attack must first drain the victim's POW to be successful. Treat as a POW vs. POW attack on the resistance table. If the victim loses, all the victim's POW is immediately drained, and the Shape Demon absorbs the upper half of the victim's body. The Shape Demon will then metamorphose into the victim's shape and appearance.

Physical weapons have no effect on Shape Demons, although they will remove the creatures' outer layers of skin to reveal the substance underneath.

Shape Demons can be destroyed in two ways—by draining their POW or by using magnets. Shape Demons are energy-based creatures, so they are susceptible to magnetic fields. A small bar magnet will do 1D4 damage to the creature, a half-pound magnet will do 1D10 damage, and an extremely powerful electromagnet will cause 1D100 damage. Unusual forms of radiation, such as X-rays, cause 1D8 points of damage per round that the Shape Demon is within the radiation field. If a demon is ever impaled by a magnet, it is automatically destroyed.

Armor: None.

Spells: None.

SAN: Anyone viewing the summoning of a Shape Demon must make a SAN roll with a cost of 1 SAN point if the roll is a success and 1D6 SAN points if it is not, in addition to the SAN cost of seeing a human being devoured. Anyone viewing a Shape Demon in its elemental form must make a SAN roll at a cost of 1D4 for a failure, 0 for a success.

NEW SPELLS

Summon Shape Demon: This spell requires an enchanted item, embedded with the words of the spell and marked with the sign of the pentagram. The spellcaster must then induce a magnetic field around the object. Once this is done, the gate which summons the Shape Demon will be formed, and the demon itself will appear.

The spell also requires a living human sacrifice to be consumed by the demon. If there is none, the demon will immediately attack the spellcaster. If the sacrifice resists the attack for three rounds, the demon will give up and return to its own dimension. Casters of this spell prefer to use humans with a low POW for their sacrifices.

In medieval times, wizards used large pieces of lodestone arrayed around a pool of water to summon a Shape Demon. In modern times, the computer has become the perfect means of summoning a Shape Demon. The spell is en-

rypted onto a disk, which is then placed in the disk drive, where magnetic fields cause the triggering of the spell.

Bind Shape Demon: This spell is exactly like other binding spells. See the *Call of Cthulhu* rulebook for details.

Enchant Disk: This spell is similar to other enchant item spells. It requires the permanent loss of 1 point of POW, 1D4 SAN points, one day of time and a blood sacrifice. The magic point cost of the enchantment is equal to the cost of any spells placed upon the disk.

Five drops of blood are taken from the sacrifice and placed on the surface of the disk to form vertices of the pentagram. The disk must next be write-protected.

At this point, the disk is a magic item and can be used to cast the spell encoded on it. Writing a spell in computer language requires a knowledge of the spell and five consecutive successes in Computer Use. Once this is complete, the program will function as an automatic spellbook, recreating the verbal components of a spell through electronic

If you liked "Madness from the Mythos," don't miss a new adventure by Patrick Sheats in **Challenge 61**:

Video Nightmare

A brilliant but insane computer programmer has developed a method of integrating technology and magic, summoning a new kind of Mythos monster by using enchanted computer disks.

means. The spell programs must be written onto the disk before the enchantment is cast.

Using a disk to cast a spell can only work if the spell has verbal components, and all other requirements for the casting must also be met. For example, if an enchanted disk were used to cast Contact Spawn of Cthulhu, it must be used at the seashore. If the spell was Summon Servitor of the Outer Gods, then the casting must be on an unhallowed night, and a flute must still be played.

If the disk is damaged in any way that would harm a normal disk, or if the write-protect seal is broken, the programs will be lost, and the disk will lose its magical abilities. The spell programs cannot be copied onto another disk. They must be encoded by the spellcaster.

Using disks to cast spells can be dangerous. Intelligent creatures of the Mythos cannot be fooled by disks and will identify the caster of the spell as the wizard who enchanted the disk, although some Mythos creatures will still treat the immediate user as a blood sacrifice. The cost to cast the spell embedded upon the disk is 1 magic point, except that the spell draws magic points from the computer's user. If there is no user, then the spell will not work. If the user is aware of the presence of the spell and its drain of magic points, he can refuse to allow the spell to be cast.

The following spells may be used with Enchant Disk: Summon/Bind Shape Demon, Summon/Bind Hunting Horror, Summon/Bind Servitor of the Outer Gods, Summon/Bind Star Vampire, all Contact spells (except Contact Deity spells), Contact Cthulhu, Contact Tsathoggua, Contact Yig and Create Gate (the gate will be the monitor screen, so this should only be used if the screen is really large). Ω

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Video Nightmare

This adventure is designed for two to five PCs in a 1990s urban environment. It can be modified for use in whatever city the referee desires.

While at home one evening, one of the PCs receives a call from Larry James, an old friend from college. James sounds very nervous. "There have been some weird things at work lately, and I think I'm involved. I need your help." If asked for more information, he'll say that "the phones cannot be trusted" and insist that the characters visit him personally.

If the characters go to James' house, they see a dim blue glow coming from his study, where he is working on his computer terminal. As they approach the house, they hear a loud pop and see a blinding flash from his study. The study window shatters, and they hear a brief scream, then silence.

If the PCs run in to investigate, they see James' lower torso, blackened by fire, fall over from his chair. His upper torso is missing. The computer monitor has exploded, and the window has not just shattered, but that has been torn out of its frame. Sanity rolls should be made for all, costing 1D6 SAN if failed, and 1 SAN if successful. If any PCs make a Luck roll, they notice a faintly glowing blue figure disappear into the bushes next door, but any attempt to find the figure will result in failure.

Anyone investigating the computer will notice that the monitor has exploded and melted into slag, but the computer's CPU and disk drive are still intact. Anyone opening the disk drive will find a 5 1/4" diskette marked "NEW PROJECT" on the label and the emblem of the Graves Software Company, James' employer. The PCs may notice that the disk has strange bumps on its surface, each bump apparently corresponding to the points of a pentacle.

ENTER DETECTIVE STILES

Police cars, fire trucks and an ambulance quickly arrive on the scene, and the PCs are questioned by authorities. If the characters have not hidden the disk to avoid having it confiscated by police, have them make Idea rolls to figure this out. If they still have not hidden the disk, it will be taken by police. If it is taken from the person of a PC, the whole lot of them will be rounded up as suspects in James' murder and will be held for 24 hours.

They may be charged with obstruction of justice and be forced to pay bail to be set free, if the referee feels malicious. Otherwise, the forensic report quickly leads the police to believe the characters could not have killed James.

PCs will be questioned by Detective Reginald Stiles, the man in charge of James' case. He does not believe that the characters killed James, but he thinks they know more about the killing than they are admitting. He will try to intimidate them and will advise them to stay within the city limits until this matter is solved.

The night of James' murder, a series of bizarre killings strikes the town. According to the papers, four people were killed that night, in the same manner as James, with the only remains being the lower halves of the bodies. This knowledge will cost the players 0/1D3 SAN when they realize that whatever killed James is on the loose and still hungry.

The attacker is the Shape Demon, which assumed James' physical form after devouring him and embarked on a killing spree on the city streets.

DISKETTE

If the characters have the disk, anyone making a First Aid roll will recognize the bumps as being dried blood, apparently treated with sealant. Exactly why they are in a five-pointed pattern is a mystery, although it is a fairly obvious guess that it has some occult significance.

The PCs can load the disk onto another computer (any IBM-compatible computer will accept it) and look at the programs. The opening screen shows the symbol and the name of Graves Software, along with the menu:

CRYSTAL COMPENDIUM

A Collection of New-Age Software

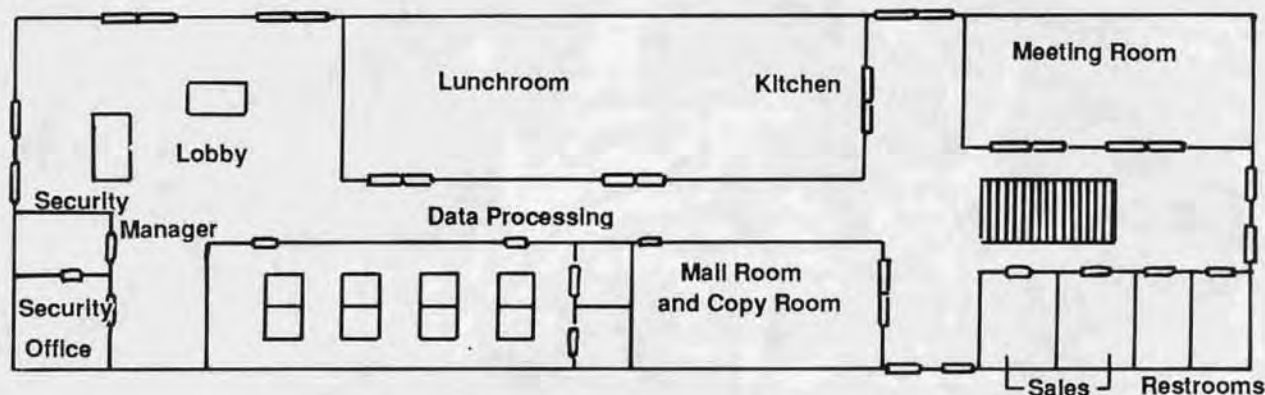
1. Horoscope Generator.
2. Biorhythm Tracker.
3. New Age Encyclopedia.

Horoscope Generator and Biorhythm Tracker: If the characters select either the horoscope or biorhythm programs, they must make successful Computer Use and Occult rolls to use them properly (they may combine their skills to do so). These programs function exactly as they are supposed to, with nothing unusual happening.

—By Patrick Sheats—



First Floor, Graves Software



New Age Encyclopedia: The New Age Encyclopedia is more interesting. It is actually a database of occult terminology, and it has a great deal of information on New Age philosophy and modern magic terminology. It is organized alphabetically, and selecting a letter key will show a page of headings in the database. If the characters investigate the database thoroughly, have them make Cthulhu Mythos rolls to recognize some unusual and rather disturbing words—such as "Azathoth," "Elder Sign," Nyarlathotep," and others—although the entries are not as detailed as a good occult tome would be. The New Age Encyclopedia on this diskette can be considered a Mythos book, with a Knowledge modifier of +3%, a spell multiplier of $\times 1$, and a cost to SAN of -1D4.

Programming Structure: Anyone investigating the programming structure with Computer Use will notice nothing unusual about the programs. However, if a PC checks the diskette's directory thoroughly, have him make an Idea roll at half value. If successful, the character notices that the programs do not take up as much memory as is indicated by the directory readout, and that a substantial block of memory is occupied by an unlisted program. Without more sophisticated equipment, the character will be unable to examine this program, and the program cannot be run from the language interpreter. Any computer programmer will know that it is probably run by some password, but what that password is is unknown to the PCs.

The missing program is the key to the mystery, although the PCs will probably not realize it yet. The hidden program is run from within the database program—the letter "S" must be selected, then the words "Shape Demon" must be keyed in. When this is done, the computer monitor will become a gate, and a Shape Demon will appear, glow-

ing with the colors of television static. It will slowly bulge out of the monitor until it suddenly forms a huge, toothy maw and attacks the person sitting at the terminal. The bite, if successful, will consume the user's upper half, and the demon will leap out of the monitor and assume the form of a devoured victim. Meanwhile, the gate (and the monitor) will be consumed in flames, although no other objects in the room will be damaged.

INVESTIGATIONS

Information on Graves Software is easily found in business periodicals. A fledgling software company, it has risen quickly in stature, recently receiving contracts for development of software for defense projects. Its reputation is built on its line of advanced language interpreters, such as GravesPascal and GravesC, and operating systems such as G-DOS. The company also makes several entertainment programs, and its New Age software collection is a best-seller.

Information on Arthur Graves is more difficult to come by. Although he is the owner of Graves Software, very little else is known about him, and he has refused to grant interviews with business magazines. If the characters look for his name in the local papers (this requires successful Library Use roll at $\frac{1}{2}$), they will find that Arthur Graves has had a checkered past. He was apparently brought in for questioning about a string of murders that occurred seven years ago. He was eventually released, but the murders remain unsolved to this day. Graves Software was created shortly after his release.

The murders that Graves was questioned about involved the disappearances of five people, four men and a woman, who later turned up in a shallow grave on the outskirts of town. All of them had been murdered with

a dagger and had their hearts cut out. Further research (another Library Use roll at $\frac{1}{2}$) will reveal that Arthur Graves had been confined to a local mental institution for awhile, although no details of his illness are available. Graves was released from the institution nine years ago.

The PCs may wish to go directly to Graves Software and talk with Arthur Graves. If they do, his secretary informs them that Graves is out of town on business. If they snoop around the building, see Graves Software below.

ATTACK

During the day, as characters move around town, they are followed by hirelings of Arthur Graves. There are four of them, each armed with silenced .45 automatic pistols. If they think they are being followed, the PCs must make a Spot Hidden roll at $\frac{1}{2}$ to notice the car tailing them.

Eventually, the PCs are attacked by the thugs, who use their pistols, only resorting to hand-to-hand combat if necessary. If one of the thugs falls in combat and cannot escape, he will kill himself with his pistol. If one of the thugs falls unconscious and cannot be rescued, one of the other thugs will kill him.

After four rounds of gunplay, another car arrives on the scene, and a figure gets out and starts to shoot at the thugs from the hood of the car. The figure is Detective Stiles. He has called for backup, as well as an ambulance, which should arrive within 10 rounds. Once the combat is over, Stiles checks with the characters to see if they are all right and administers first aid to any who need it. He also takes the PCs to the station for questioning.

GRAVES SOFTWARE

After another evening of questioning by Detective Stiles, the characters are finally

released. But as they make their exit, they are seized by police in front of the station and taken to police cars waiting on the street. Detective Stiles is nowhere to be seen. They are roughly forced into the cars and are taken to Graves Software.

Graves Software is in a small, two-story, glass-and-stone office building on the edge of town. Anyone investigating the earlier Graves murders will realize that the building is sitting on the exact spot where the bodies were discovered seven years ago.

Lobby: The lobby is largely bare, except for the plants around the wall-length windowpanes and the polished granite security desks. At least one guard is always present at each desk. Guards are part of Graves Software and are not from a private security agency, which is rather unusual for such a small office.

In fact, all the security agents are deranged followers of Graves, and will obey his orders to the letter. Otherwise, the guards are like normal corporate security guards, although they never show flashes of humor or friendliness. When the PCs are brought to the building, the guards' job is to ensure that they do not leave.

Office of the Security Manager: In this office is a desk, a three-drawer file cabinet, a security monitor and a computer terminal. At the bottom of the file cabinet is a locked drawer containing secret dossiers on most of the programming staff, including a file on James which contains a note that he has been selected for "the new project." The drawer also contains dossiers on the PCs, although these are very thin. In the top drawer of the desk is a 9mm Parabellum pistol.

Security Office: Four guards are usually seated at security stations, monitoring every room by security camera, except the restrooms, which are monitored by audio sensors only. Inside a locker against the wall are eight M-16A2s and four Ithaca shotguns. Each of the assault rifles has six clips of ammunition. All security guards have a key to this locker, although it will take awhile to find the right key, since the guards have at least 20 keys each.

Data Processing (DP): This is where permanent and temporary employees translate data from paper to computer disk. Within this room are several cubicles. Within each cubicle is a small desk covered with papers, as well as a computer terminal.

At the east end of the room are two offices belonging to the data processing manager and assistant manager. There is nothing of interest here.

There are also some DP cubicles on the upper floor. The recent increase in business for the company has meant a temporary increase in the DP staff. These new employees have been placed upstairs, although they still report to the DP manager downstairs.

Lunchroom and Kitchen: This is a typical employee lunchroom with tables, chairs and a counter at the far end connecting the room with the kitchen. There is nothing of interest here.

Meeting Rooms: There are three meeting rooms. The room on the first floor is the largest, having a small wet bar. Otherwise, they are all straightforward meeting rooms, each with a large table and several chairs.

Mail Room and Copy Room: This is where the company's mail is processed, as well as where the employees come to have photocopies made. A counter separates the mail room from the copy room. Two employees work in the mail room during the day, handing out the mail and doubling as copier technicians. Six photocopy machines are located in the copy room. There is nothing else of interest.

Sales: These rooms are where the manager and assistant manager of sales work. There is nothing of interest in these rooms. The managers know nothing of the "new project."

Programming: These are the offices of the programming staff. Programmers work in here when they are not working in the computer lab. Each room contains a desk, file cabinet and computer terminal.

One of the offices closest to the meeting rooms is marked "Larry James" on the door. In that room, and in the two other offices nearest it, diskettes marked "NEWPROJECT" lie on the computer desks. These are incomplete portions of the disk which the PCs found at James' home. These disks are devoid of any bumps on their surfaces. Other than this, there is nothing unusual in these offices.

Reception: This is the reception area for Graves' office. A receptionist sits at the desk during business hours. There is nothing unusual here.

Arthur Graves' Office: This room contains a large desk facing the double doors from the reception area, plus a four-drawer filing cabinet and a computer terminal. Other than this, the office is bare. All the drawers on the desk are locked (Mechanical Repair roll to pick the locks). In one of the drawers is a copy of

Liber Ivonis, which can be recognized by any character making a successful Cthulhu Mythos roll as being a powerful and evil piece of work. In Graves' filing cabinet, a file labeled "New Project" gives details on the spells Enchant Disk, Summon Shape Demon, Bind Shape Demon and Gate.

Computer Lab: This room is accessible only through the airlock on the east wall. It is filled with computer terminals and large tables covered with pieces of electronic apparatus, circuit testers, disassembled disk drives, etc. A couple of monitor housings on one table are somewhat molten, very much like the monitor found in James' room when he died. In a corner of the room, well away from any magnetic storage media, are four magnets, weighing about one-half pound each. Otherwise, there is little of interest in this room.

Mainframe: This room has an airlock. Inside is the company's mainframe computer, a unit the length of a car and about four feet high. There is nothing else of interest in the room.

The computer is the repository for all the company's business files and projects under development, including the "new project," which is stored under the file name SHAPE and is embedded with enormous security subroutines. To gain access to this file, PCs may access the mainframe through any terminal in the building. They will have to find a Shape file by using Graves' logon code and password, then accessing the file itself with a special password. Otherwise, loading these files with another logon will require five

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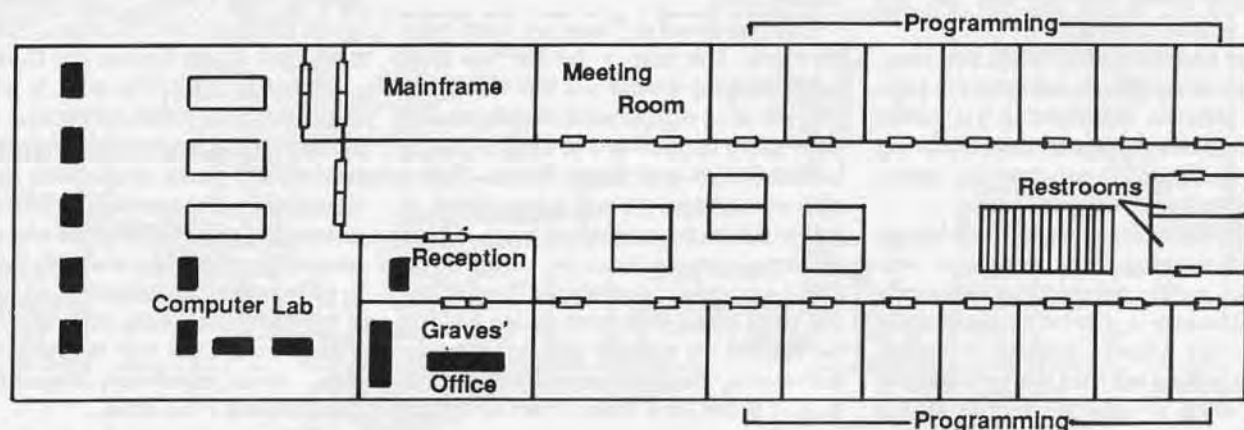
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Second Floor, Graves Software



consecutive successes with Computer Use. The whole process will take 10 minutes, and if any of the rolls are failures, another 30 minutes will be required before a character may start again. The file contains all the programming codes for the enchanted diskette, as well as notes on the enchantments required to make spells work, just as the file in Graves' filing cabinet.

HELD CAPTIVE

The police who hold the characters captive are fakes sent by Arthur Graves. When the characters are brought to Graves Software, they are immediately taken to the computer lab. As they are escorted through the building, they see that it is completely empty of personnel. In the lab, Arthur Graves is standing in front of a row of desks with computer terminals on them. In his hand he holds four disks, identical to the one the players found. As the players are strapped to chairs in front of the computer terminals, Graves inserts the disks into the disk drives of the computer terminals in front of them, grinning at the characters as he does so.

Before he is able to turn the terminals on, however, he is interrupted by the breaking of glass downstairs. As the fake police head out the doors toward the stairs, Graves slowly walks toward the switch that will activate the terminals, saying, "You may now ask any questions you have. Since you will all soon be dead, I will be happy to provide you with answers."

At that point, gunshots and screams erupt from the hallway outside. One of the PCs will notice that his bindings are not secured very well. He can use the distraction to free his hands (with a successful DEXx5 roll), undo his foot bindings (another DEXx5 check), and free a second PC (another DEXx5 check). The sound of a scuffle draws closer

to the lab, and suddenly the door bursts open. A security guard stands before them, except he has holes in his torso ringed with spots of glowing blue static. His eyes are also glowing blue.

This is no ordinary security guard! It's the original Shape Demon, determined to return to its home dimension by killing Graves, who enchanted the disk that summoned it.

The figure launches itself at Graves, who will run to the corner of the room containing the magnets and pick two of them up. Graves will then engage in hand-to-hand combat with the creature. As the PCs try to free themselves, they see Graves and the Shape Demon writhing on the floor, with Graves slowly gaining the upper hand as he uses magnets to pull away shards of energy from the Shape Demon as the creature tries to tear away Graves' flesh with various mouths that form from its body.

Eventually, Graves succeeds in plunging one of the magnets deep into the demon's body, causing it to disperse completely in a cloud of electronic particles. Graves will then try to reach the computer switch to activate the terminals with the enchanted disks, holding off the party with his 9mm pistol.

If Graves succeeds, the computers will activate. After the internal memory check, the programs will load and activate the summoning program. Five new demons will appear and attack anything that they can find in the room. Graves will attempt to make a hasty escape. The players may use the electromagnets against the demons, if they wish.

CONCLUSION

If the PCs succeed in stopping Graves before he unleashes the demons, or if they defeat the demons before the creatures escape from Graves Software, each PC

should receive 1D10 SAN, with 1D2 SAN for each demon defeated in combat.

If the characters then destroy the disks and all the files containing the summoning programs, they will gain another 1D6 SAN each.

As the action winds down, Detective Stiles arrives on the scene with several policemen. The characters are interrogated briefly, then released. If they have been cooperative, they will have made a friend in Detective Stiles and a possible ally in future adventures.

ARTHUR GRAVES

STR 11, CON 12, SIZ 12, INT 18, POW 16, DEX 16, APP 14, EDU 18, SAN 0, Hit Pts 12.

Skills: Accounting 20%, Bargain 50%, Credit Rating 60%, Computer Use 95%, Cthulhu Mythos 45%, Drive Automobile 50%, Fast Talk 50%, Handgun 60%, Hide 60%, Library Use 40%, Occult 90%, Read Latin 60%, Read English 100%, Rifle 40%, Sneak 60%, Spot Hidden 70%.

Spells: Enchant Disk, Summon/Bind Shape Demon, Gate, Contact Nyarlathotep, Contact Hound of Tindalos, Dread Curse of Azathoth.

Arthur Graves is a tall, slender man with a long, almost elfin face. He has short black hair and piercing blue eyes. He wears a business suit almost constantly and speaks in a very punctual manner, never showing flashes of emotion except when he is working directly on some Mythos-related project. At that time he becomes quite animated and talkative, although nobody understands what he says.

Intelligent but unstable since he was a child, Graves was always a loner. Computers became his friends, and he still enjoys working with them. He also bears a burning hatred of the rest of humanity for harsh

treatment of him during his youth.

A long-time follower of the occult, Graves managed to obtain a copy of *Liber Ivonis* during his adventures. He went to college and learned Latin in order to understand and translate the work. Using the spells gleaned from that book, he managed to contact Nyarlathotep, who saw in Graves the opportunity to unleash a new horror upon the Earth. It was Nyarlathotep who gave Graves the spells required to enchant disks and summon Shape Demons.

His contacts with the Mythos have made Graves into a complete sociopath with delusions of grandeur. He believes that Nyarlathotep has chosen him for some special destiny, and he has pursued his new project with total commitment. He will destroy anything that interferes with his dreams of becoming a powerful wizard.

He is not stupid, however. Graves will mask his intentions among others, trusting no one. Although he is not a friendly man, no one (save Detective Stiles) believes him to be a madman. Since he came under suspicion in the serial murders seven years ago, Graves has been the perfect citizen, avoiding even traffic violations. His company has given generously to charities, and he is known as a stern but fair employer. He wears a mask of civility in order to achieve his ends.

REGINALD STILES

STR 15, CON 15, SIZ 15, INT 14, POW 9, DEX 14, APP 11, EDU 12, SAN 65, Hit Pts 15.

Skills: Dodge 55%, Dive 60%, Fast Talk 55%, First Aid 50%, Handgun 75%, Hide 50%, Law 65%, Library Use 50%, Listen 70%, Spot Hidden 70%, Sneak 65%, Mechanical Repair 45%, Nightstick Attack 60%, Nightstick Parry 45%, Occult 35%, Psychology 30%, Track 45%.

Spells: None.

Reginald Stiles is a classic police detective. With a typical build, a paunch and a receding hairline, he is a picture of the burned-out city cop. He was originally assigned the serial murder case seven years ago, but could not find enough evidence on Graves to press charges. Since that time, he has gone on to solve several other cases and has performed well enough in the line of duty to earn two commendations from his department. Nevertheless, his failure in the Graves case disturbs him, and this case will give him the opportunity to put Graves in prison for good.

Stiles is a man who believes strongly in justice. He will not harass the characters unless he feels that such acts will serve the greater good of putting Graves behind bars. He will try to pressure the characters into giving information, then bargain with them to assist in his investigations, but he will not press charges against them unless they commit blatantly illegal acts. He feels some kinship with the PCs, seeing them as pursuing the same goal as himself. If the characters betray him, however, he will not rest until he sees them punished.

SECURITY GOONS AND FAKE POLICE

STR 14, CON 12, SIZ 12, INT 8, POW 10, DEX 13, APP 12, EDU 10, SAN 0, Hit Pts 12.

Skills: Law 40%, First Aid 40%, Fast Talk 60%, Handgun 60%, Submachinegun 50%, Rifle 50%, Fist Attack 50%, Knife Attack 40%.

These men are all from the fringes of society, taken in by Arthur Graves and trained to be his personal group enforcers. Like him, they are sociopaths, and they conceal their true desires to maim and kill in order to better serve their master.

SHAPE DEMON

STR 32, CON 15, SIZ 12, INT 17, POW 15, DEX 14, EDU —, Hit Pts 35.

The abilities of the Shape Demon are described in the article "Madness From the Mythos" in **Challenge 60**. This particular demon will roam the streets from the time that it is unleashed until the climax of the adventure.

If any of the characters wish to find the demon before then, they will have a 5% chance of encountering the creature (not cumulative).

If the characters do find the demon, however, they will be severely handicapped in combat unless they know about the demon's peculiar weaknesses. Ω

For more on Shape Demons and enchanting computer disks, see "Madness from the Mythos" by Patrick Sheats in Challenge 60.



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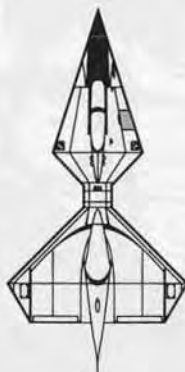
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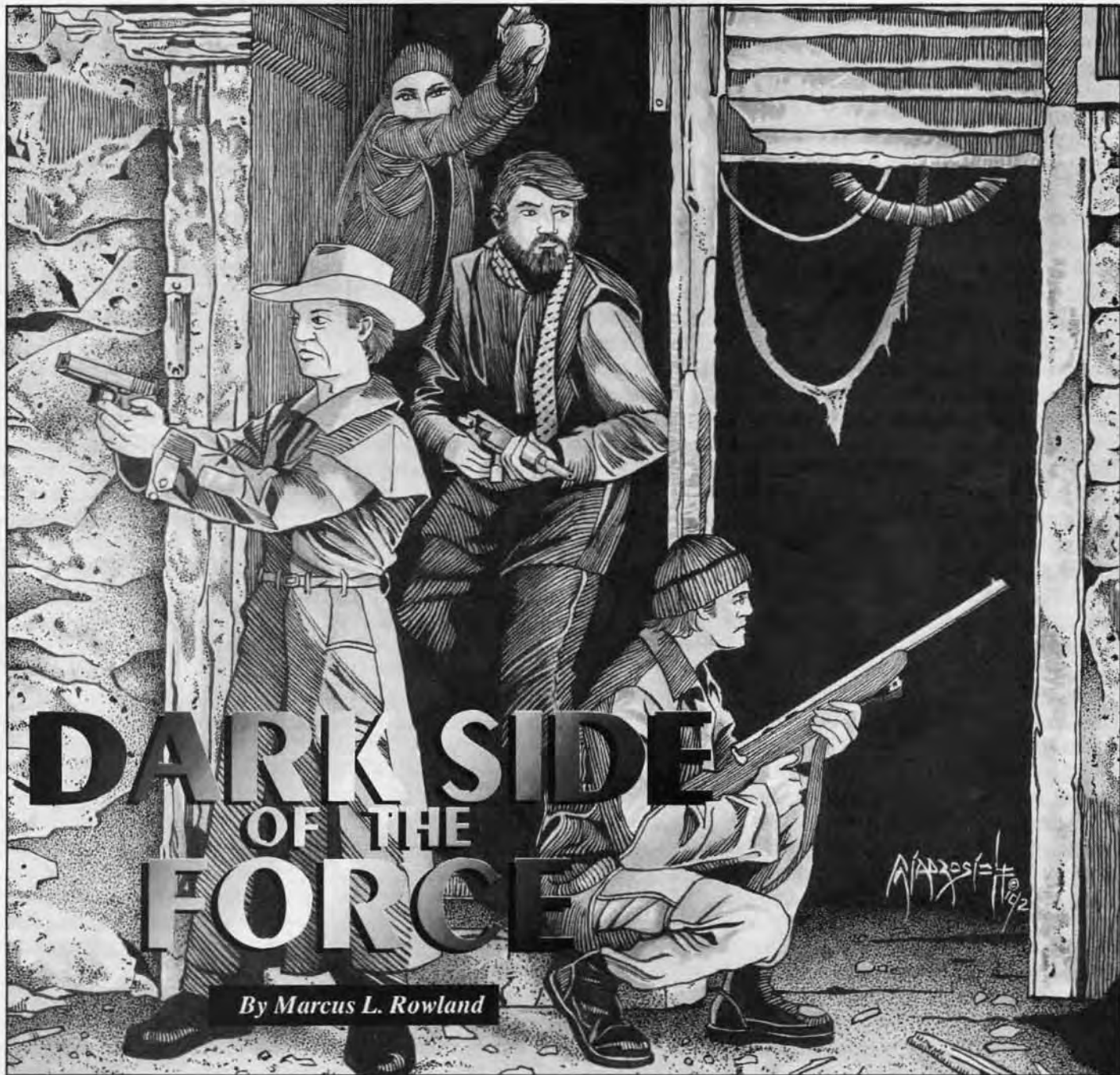
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DARKSIDE OF THE FORCE

By Marcus L. Rowland

It's 6 p.m. on a bitterly cold winter day. For the last few months, George Charteris has been a patient in Purfleet Psychiatric Clinic in East London. It's an excellent clinic, and he's made a slow recovery from the ordeals that drove him over the edge of sanity. An hour ago, he called from Purfleet Station to let you know that he's finally out and needs a lift home. It's snowing, and British Rail has done its usual efficient job of canceling all the trains into Central London. As you drive out, you switch on your radio to catch the traffic news, which follows the news headlines on local radio.

"The RSPCA reports a record number of calls about frozen tortoises, and advises owners to bring them indoors and let them spend the winter awake. Don't let them hibernate.

"Sir Albert Anthony, the late commissioner of metropolitan police, was buried this afternoon. He was a controversial figure who forced the resignation of several officers with social links to known criminals. He died in a fall at his home last week. Anthony was 55.

"The charity Shelter has announced that deaths among London's homeless have risen by 28% since the start of the cold weather. Causes of death have included hypothermia, pneumonia and fires in derelict buildings occupied by vagrants."

As the traffic news finally begins, you reach Purfleet Station. To your surprise, Charteris isn't waiting; the station entrances are closed, and all you can see are a couple of torn shopping bags and some scuffed footprints in the snow.

This modern-day *Call of Cthulhu* adventure is set in London, but it can be converted to any big city. The adventure should be run several months after an important NPC (or a PC) has been committed to a psychiatric institution. If no such character is available, invent one. For convenience, this character is referred to as George Charteris throughout this adventure, but you may change his name and description to suit your campaign.

Note: Investigators in this adventure may suffer arrest, injury or death. *Call of Cthulhu* is set in a universe in which the odds are stacked strongly against humanity; investigators shouldn't be able to escape the consequences indefinitely. You may want to run this adventure to close a modern-day cam-

paign or to terminate expendable characters to remind players that investigators walk the edge of a lethal precipice.

WEIRD CRIMES

For many years Scotland Yard's Weird Crimes Squad fought the occult in London and was itself the target of numerous sinister plans. Unfortunately, the squad was disbanded (and most officers asked to resign) in 1936, when cultists tricked the squad into arresting the Vatican City ambassador on witchcraft charges.

Without the vigilance of the squad, Scotland Yard was soon infiltrated by cultists, who extended a web of magic, corruption and blackmail, slowly ensnaring hundreds of police officers. Today, almost all sections of the metropolitan police have been infiltrated by a variety of evil cults, from Satanists to servants of the Cthulhu Mythos. Some departments are entirely corrupt; the rest are headed that way. Fortunately, there are many conflicts of interest, and no one cult has ever gained control. There is a continual struggle for supremacy, totally unseen by the public, with occasional uneasy truces when the interests of several cults coincide. One common ground is the concealment of cult activities—no one wants the public to know anything about the reality of the occult, so everyone cooperates to disguise sacrifices and cult-inspired murders as traffic accidents, suicides, drunken brawls and other "innocent" deaths. The police have unusual advantages in procuring victims, typically homeless vagrants and alcoholics who will never be missed.

Sir Albert Anthony recently became commissioner. A politically appointed outsider, he dismayed all factions by launching a sweeping investigation into police corruption. He learned just enough to endanger the cultists, who decided to destroy him. One department had the power to do the job quickly and quietly—the Flying Squad, which specializes in armed operations against known violent criminals. This squad has long been run by servants of Th'Yasku'hakula, a Llogir living beneath London's docks. The Llogir demanded 100 lives as payment for the killing.

Since Anthony was killed, members of the Flying Squad and several other cults have been making an all-out effort to capture enough vagrants, transport them to the Docklands for sacrifice, then dump the bodies back on the streets. Th'Yasku'hakula is using the magical energy of the sacrifices for its own long-term plan. With this final boost to a pool of magic it has accumulated over decades, it intends to drive humanity out of Britain by inducing a new Ice Age. The unseasonably cold weather is the first step in this plan, although most of the extra deaths reported by Shelter are actually sacrificial

victims, drained of their magical essence and life.

Unfortunately, some of the officers concerned in the mass sacrifice have grown a little careless. Seeing an "obvious vagrant" at the station, Detective Inspector Mondale and Detective Sergeant Anders of Purfleet CID (both devout Satanists) have "arrested" Charteris. He is now locked in the cells at the local police station, pending transportation to the Docklands and a sacrificial ceremony disguised as an acid house party. A van will arrive soon. Charteris' fragile mental state didn't prepare him for this ordeal; he has suffered a relapse and can't defend himself.

MISSING PERSON

Charteris is missing. No one at the station recalls seeing him, but the abandoned bags hold his clothing and a few clay ashtrays, the products of an occupational therapy class.

Eventually, the PCs should find three porters taking a long tea break in the station buffet. One remembers seeing Charteris about half an hour before the PCs arrived. If the PCs examine the road carefully, they'll find the tracks of a car or van in the snow, but the details are too blurred to be useful. There is also a blood stain—Charteris' nose was hit as the police bundled him into the van. The tire tracks can be followed onto the main road, but they are then lost among hundreds of slushy ruts.

If the PCs don't decide to go to the police for help, one of the porters decides they are acting suspiciously and calls the police. A car arrives a few minutes later, with two uniformed constables who want to know what the PCs are doing. By chance, these two officers aren't part of the conspiracy.

If the PCs act reasonably and explain their problem, the police suggest that they call in at Purfleet Police Station and fill out a missing person report. If the PCs act stupidly (for example, by pulling a gun on the police), the constables call for backup, then attempt to arrest the PCs.

At the police station, the PCs are taken to an interview room. After a few minutes, Detective Sergeant Anders arrives and starts to type a report as the PCs explain the disappearance. He'll try to keep things low-key and as routine as possible, while suggesting that Charteris has simply wandered off. Once he learns that Charteris recently left the asylum, he says, "He's a nutter, isn't he? You can't expect us to put out an all points alert—nutters just don't do things like normal people."

Anders doesn't try to explain why the bags were left. If someone mentions the blood, he suggests that it might have been a cat or a bird. If someone mentions the occult, he says, "What do you think I am, an idiot!" He then tears up the form and tells the PCs to stop wasting valuable police time.

Eventually, the telephone rings. Only Anders' end of the conversation is audible: "Hello....Yes, speaking....Yes, Mondale wants it picked up right away....Yes, I know it's bloody snowing! So bloody what?....No, I can't talk about it now—try me later....Okay, if you insist—I can pop down for a minute."

THERE HE IS!

After this call, Anders apologizes and says he has to pop out for a while. He leaves the PCs sitting in his office. Naturally, all drawers, etc., are locked; in any case, they don't contain anything incriminating.

On a successful Listen roll, the PCs will hear an engine start several minutes later. The curtains are closed, but it's easy to open them and peep out into the yard behind the police station. There are bars on the window, and it is locked and double-glazed, so there is no way to open the window or get out.

Anyone looking out the window sees two plain-clothes officers (Anders and Mondale) pushing someone into the back of an unmarked green van, which lurches off into the night. It isn't possible to identify the person in the van with any certainty, but it looks suspiciously like Charteris. On a Spot Hidden roll, the licence number of the van can be read—it's GLE 36J, a very old licence number, but the van looks quite new. If the adventurers have contacts with access to the Police National Computer, they'll learn that this number belonged to a Honda moped that was scrapped in 1980—the licence plates are fakes. How do the PCs react?

If they run out of the room and start to make trouble, or if they make trouble when Anders returns, they will be locked up. The next day, Anders and Mondale deny any knowledge of Charteris, and even deny that they were out in the yard. There is no evidence to the contrary. A few days later, Charteris is found dead in the Thames below Purfleet, an obvious suicide. The PCs are charged with a breach of the peace (or assault or firearms charges, if appropriate) and fined or sentenced to prison terms. Mondale and Anders go to ground, concealing their activities and arranging for friends from the Fraud Squad, Drugs Squad and other branches of the police to give the PCs a very bad time.

If the PCs leave the station without waiting for Anders to return, then follow the van, no one will attempt to stop them. Naturally, Anders knows something is wrong and guesses that they might have seen the van. He radios the van driver to watch for pursuit.

If the PCs do nothing, Anders will return a few minutes later. His boots and trouser cuffs are damp with snow. If the PCs finish making their report and leave quietly, they find that the tracks of the van soon merge into the slush of the main road. They may want to stake out the police station and wait

for Anders or Mondale to leave. Both detectives leave 10 minutes later in an unmarked red Volvo.

HOSTILES

The van (and, later, the Volvo) takes the A13 west toward central London, near the Thames, speeding along the slippery neon-lit road in fairly light traffic. The van driver soon realizes that someone is following, and he speeds up as he enters heavier traffic in East Ham, losing the PCs unless their driver makes a series of successful Drive rolls. The van driver is very skilled, and the vehicle has all-weather tires which won't skid on snow. However well the PCs are doing, they lose contact with the police somewhere in the complex of road junctions and interchanges at Canning Town.

During the chase, the PCs should realize that they are being followed by a grey BMW estate car (six seats) with several radio aerials. The driver makes no attempt to disguise the fact that he's following, and he beckons for the PCs to stop once they've lost the trail. If they have a car phone, he'll call them, having looked into the car and noted the number while they were in the police station. The driver is in his mid-eighties, but still looks fit and alert. He smokes a foul black pipe and has the look of someone who has lived a hard, violent life.

The man introduces himself: "My name's Harry Raglan. I think I can help you. I've heard the police talking about you on the radio—seems you've been meddling in something they've been doing, something pretty naughty. What do you know about the Powers of Darkness?"

Raglan tells the PCs about the Weird Crimes Squad. He explains that he was forced to resign in 1936 and worked as a private detective until he retired in 1980. He's spent his retirement trying to solve some of the cases abandoned when the squad was disbanded, and he has found evidence of corruption in the police force. He suspects Satanism, but has no real proof.

Raglan has been tapping police radios for several days. A few minutes ago, he heard a message telling "Unit Zed Zed Nine" to be alert for pursuit by "hostiles." He has learned that this word is used by the cultists to indicate someone who is not part of the conspiracy. The message included the PCs' licence number, a description of their car and other details. As luck would have it, he was nearby and decided to see if he could find out more by talking to the PCs. He suggests that they join forces with him and abandon their car before it's stopped by the police.

THE GREAT RACE OF YITH

Some of Raglan's story is true, but he omits some important details. He now works

for the Great Race of Yith; and he has a very good idea what's going on in the Docklands.

To further its studies of humanity, the Great Race needs many resources and sources of information. Building a new chain of contacts each time someone is possessed would be inefficient, so the race set up trust funds for the hire of lawyers and other agents. Raglan was hired in 1941, but soon became curious about his employers. He learned the truth, realized that the Great Race wasn't interested in harming humanity, and decided that he might as well stay on the payroll and continue doing work that interested him. There aren't many other job opportunities for trained occult detectives.

The Great Race doesn't care about the struggle in Scotland Yard or the lives of a few tramps. But its current projects require another 20 to 30 years of study at the British Museum and other British centers of knowledge—an Ice Age would seriously disrupt the research. The Great Race has detected the buildup of magical energy and calculated the probable effects. A lawyer on its payroll has asked Raglan to come out of retirement and investigate.

Raglan's car is equipped with an illegal police radio scanner/receiver. He has a 12-gauge pump shotgun in the trunk, with 25 cartridges.

While Raglan is talking to the PCs, the radio occasionally crackles with police messages. Most seem unremarkable—disturbances near pubs, burglaries, traffic offenses, drunk drivers, accidents and so forth. One of the messages is a request for any sightings of the PCs' car, again identifying them as "hostiles." A little later: "Control to Zed Victor Nine. We have a telephone report from a nightwatchman on the Thameside Industrial Estate. Says he can hear an acid house party somewhere near the river."

The reply is loud, as though the transmitter is nearby, and almost drowned in the throbbing beat of savage music: "Zed Victor Nine to Control. Message received. I'll turn it down a bit. We'll be through for tonight in about an hour. Keep him stalled until then."

If the PCs don't head for the estate, Charteris dies 45 minutes later, and the "party" ends soon afterward. The police disperse, dumping the bodies at various locations in London, with no clue to the exact location of the murders. There will be another ceremony the next night, giving the PCs a further chance to confront the cultists, but too late to save Charteris' life. In the meantime, the police are looking for the PCs, who must lie low to avoid arrest on trumped-up drugs charges.

After hearing the radio message, the PCs can easily find the "party." Most of the industrial estate is completely dark and deserted, except for a few trucks and construction vehicles. The music should guide the PCs if

they just get out of the car and listen. Near the river, a warehouse is surrounded by cars and vans, noisy with the throb of acid house music.

ACCCCHHHHHIDDDDDDD

The warehouse is a modern building recently sold to a supermarket chain, but not yet in use. The owners would be horrified to know its current role. There are no windows at the front, just massive folding steel doors which are firmly closed and locked. The music seems to come from behind the doors. The door on the west side is closed but unlocked, and can be slid open. There is a small locked door on the east side of the building, and the van the PCs saw at the police station is parked there. If they followed Anders and Mondale, the Volvo is one of the cars beside the warehouse. Most of the cars near the warehouse are unmarked police vehicles, equipped with radios, and concealed lights and sirens.

Before the PCs go any further, a kind referee might suggest that they don't really stand much of a chance against these odds. (Are you feeling kind?)

If the PCs pull out at this point, Charteris will be killed. Raglan will try to enter the warehouse alone and will be killed before he accomplishes anything. The police will observe the PCs for many months to ensure that they haven't found out anything about the cult, and will frame them for drug offenses and other crimes if they make any attempt to investigate further.

If the PCs decide not to pull out, Raglan won't lead them into the building. He'd prefer them to take the initiative, and he says he's "not as quick on my feet as I used to be." He gets his shotgun from the car and gives it to the leader if none of the PCs are armed. The trunk also contains tire irons, spanners and other tools, enough to give everyone a club. As he hands out the weapons, Raglan pretends to stagger, puts a hand on his chest and says, "There goes my ticker again. I'll have to sit down for a few minutes." He won't let any of the adventurers help, and he won't accept first aid (which would reveal that he's perfectly well). He tells the PCs to "off and help your friend before it's too late." Once the PCs enter the building, he'll follow them in, extremely cautiously, hoping they'll divert attention from him.

The main warehouse is a huge chamber, reverberating to house music at hundreds of watts. Apart from an amplifier, speakers and a tape recorder near the main doors, it's completely empty.

Heavy Equipment Area: In this area are four parked fork-lift trucks. All are immobilized, with the ignition keys removed and a padlock stopping the steering wheel from turning. Another sliding door leads into the cold-storage section of the warehouse.

Offices: In the center office are two plainclothes policemen with a radio transmitter. They are generic Flying Squad officers armed with .38 revolvers, with 9 and 11 hits, respectively. If the PCs followed Anders and Mondale, they are also present, arguing with the other officers. If the PCs eavesdrop, they'll hear Anders ask for the return of Charteris, saying that the kidnapping has attracted too much attention. The other policemen refuse. It isn't hard to eavesdrop because they are shouting above the noise of the music. There is another door into the cold store from this room.

The other offices contain neat piles of clothing—men's in the northern-most office and women's in the one to the south. Each pile includes shoes and underclothes, and somewhere in each pile are a police warrant card, handcuffs and other equipment. Several piles are topped with holstered .38 revolvers. Each room also contains a hamper of brown sacking robes, with hoods which would cover most of the head and shade the face of the wearer.

Cold Storage: The cold storage area is kept at 4°C. Most of the rooms are empty, with a few notable exceptions:

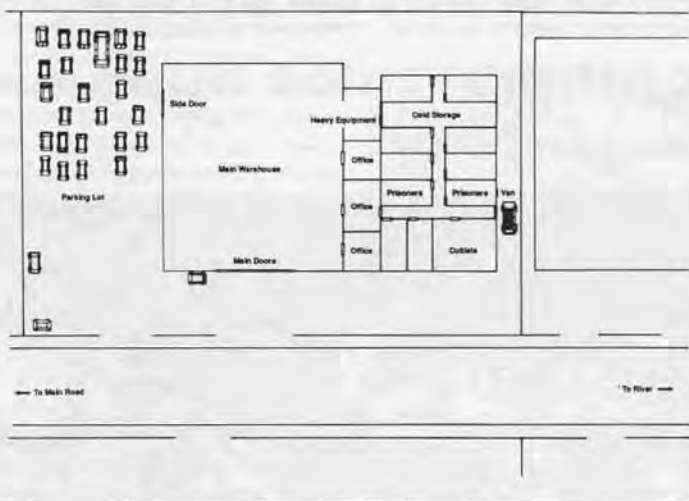
Prisoners: Two of the rooms in the cold storage area contain prisoners—tramps snatched from the street. Most of them are alcoholics or psychiatric patients released due to cuts in social service funding, and they will act irrationally if they are released. At least one should start singing or shouting if they are rescued. All the prisoners are handcuffed. Charteris is in the western-most prisoner room, in a near catatonic state of terror. He will revive slightly if he is freed, but he won't be able to help with the escape. Three policemen guard the junction of corridors outside the prisoner rooms room. They have 9, 10 and 12 hits, respectively, and are armed with .38 revolvers in belt-clip holsters. They wear normal street clothing.

Cultists: The largest room in the cold storage section contains most of the cultists. If the PCs are captured elsewhere in the warehouse, they'll be brought here. From outside, it's just possible to hear chanting and a rhythmic thudding noise from this room, although the commotion is almost drowned out by the music.

CEREMONY

Inside a room roughly 30 by 40 feet in size are dozens of police officers, all wearing brown robes and chanting rhythmically. All carry truncheons (night sticks), which they thump on the ground in time to the chant. They are gathered in an ellipse around a complex pattern of chalk lines, which twist in a manner that hints at non-Euclidean dimensions (or bad draftsmanship). Any PC making a Cthulhu Mythos roll will realize that a powerful summoning spell is in

Warehouse Environs



progress, but won't recognize it more precisely. In fact, the spell is unnecessary—Th'Yasku'hakula has been in the warehouse in its invisible form for several hours, watching the worshippers assemble and checking that there is no danger. It needs to materialize to take the sacrifice, but it won't do that while there is any danger of an attack. If the PCs interrupt the ritual, Th'Yasku'hakula will try to use its power to destroy at least one interloper, then sink back into the floor and the underlying rock if the PCs aren't overcome by the police. It won't automatically spot the PCs as outsiders if they disguise themselves in robes and do nothing to disrupt the ceremony.

If the ceremony isn't interrupted, or if the PCs are captured, Th'Yasku'hakula materializes half an hour after the radio message was overheard. The worshippers begin another chant, while the prisoners are brought in, pushed toward the Llogir, and knocked out with truncheons. Th'Yasku'hakula starts to drain magical energy from the unconscious victims, taking a Magic Point from each victim each minute. A minute after the victims are drained to 0 Magic (most start with 6 to 10 points), their bodies frost with ice as the Llogir draws the remaining life force from their defenseless bodies.

FINISH

Raglan makes his own way to the sacrificial chamber. When the Llogir materializes, or manifests its power, he'll throw his energy grenade (see below) at the Llogir, shout "Run for it!" and depart rapidly. Wise PCs should follow if they are able. Raglan has no intention of staying anywhere near an angry Llogir. If the PCs catch up with him before he starts his car, they are welcome to ride with him. Once he's moving, anyone left behind should start running very fast.

The grenade disrupts the Llogir's control of its store of magic, which is released in a

powerful underwater explosion that raises a gigantic waterspout over the Thames, sinking several barges before it dies down. The Llogir then retreats to its lair beneath the Thames, its plan ruined by the loss of its hoard of magic. Any remaining prisoners are killed by the surviving cultists, who will then start a hunt for everyone who escaped.

If the PCs blow things so badly that Raglan is captured without using the grenade, the Llogir will continue accumulating magic, but global warming and other factors will moderate its power and prevent another Ice Age. The winters will be severe for the next few years, but that's all. Eventually, Th'Yasku'hakula will give up or devise another plan.

If they work really well, the PCs may disrupt the ceremony, kill a few cultists and rescue some or all of the prisoners. This leaves them pursued by enemies equipped with all the technical advantages of a modern police force and unhindered by any regard for due process of law. Even if they managed to kill everyone in the warehouse, dozens of cultists and hundreds of others will want to track down those who know too much about the dark side of the force.

GENERIC CULTIST POLICE/FLYING SQUAD

STR 14, CON 14, SIZ 14, INT 13, POW 10, DEX 12, APP 10, EDU 14, SAN 35, HP 14.

Damage Bonus: +1D4.

Weapons: Fist/punch 60%, 1D3+1D4; Truncheon 65%, 1D6+1D4; Grapple 55%, damage special. (Flying Squad only: 25% chance of .38 revolver, 50%, damage 1D10.)

Skills: Climb 55%, Credit Rating 20%, Cthulhu Mythos or Occult 10%, Drive 65%, Law 45%, Sneak 25%.

Spells: 10% chance of one appropriate cult-related spell.

Equipment: Most have radios, handcuffs, notebooks and other police equipment. All have police warrant cards. Ω



From the **TRENCHES**

By Adam Geibel

Nightmares, both real and imaginary, are a given byproduct of warfare since the beginning of recorded time. As man became more efficient at slaughtering himself, his nightmares grew stronger and more numerous. During the Great War, so many torments were born in battle that naming them all was impossible. Most of these terrors died quickly on the battlefields, while many more were later put to rest on psychiatrists' couches.

*From "Treatments on the Front: Healing Unseen Wounds,"
Dr. Fritz Lieberstrauss, Vienna, Austria, 1924.*

Continued from page 60.

The following adventure offers a choice of openings and outcomes to suit your individual campaign. A copy of *Arkham Unveiled* is recommended.

First Opening: The PCs are contacted by a stranger based on their reputation.

Since our last trip to Miskatonic, a dark cloud seems to follow me. But until today, I thought I had nothing to fear from my mailcarrier. In addition to the bills was a thick letter addressed with the shakiest script. The return address read "Miskatonic Veterans' Home." A man I'd never heard of was begging for help. Said he'd read something about me in the newspaper after that last trip. He thought I could help him fight a horror that had followed him home from the war.

Second Opening: The PCs by chance meet up with an eccentric old man.

We were in Parrington's gun shop to pick up shells for Saturday's goose hunt. Just as we were about to leave, a wizened, bedraggled man entered the store. In a rasp, he asked for a case of .30-06 shells. When Ed slapped a box of 20 down in front of him, he snapped back, "No, man, a case! A case of 1000!" Parrington asked the question we were all thinking. The eccentric smiled back, then answered, "Have any of you ever been in the trenches?"

Third Opening: One of the investigators is a veteran of the Great War, preferably a survivor of the trench-fighting of 1918. He is contacted by an old friend.

I hadn't seen Anderson since the war. He had returned from his last patrol grievously wounded; I thought he had died since then. That is, until I received a short telegraph begging that I come see him at the veterans' home. The Anderson I remembered was tall, athletic and should be around 30. At first, I thought we had the wrong room. A bedraggled old man sat on the edge of his bed, staring out the window, not noticing me until I whispered his rank. My blood ran cold when I saw his sallow face. With recognition came a spark of life, and he invited me to sit down. I glanced at my friends, took a corner of the bed and listened to his tale.

Fourth Opening: The PCs are staying in a run-down old home in Arkham. One evening, they apprehend an intruder who tells them that the house formerly belonged to his parents. He claims that "something he needs" is still hidden in the basement. If the PCs allow him to proceed, he reveals a cache of weapons buried in the dirt floor of the basement, under the stairs.

UNDER A DARK SKY

With slow, measured speech and labored breathing, Anderson took more than an hour to spin his tale. It went something like this:

In the last days of the Great War, the trenches were a place of horror. To be out-

side, to ignore the periscopes or look at the sky was to invite a sniper's bullet, the whir of a trench mortar or the attention of a spotter floating in a plane high above one's head. So the men hid under the bunker roofs like so many rodents during the day. At dusk or under the cover of the late fall rains, they would slither out their holes. Negotiating their way from wire crater to gully to collapsed trench, they made their way through no-man's land and into the enemy's backyard. Gaining information rather than ground was the objective, and stealth rather than bravado brought them back alive.

One particular raid would forever haunt the life of the sole survivor. On the last night of October 1918, 15 men of Company A, 2nd Battalion slipped out of their trenches and crept toward German lines. They were heavily armed, and all were veterans of a score of trench brawls. Within the last week, two other from neighboring companies had completely disappeared in front of a section of the Hun's lines thought to be deserted.

A Company's patrol was halfway across no-man's land when the corporal heard something and signaled a halt. Suddenly there was a deafening roar, and several shadows rushed the patrol. At first it seemed that the Germans had discovered them, but the light of a distant artillery flare said otherwise.

The attackers were bigger than men, seemingly naked, very large and very angry. Anderson fired his rifle as fast as he could, reloaded, emptied it again. One beast fell to a volley of grenades, and Branton's Lewis gun downed three more. Then the weapon clicked dry, and they were on the poor kid.

The patrol tried to pull back, but the withdraw turned into a race, and three more men fell. The rest of the company made it to the safety of a shell crater, hoping to catch their breath in some defensible position. But a half-dozen of the creatures swarmed over the lip of the pit, and in the darkness a close and confusing fight whirled around the shattered hole. Anderson put his rifle against the back of one of the creatures and fired. It registered pain but didn't stop disemboweling the soldier in its grip.

Anderson grabbed two men and fled, half out of his mind. One of the nightmares broke off from the slaughter and gave chase, quickly felling one fellow without even breaking its stride. The other soldier tripped over barbed wire and cried out for help. Pausing, Anderson made eye contact with his lone pursuer for a second, then he ran for his life.

Anderson somehow made it back to his lines, unaware of the wounds to his legs and arms. He tried to tell the first sergeant, the officers, the medics, about the beasts. No one would listen. He went into a panic, and when he woke up, he was in a hospital outside Paris—the war was over. His questions and warnings were met with a stony

assurance that "it would be looked into." But the whispers that followed said much more.

Anderson spent the rest of the year on convalescent leave in Paris. He became paranoid, convinced that something trailed him from the sewers below. He went so far as to buy a few battlefield relics for personal protection and ship more back to his parents' home. And at the beginning of the new year, along with thousands of other soldiers, he returned to America and his native state.

KEVIN ANDERSON

Born October 30, 1899, Anderson was a precocious youth. He graduated with honors from high school a year early and was attending his first year at Miskatonic when the war called. He volunteered for the infantry and was with the first American troops deployed in France in 1917.

Promoted three times on the battlefield, Anderson was adept at surviving the fighting and became something of a local media hero. The future seemed quite promising. But when the war ended, he came home a physically broken and mentally listless man.

Anderson attempted to continue his studies, but the spark was gone. His failing health and shaky mental state was further aggravated when his parents sickened and died (possibly of typhoid) late in 1919.

That was the last straw, and Anderson lost his tenuous grasp on reality. He was treated briefly by a university psychiatrist, but things just never worked out. Anderson became a shriveled caricature of his former self, without appetite, desire or emotion, given to long periods of listlessness.

Two months ago, Anderson caught a glimpse of something horrifying familiar from his window. He had seen the threat, and he knew too much. It was still after him.

Anderson doesn't really believe anyone will be willing to help him. But he is desperate, and he will tell his story to anyone who seems interested. He wants to recover the entire cache of weapons from his parents' home, then go for broke. This time, he says, only he or the monster will walk away.

Attributes: STR 8, CON 6, SIZ 13, INT 14, POW 16, DEX 9, APP 7, EDU 13, SAN 10, HP 7.

Weapons: See Anderson House, below.

Skills: Camouflage 70%, Occult 15%, Drive Auto 45%, Dodge, Hide 45%, Listen 40%, Operate Heavy Machinery 45%, Make Maps 30%, Throw 30%, Track 65%, Sneak 75%, Spot Hidden 80%, Listen 55% First Aid 40%, Speak German 20%, Handgun Attack 75%, Rifle Attack 80%, Shotgun Attack 75%, Machinegun Attack 35%, Nightstick/Club 55%, Knife 40%.

WHAT'S HAPPENING

Is Anderson really facing a battlefield demon or just a figment of his guilt-ridden imagination? The following options are pro-

vided so the referee can pick one to match his campaign situation or roll 1D6 to randomly determine the result.

1: Survivor's Guilt: This is a wild goose chase. The creatures and all subsequent events are residents of a tormented mind. Anderson's last patrol was no less realistic or violent than any other he had participated in. But this time, it was his men rather than the enemy who were surprised and wiped out. "Survivor's guilt" is what the experts call his condition—guilt that turned mere men into monsters. After all, how could an all-American hero survive when his comrades fell to a vicious enemy?

2: Dormant Spirit: The creature is a physical manifestation of Anderson's guilt. A spirit laying dormant in the house now occupied by the veterans' home has been feeding on the depression. Anderson's intense feelings have given it an invitation to come out and play, even giving it a form and a mission to assume.

3: Human Predator: The "creature" is actually a human intent on murdering Anderson. Charlie Gould was the young private who tripped on the barbed wire during that fateful patrol and was subsequently captured by the Germans. He only spent a week in detention, and while he was hungry most of the time, he wasn't really mistreated.

Gould was young and full of high hopes when he went to war. Unfortunately, nothing has gone right since. And failure and disillusionment have caused bitterness and blame, and a misguided conclusion that all his problems are the result of his imprisonment. And Anderson was the one person who could have saved him—and didn't.

Charlie went home to Boston, eventually, and became a small-time hood and semi-competent hit-man for a local gang. Not too long ago, he saw a small article in a Boston paper about an Arkham war veteran who "wiggled out" and shot up a local graveyard (see result 4, below). It took awhile, but Charlie drove all the way up here in his clapped-out Model-T to pay his old army buddy a visit.

Attributes: STR 11, CON 8, SIZ 9, INT 10, POW 10, DEX 6, APP 5, EDU 9, SAN 22, HP 8.

Weapons: Garrote, knife, .32 automatic.

Skills: Jump 25%, Fast Talk 50%, Bargain 35%, Camouflage 70%, Climb 40%, Drive Auto 55%, Electrical Repair 35%, First Aid 40%, Hide 65%, Listen 50%, Operate Heavy Machinery 45%, Rifle Attack 70%, Pistol Attack 50%, Knife 60%, Sneak 60%.

4: Graveyard Ghouls: The creatures from the battlefield are figments of Anderson's imagination. But what he has been seeing lately are ghouls from the Old Wooded Graveyard. Since Anderson spends so much of his life looking out of the window, it was only a matter of time before he caught sight of his unnatural neighbors and swore to strike

back at what he thinks are his old enemies.

Anderson's state wouldn't allow him to leave well enough alone. Sneaking out of the home late one night, he went on patrol again. He actually managed to kill one ghoul with a shotgun retrieved from his house. The police arrived quickly and apprehended him while the ghouls recovered their body.

Now the ghouls know about Anderson and won't leave him alone. At night, they taunt him from high perches, hiding whenever he brings someone to witness their antics. The ghouls may not be too bright, but they know that if they can lure him back, he'll make a fine meal.

5: Gibichung: The creatures are real, the product of German experiments on African apes taken from the Berlin Zoo. Anderson's patrol was one of the last group of victims before the German High Command came to its senses and exterminated most of these things.

Known as Gibichungs, these creatures stand seven feet tall and weigh 300 pounds, with brown-tinted flesh and a mockery of human body hair. Statistics are as follows:

Attributes: STR 35, CON 16, SIZ 22, INT 6, POW 13, DEX 18, SAN 0, HP 25.

Dam Bonus: Bite 1D6+4/2D6+4.

Hand: 1D6+4.

The Germans' intent was to create a superweapon without draining already meager resources—a soldier that could clear a section of battlefield without the need for increasingly complex weapons or burdened with the limitations of fear or pain. However, in the process of initial deployment, the creatures became uncontrollable and were just as likely to turn on friend as foe.

The beast now stalking Anderson is very real. In fact, it is the same creature that met his gaze on that long-ago battlefield. Anderson may have won on that day by escaping with his life, but now the beast is intent on settling the score.

The ocean that separated them after Anderson returned home offered a temporary frustration. But using its elevated instincts and cunning, the creature somehow crossed the Atlantic and continued its hunt to sleepy Arkham.

6: Gibichung Revisited: The Gibichungs were created as explained above. One of the creatures was wounded in battle, captured and subdued by a French Army deserter. After keeping it drugged for a year in an unused wine cellar, the deserter sold it to a travelling carnival, which eventually made its way to America.

As long as the creature was fed a steady diet of drugs, it was fairly docile. However, by a strange twist of fate, the Gibichung escaped the carnival the night after it reached Arkham. Anderson saw the creature roaming past the graveyard, on its way to find a meal. It found the ghouls, which were almost as satisfying. The combination of ghoul flesh

and a lack of its usual medication is restoring the Gibichung's former antisocial tendencies. The Gibichung will continue its spree until it is killed, something attracts it to new hunting grounds, or its owners reclaim and subdue it.

VETERANS' HOME

The Miskatonic Veterans' Home is a dilapidated, three-story, brick building on Boundary Street, across from the Old Wooded Graveyard. A yard of weeds is surrounded by a rustling iron fence. Inside, yellowing paint peels from walls, and steam pipes groan, adding to the aura of depression.

The home is staffed by two nurses, two orderlies and a cook to care for the 25 veterans living there. A disinterested doctor from St. Mary's makes semiregular visits, and there is no staff psychiatrist. The staff members cannot be said to earn their salaries. Recovery is unlikely—this is a human warehouse for those waiting to die.

ANDERSON HOUSE

The Anderson house is a three-story, brick, row home. Oil-heated, it includes three bedrooms and two baths, kitchen, basement and attic. From the outside, it is unassuming and even a bit run-down, but everything inside works, down to the electricity and running water. Brokerage is handled by Manton & Manton Real Estate, and the home rents at \$25 a month or \$200 a year.

What makes the Anderson house unique is the weapons cache buried in the dirt floor of the basement, under the stairs. The prize piece is a pristine .30-06 Lewis gun with three 47-round pans and one 97-round aircraft drum, heavily cosmoline'd and wrapped separately, as well as a .45 government automatic and three magazines.

FINAL NOTES

There isn't much monetary reward for the investigators in this case. However, played well, this adventure could give the investigators a base of operations in Arkham.

Anderson doesn't have much in the way of worldly possessions other than a \$2500 bank account and his parents' house. If the PCs offer their assistance, Anderson might be inspired to draft and even have notarized a will leaving everything to one of the investigators (50%). This assumes that they're generally nice to him, in addition to believing his story. A successful conclusion will definitely put them in Anderson's will (99%), provided he is alive to write one.

Given enough time, Anderson will be able to function in society. He will be grateful to the PCs for their assistance, opening his home to them and essentially becoming their major domo. However, he will never have the stamina to be an investigator and will refuse to listen to any "ghost stories." Ω



By Paul Sudlow

Valley of Twisted Apes

When one sets out for adventure in the universe of H.P. Lovecraft, one quickly learns to expect the unexpected. Not all dangers are From Beyond, and not all trails lead to the Spawn of Cthulhu, though investigators tend to assume they do. Sometimes, otherwise sinister and unearthly-seeming investigations lead to truly unexpected conclusions. Natural, terrestrial ones. That there is absolutely nothing of the supernatural about this adventure is what makes it so unusual for a horror-genre game. That is not to say, of course, that there is no danger! Nature can be a harsh mistress, as foolish investigators will discover.

"Valley of Twisted Apes" is a short adventure intended to be run between major episodes of a campaign, probably as investigators are travelling from here to there. It is primarily intended for play with the *Cthulhu by Gaslight* background, though it can easily be adapted to a 20th-century *Call of Cthulhu* campaign (since the Dutch were in Java up to the 1940s), or even the **Space: 1889** game system. In the latter case, the adventure might take place in a Lizard-man village on Venus; replace Batavia with Venusstadt, and replace the Dutch with Germans.

Due to the absence of powerful, mind-blasting beasts, this scenario is suitable for investigators of any number and ability. A low-power group with its wits about it will do as well as a more powerful group. This interlude serves nicely as a recovery period for otherworld-weary investigators who aren't quite over their last bout of insanity.

The key to running this adventure is atmosphere; build the tension just as you would with any other horror scenario. There is plenty of the weirdness typical of Mythos adventures present to keep the investigators nervously flipping through the *Necronomicon* looking for ape references, absolutely sure that the Creeping Horrors are just about to come out of hiding. Any time now. Stringing your players along can be lots of fun (just remember, they're the ones assuming Mythos creatures are behind all this). Of course, if the guilt gets to you, just put a group of ape ghouls in the valley, together with some sort of Weird Artifact!

Java

Java is the dominate island in the Dutch East Indies (other islands of note are Sumatra, Borneo and Celebes). It is part of a mountain chain that runs through Thailand and into the Pacific, to rise up again farther to the south as the Indonesian islands. Most of the higher mountain peaks are volcanic in origin, and many are still active. There are plains on the north and south coasts.

Java is very hot and humid, and since it is almost on top of the equator, it stays that way all year round. Rainfall is heavy, especially in the summer and winter monsoon seasons. The east of the island is characterized by a savanna-type climate, while the remainder is covered in lush tropical rain forests.

Since crops thrive in the fertile volcanic ash that is found throughout Java, it is not surprising to note that in the 1890s, Java is the most densely settled island of the Dutch East Indies. Almost 30 million people live on Java by the late 19th century—among them the Dutch colonists, and Chinese, Indian and Arab laborers and merchants.

Batavian Layover

After a grueling case in Australia, the investigators are returning to England via the *Miranda Gale*, a steamer of the Adelaide-Tilbury Company. The ships of the Adelaide-Tilbury line ply regularly between Essex and Sydney, with numerous stops along the way, including Singapore, Rangoon, Bombay, Aden and Cairo. Batavia is the first stop out of Sydney and is a one-night layover.

Batavia is the largest city in the Dutch East Indies, the center of the Dutch trading empire. Once a walled fortress carved out of tiger-infested jungle, Batavia is now surrounded by gardens, orchards, fields growing sugarcane and rice, and mills for sugar, corn and gunpowder. Batavia is about as lively a city as one can manage to cultivate in a predominantly Islamic country.

The Dutch colonizers occupy fine neighborhoods in the center of town. Due to the European architecture, the canals running through the city, and the streets cobbled with the ballast stones from merchant ships, the downtown area is very reminiscent of cities in Holland. The middle-class sectors are well demarcated ethnic neighborhoods in which the Chinese, Indians and Arabs live. The shanty-town areas and run-down slums at the edge of town and around the harbor are the domain of the urban Javanese.

British Embassy

One of the upper-class PCs has an old school chum posted at the British Embassy and suggests that the group look him up and have him show them the town. When they arrive, they find the embassy in a quiet uproar. Apparently, a British subject has disappeared under strange circumstances, and the staff is casting about for a way to look into the matter without appealing to the Dutch for help.

At this point, the school chum, John Becket, bustles up. He is a fit man of indeterminate age (though he will, of course, be the same age as the investigator he knows), with a thick blond mustache, a matching

thatch of hair and a strong grip. After a brief reunion and introductions, he recalls from past correspondence that his investigator friend is a "bit of an adventurer with an odd taste for eerie and occult affairs." Noting that he has been placed in charge of this "damned Stadwick affair," he wonders if the investigators might be interested in helping him out, since the case seems right up their alley.

After settling the group in his office, Becket tells the investigators what the commotion is all about. Apparently, Dr. Roger Stadwick, an anthropologist associated with the British Museum, had been travelling around Indonesia for the past few months, studying totemism in small villages. Stadwick had sent weekly reports to the museum via the British Embassy in Batavia. Early reports dealt with the mundane matters of organizing an expedition through the steep mountains of Java, with preliminary studies of various tribes and villages encountered.

Subsequent reports grew a trifle stranger, as Stadwick described his discovery of a village named Tanjungsolor, which was surrounded by trees on which were weird carvings of horribly distorted simians. Then mention was made of some damned-odd secret valley, a valley in which no natural animal can live—or some such rot.

Just this morning, Stadwick's guides returned to Batavia, extremely excited and bearing the news that Stadwick had disappeared into the jungle three days ago looking for the mysterious valley. When the village boy who had guided Stadwick into the jungle returned gibbering about the horrible ape gods making off with Stadwick, the poor buggers made for home.

The Dutch authorities have offered to mount an investigation, but it so happens that Stadwick is the brother-in-law of an MP of some note. This being the case, the embassy would prefer a quiet, British inquiry, with no Dutch entanglements.

Appealing to their curiosity in such a strange case, Becket asks the investigators to look into the matter and find Stadwick—or at least his remains. Moreover, Becket hopes the cause of Stadwick's death can be established once and for all and, if it be murder, that the murderer be brought to justice. Surely, he says, there is enough of the eerie and macabre surrounding this unfortunate affair to interest them.

The crown will pay for reasonable expenses (Becket trusts his friend to be honest) and will transfer the group's berthing to the next England-bound ship to stop in Batavia. Becket provides the names and addresses of Stadwick's guides, directions to Tanjungsolor and any needed funds (in guilders), then wishes them luck. Unfortunately, the embassy cannot spare any marines to accompany the group.

The whole village was roused very early the next morning by the boy

Stadwick's Guides

The guides, three brothers, live in a crude shanty in a rather unassuming section of town. They speak broken English, but will not be very forthcoming unless one of the investigators makes a successful Oratory roll. In this case, they tell their tale.

According to the guides, the party entered a small village named Tanjungselor after visiting several other unremarkable villages. This village was surrounded by trees on which were carved weird drawings of horribly distorted simians, and their presence made the guides very nervous—they had never heard of such totems in Java.

The group lived with the villagers of Tanjungselor for several weeks, while Stadwick conducted his research. He seemed very curious about some secret valley that had something to do with those horrible monkey statues, but no one would tell him where it was. Then one morning, he roused the guides and told them he had found a boy to take them to the valley. The guides refused to go, and Stadwick left with the boy, cursing.

They never saw him again, but the whole village was roused very early the next morning by the boy running back into the village, shouting that the apes had got Stadwick. That was it for the guides; they left at once in a terrible fright. They will under no circumstances agree to return to that "awful village of leering ape faces." If the PCs mention that they are looking for guides to take them to the village, Stadwick's guides might be persuaded (with another Oratory roll) to suggest a relative or friend who speaks English and may be interested in an expedition. Such a reference will cost a few guilders.

Hiring New Guides

The PCs may want to hire guides of their own, unless one of their number speaks one of the Malay languages spoken on Java. Guides who are familiar with the inland areas and people are not hard to come by, but most of them speak only Dutch, Javanese and some of the inland dialects.

English-speaking guides are quite uncommon. The investigators' best bet is to ask Stadwick's guides for references. Becket might be able to offer some leads as well.

Typical English-Speaking Guide

STR 16, CON 15, SIZ 15, INT 10, POW 11, DEX 13, APP 09, EDU 5, SAN 40, HP 18.

Skills: Hide 60%, Ride 65%, Sneak 75%, Speak Dutch 85%, Speak English 35%, Speak Javanese Subdialects 50%, Spot Hidden 85%, Track 80%.

Weapons: Knife 50%, 1D6 damage; lever-action rifle 45%, 2D6 damage.

Trip Inland

Tanjungselor is roughly 80 miles from Batavia to the interior. The first leg of the journey can be made by train. Travel from

ing wide to display huge fangs. All are eerie and ugly as sin.

Tanjungselor is a clearing in the jungle through which the rude road wanders. It lies in the shadow of a modest dormant volcano, which rises from the jungle some distance away. Rice patties and small gardens surround the area. The village is made up of small rattan and palm thatch huts, some 40 of them sprawled in a rough circle. In the center of the circle is a much larger building, apparently the village mosque, with an elaborate, wooden, tiered roof. Beside it is a long house with a roof that curves up at the ends like the horns of the buffalo.

Interviewing the Headman: The investigators will be seen at once by workers in the fields and will be directed to the horned building, which is, as it turns out, the community building. Here the investigators will be received by the village headman. He is a large, imposing fellow, who will greet the Westerners impassively. He does not need to guess why they are here—no European visited Tanjungselor before Stadwick.

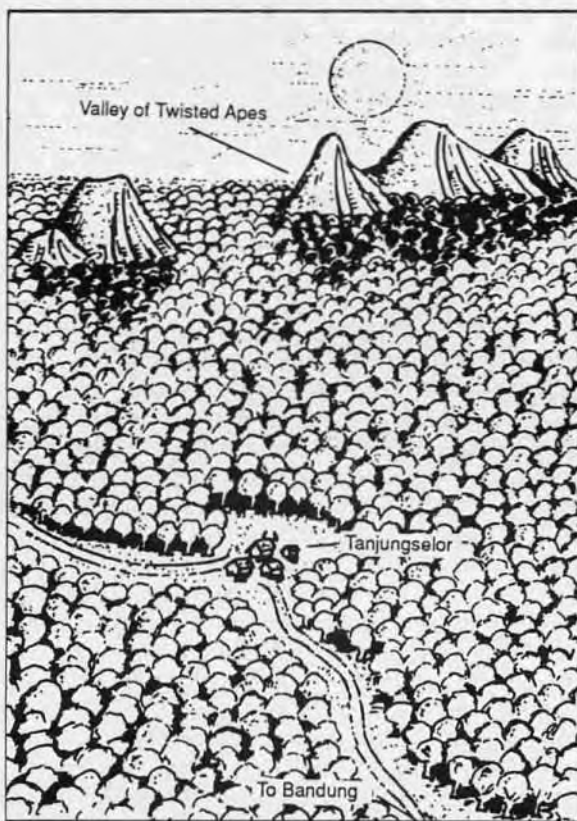
The headman will confirm the guides' story—Stadwick slipped out of the village one morning with a foolish local boy while everyone was working in the fields. Regarding the valley, he will say only that it is cursed—a valley in which no bird

sings, no animal lives, and only large moths and butterflies hover over unpleasantly lush plants. He will not show the investigators where it is.

If asked about the simian carvings adorning the landscape, he will smile and say that it is an ancient tradition for each boy of the village to carve the image of the creature that reveals itself to him in the vision that accompanies the passage-to-manhood ritual. Since the guardian animal of Tanjungselor is the ape, it is not surprising that the boys claim it as their guardian as well.

The headman will be hospitable to the PCs, though he plainly wishes them gone. He apologizes for not being able to be of more service to the investigators after their long trip. He will offer them use of the community house as a sleeping area for the night, since he expects they will be leaving for Bandung in the morning.

Fast Talk attempts will come across as being very rude. If the headman is so accosted, he will react negatively, and insist the investigators leave the village at once. Other skill rolls will have no such effects but will be as ineffective—the headman has said all he will say.



Kota Railway Station in Batavia to Bandung will take a few hours. From Bandung it will be necessary to travel south by road for 20 miles to Tanjungselor. Wagons, horses and mounts can be rented in Bandung. This last leg of the journey will take five hours, due to the poor quality of the clay road. The weather is hot and very humid, and heavy but brief showers are frequent. The road goes steadily uphill, surrounded by jungle and heavy growth. Mountains can be seen in the distance. From time to time, small animals can be glimpsed moving about in the underbrush, as well as an occasional tiger or panther (the latter encounters can be a source of considerable excitement on the part of the guides, who are eager to display their prowess with their rifles).

Tanjungselor

The approach to Tanjungselor will be marked, as Stadwick warned in his reports, by hundreds of carvings in tree trunks of gnarled and grimacing ape figures. Many are obviously ancient, while others look newer. Some are fat, squat beasts with bulging, pouting lips, while others are tall and distorted, with distended mouths yawn-

running back into the village, shouting that the apes had got Stadwick.

Interviewing the Villagers: The investigators may elect to interview as many villagers as they like, but few will even speak to them. Those who do will say no more than the headman did. Those who might have spoken more freely before Stadwick came have been frightened into silence by his disappearance (and more so by the insanity of the local boy). Fast Talking Westerners will strike the villagers as extremely impolite.

Interviewing the Local Boy: The headman will not grant the investigators an interview with the boy who accompanied Stadwick into the forest, and, indeed, there is no real way of determining who he is. All the older boys the investigators see seem sane enough, albeit shy of strangers. However, some time after the investigators have entered the village, the boy will burst out of a nearby hut and beg to speak with the group.

The boy is quite insane. Though there is nothing supernatural about the valley, the combination of superstitious fears, the dark night, Stadwick's collapse in the valley among the ape corpses and an already unstable mental condition culminated in an encounter that pushed the boy over the edge. He is now a babbling idiot and will have little to say which is readily coherent. Most of his conversation will consist of random utterances about creeping horrors and ape gods, but he will indicate the direction of the valley in his ravings, pointing at the lone mountain towering over the village. He will lapse into incoherence in moments and be led off by upset villagers. They will not welcome or honor any requests to see the boy again.

Into the Woods

The investigators can spend as much or as little time in Tanjungselor as they like, though there is little more to be learned here. Indonesia's Islamic heritage came by way of India and is, therefore, colored by strains of animism. The valley's proximity has inspired a more than usual reverence for apes and a strange form of totemism. However, there are no degenerate religious practices or cults to be found in the village, though there likely were such in the distant past when the volcano was more active. The villagers simply give the valley a wide berth and seek to placate its "gods" with their statues.

Sooner or later, the PCs will want to investigate the valley Stadwick wrote of. They will wear out their welcome if they stay in the village more than two days, especially after the encounter with the village boy. If they haven't offended the headman, they have a hut to stay in for a night. After that, they must rely on their own resources. If the investigators openly declare their intentions to go on to the valley, they will be paid little attention. They have been warned.

There are five miles of dense jungle between Tanjungselor and the mountain the village boy indicated, which means wagons and horses must be left in the village or elsewhere along the road. The trip will take most of a day and will be an exhausting one. The forest is very dark, because most of the light is intercepted by the canopy of upper branches. The ground is clear of heavy undergrowth due to this lack of sunlight. Hogs, deer, tigers, panthers and apes abound, and snakes and lizards are also common. Most animals ignore or avoid the group, but some of the predators might follow for a distance out of curiosity and may attack if provoked. Having a curious ape tail the group might unnerve the players.

Investigators who make a successful Spot Hidden roll will notice an occasional ape carving in a mossy trunk, which is a good sign that the investigators are on the right track.

Valley

The valley is actually at the top of the lone mountain—the long-dead crater of the extinct volcano. The mountain is not particularly large and the slope is not steep. Its sides are covered in foliage. It can be ascended in a matter of two hours.

The crater is a shallow bowl which gradually slopes toward a central low point. Its slopes are covered in a tangle of vines, scrub growth and great, larvae-white mushrooms. The floor of the valley is likewise covered in unwholesome growths of lush, unnaturally green plants.

Ringling the valley are thousands more of the ape totems. These carvings, if anything, are more morbid than their fellows back at the village and appear to be quite old. Some depict humanoid figures being thrown into a volcano while apes dance and cavort (this isn't just a cliché—people really were sacrificed to volcano gods by some isolated Javanese tribes in past centuries, though the practice has been abandoned by this tribe). The artists were probably not young boys. There do not seem to be any recent additions to the collection.

Multitudes of butterflies and other insects hover and flutter over the valley, though someone making a successful Spot Hidden roll will observe that they do not seem to actually enter it to any great degree.

The valley's most distinctive feature is the hundreds of ape corpses and skeletons sprawled on the valley floor. This morbid feature of the local terrain is at the root of Tanjungselor's slightly off-kilter religious observations and explains why the village's religious traditions are even more animistic than the mainstream Javanese ones. There is no sign of Stadwick.

Deadly Secret

Large quantities of carbon dioxide seep up out of fissures in the floor of the extinct volcano. The toxic (and invisible) gas builds up in the valley's low points, displacing the oxygen as it fills up the cavities. Since it is heavier than air, the gas hugs the ground—the most toxic levels are concentrated in a six-foot-high layer blanketing the floor of the valley.

Anyone under six feet tall moving about on the floor of the valley will slowly asphyxiate, eventually to die from lack of breathable air. Those over six feet will only suffer the milder effects of the gas, as described below.

The poisoning will be a gradual process, as investigators move from the clean air at the rim, to the mildly contaminated air on the slopes, to the toxic air on the valley floor. Symptoms begin with a shortness of breath and proceed to a mild dizziness. Everyone is susceptible to these general symptoms.

At the investigators move onto the valley floor, begin using the drowning rules in the *Call of Cthulhu* rulebook to determine how everyone under six feet fares with the gas. An investigator (or NPC) failing a roll will be overpowered by an overwhelming sleepiness and will faint if he does not leave the valley that round. Once a character is unconscious, he will take 1D8 points of damage each round until carried out of the valley or until death comes.

Taller PCs will expose themselves to the gas as they kneel to examine fallen comrades or the corpses.

The valley is periodically purged of its noxious fumes as particularly fierce winds lash through the jungle in the monsoon seasons. There have been no such storms recently, but a Mythos spell might be cast that would have a similar effect.

Stadwick's body can be found among the apes in the center of the valley. Stadwick died of the same malady the apes did—curiosity (they are drawn into the valley by the sight of so many fallen comrades). His body is in moderately good condition for a week-old corpse in a tropical climate, and it doesn't seem to be disturbed. His pack lies nearby, containing his personal effects, positive identification, camera and anthropological notes. The British Museum would be glad to claim the notes and may even consider sponsoring future expeditions by the investigators if said expeditions coincide with museum interests and are led by a reputable scientist or academian. Ω

The peculiar aspect of the valley in this adventure was inspired by a story that ran in Weird Tales a number of years ago, "Funeral of the Fog" by Edward D. Hoch.



CURSE of
the
CENTURIES BY
J. B. HILL

Many *Call of Cthulhu* players expect to meet huge, sanity-destroying monsters or ancient, bandage-shrouded mummies. In this adventure, they discover that a pretty creature an inch and a half long can be just as deadly. The adventure is written for the 1920s but fits easily into either the 1880s *Gaslight* era or *Cthulhu Now*. Although it was written to be placed in London or Cairo, any town or city with a museum and a river will do. If the investigators are not already members of the museum staff, they can be brought in to investigate the death of Sir Richard Lesley-Smith, a leading Egyptologist, by the museum or his next of kin.

NEPHRA-KA

Sir Richard Lesley-Smith was a leading Egyptologist who recently returned to London (or Cairo) after leading an expedition to discover the tomb of Nephra-Ka. In 1911, he discovered the mummy of a handmaiden of Nephra-Ka and returned it to America at the request of New World Industries, which is sponsoring the expedition. This mummy was placed in a storeroom near the bridge on the *Titanic*. Unfortunately, it was, of course, lost when the *Titanic* sank on April 4, 1912. After much research, he subsequently believed he had again discovered the mummified body of a servant of Nephra-Ka in a rough tomb far to the west of the Nile on the border with the Italian colony of Libya. Because of the earlier loss, the mummy has now been brought to London (or Cairo) by land for initial investigation. With the body were brought various objects from the tomb. They were kept in the basement rooms for examination and were not planned to be placed on display or transported to America yet.

On night one of the adventure, Sir Richard decided to start work on the examination without waiting for his assistants, Alan Griffiths and Emma Ward. He had a meeting during the day with the museum curator, Dr. Henry Usher, and so was not able to start work on the mummy until early evening. The following morning, his body was found by Ward. The investigators may be brought in on day two.

MYSTERIOUS DEATH

The basement of the museum has a large table in the center. On this lies the mummy. All the bandages have been carefully removed and placed to one

side. The head of the mummy has been removed using a sharp instrument. The head itself is missing. The body is not a normal mummy in that the internal organs have not been removed and stored in canopic jars. This is clear from the lack of the usual large opening down the length of the body. There is, however, a circular hole in the center of the chest in the region of the heart, about two inches in diameter. Next to the body lies a dissection kit comprising a set of very sharp scalpels, probes, etc. Around the room are shelves containing all the other items removed from the tomb. They include a bronze mirror which still retains a reflective surface, a clay jar with a picture of a flying scarab beetle and an inscription in hieroglyphics, a statue of the cat goddess Bast, a statue of Osiris (protector of the dead), and some gold jewelry. On the floor lies the mummy of a cat.

To one side is a desk containing Sir Richard's notes of the discovery of the tomb, a list of all the items found in the tomb and copies of his published books, *Secrets of the Ancient Egyptians* and *Khephu: The Black Pharaoh*.

The basement door was found open. Next to it is a second room containing the furnace which heats the central heating for the museum.

Sir Richard's body was found lying on the floor in the main basement room near to the desk. His face had a look of utter horror on it as if he had just witnessed something which had affected his sanity. His mouth was open as if he died screaming. He had slashed both his wrists with a scalpel and bled to death very quickly. He lay in a large pool of blood. Next to his body lay the scalpel. Obviously, his body was removed to the local mortuary. The time of his death was difficult to calculate as rigor mortis set in surprisingly quickly.


CLUES

The museum curator, Dr. Henry Usher, will tell the investigators that the expedition was sponsored most generously by New World Industries, which is noted for its support of both

the arts and scientific research. Dr. Usher did not go on the expedition. He met Sir Richard on the day of his death. Sir Richard had no worries, no money problems and no enemies, although he was upset by criticism of books and his ideas. On the day in question, he had no reason to kill himself. He had appeared happy and relaxed, although perhaps too eager to start his research on the mummy.

Griffiths and Ward both went on the expedition. They can describe the discovery of the tomb in the desert. It lay behind a thick stone slab which was inscribed with a curse calling down the "Curse of the Centuries" on any who disturbed it. Either of the assistants, or the list of items recovered, will reveal that no mummified cat was found in the tomb. Both the assistants can help with Sir Richard's theories, which are contained in his books. Each book will take one full day to read.

Secrets of the Ancient Egyptians: *Secrets of the Ancient Egyptians* mentions Sir Richard's theories concerning the origins of Egyptian mummification. He believed in the reality of the lost continent of Mu and believed that the Egyptians learned of mummification from the priests of Mu. The people of Mu worshipped gods more ancient than the Egyptian gods, and mummification was a form of sacrifice to those



Something really dark for

CYBERPUNK

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ancient gods. In Egypt, the most terrible form of punishment was to be mummified *alive*. No one knows how this was achieved. But to protect the body from anyone showing mercy on the victims, a curse was placed on the mummy that either death or living mummification would befall anyone who interfered with the body.

This book received wide criticism from the Egyptologists, who compared Sir Richard's ideas with those of Charles Piazza Smyth—a great insult to someone of Sir Richard's standing.

Khephu: The Black Pharaoh: *Khephu: The Black Pharaoh* describes the chaotic fourth dynasty of Egypt, which was ruled by the evil black pharaoh Khephu and his daughter-wife queen Nitocris. He worshipped an ancient evil god known as "the Black Pharaoh." As a living god, Khephu himself took the same title. He was challenged by an equally evil wizard-priest named Nephra-Ka whom he slew, but the priest's followers stole the body and hid it in the western deserts. In revenge, Nitocris hunted down those followers of Nephra-Ka and subjected each of them to the ultimate horror of living mummification.

Sir Richard's Notes: Sir Richard believes the mummy he found was that of a follower of Nephra-Ka who had been mummified alive by Nitocris. He was found in a rough stone tomb. The body itself was found in a stone sarcophagus. The bronze mirror was held in the mummy's wrappings in such a position that the victim would be able to see into the mirror. The sealed clay jar was nearby, as were the statues of Bast and Osiris. The tomb had a large stone slab across its entrance.

Clay Jar: If translated, the inscription reads, "May the winged death destroy those who seek to disturb the rest of he who awaits Osiris." Inside is a papyrus with more hieroglyphics. If translated, it is headed, "Curse of Centuries" and contains the spell Summon Ghatanothoa. The spell need not be read aloud—reading it silently to oneself will suffice. If read near an enchanted mirror, an image of Ghatanothoa will appear.

Other Clues: A spot hidden roll whilst examining the mummy will reveal that the wound in the center of the chest is new and was caused from the inside outward. Ward will comment that the museum's pet cat, Cleo, has run away and cannot be found.

NEXT DAY

When the museum's furnace is cleaned out the next day, a human skull

is discovered. The top of the skull has been removed. The teeth show no dental work at all, possibly indicating that it is not modern. The skull is very delicate, and anyone touching it must save against DEX or it will crumble to dust.

The museum's library has a restricted section. If the investigators gain access, they will find a copy of the *Book of Eibon* and von Junzt's *Nameless Cults* (the Bridewell translation of 1845), also known as *The Black Book*. The British Museum, but not the Cairo Museum, has a copy of the *Neuronomicon*. If they research the lost continent of Mu, they will find references to the ancient god Ghatanothoa, the sight of whom petrified the luckless victims and converted them to living mummies—the living brain magically preserved in the dried mummified body.

Finally, at the end of the day, the PCs will hear from the mortuary that a strange wound has now been discovered in the center of Sir Richard's chest. It is a circular wound about two inches in diameter and reaches to the area of his heart, but gives the impression of being caused from the inside outward.

FACTS

The investigators should be able to piece together the facts and confirm them by an experiment on the cat (SAN loss of 1D6 if they do).

Sir Richard's theories are, of course, perfectly correct. The Egyptians did indeed learn about mummification from the evil priests of Mu. The punishment of being mummified alive, known as the Curse of the Centuries, was performed by a victim being bound in bandages with an enchanted mirror in front of him. A priest would read the spell Summon Ghatanothoa from behind the safety of a solid stone slab, and Ghatanothoa appeared in the mirror. The victim turned into a mummy, but his brain remained alive, trapped in the body for eternity. He could only be released by his brain being destroyed. To prevent anyone from taking pity on the victim and releasing him, and to bring revenge on those who did, a sacred scarab beetle was placed in the mouth of the still-living victim. It crawled down the throat to remain near the heart, to eat its way out and seek revenge if anyone cut the body. When Sir Richard started the autopsy on the mummy, he started with the head. Upon opening the skull, he discovered a still-living brain. Before his sanity fled forever, he removed the whole head, took it to the furnace and consigned it to the flames. By the

time he returned, the scarab beetle had eaten its way out and had started to perform the spell Summon Ghatanothoa in front of the mirror. Fortunately, Sir Richard bled to death before the spell was completed, and only the museum's pet cat was mummified. Still disorientated, the scarab then crawled into Sir Richard's mouth and hid near his heart to eat its way out the following night after the body was removed.

The scarab will now hunt down all those involved with Sir Richard—including the investigators.

DEATHS CONTINUE

The scarab starts a series of killings.

Dr. Usher is seen by many witnesses to run from a side road into a main road and is instantly crushed to death beneath the wheels of a heavy truck—his head is torn off, wedged between the rear tires (SAN loss 1D6/0). Witnesses will describe him running, looking backward and swinging his arms around. Several will have the mistaken impression that he was being chased by some giant invisible monster.

Alan Griffiths is found lying face down in the river, which seems unnaturally misty at the time. He has drowned, but when his body is recovered, it is obvious that both his eyes have been bitten out (SAN loss 1D6/0).

Emma Ward can be visited at the museum or at home. When the investigators arrives, Ward crashes through the third-story window and is impaled on the spiked iron railings below (SAN loss 1D8/1D4). She does not die immediately but manages to say, "Gold. Gold. It's alive," before dying. On her right hand is a strange injury similar to a large insect bite. On investigation of her rooms, the doors and windows are all locked from the inside, and one window has been left open by an inch to allow some fresh air to enter. On a table, a collection of gold Egyptian jewelry is laid out which she was apparently cataloguing.

The scarab will start to hunt down and attack the investigators—preferably while each is alone. Their best plan is to try to trap the scarab in a sealed room or in a car, and destroy it by fire.

REWARDS

Solving the mystery of the death of Sir Richard: 1D6 SAN.

Destroying the jar and papyrus: 1D6 SAN.

Freeing the cat from the horror of live mummification: 1D6 SAN.

Destroying the scarab: 1D6 SAN, plus they get to live.

DIFFERENT TIMES

The following will help a referee adapt this scenario to a different setting.

1880s Cthulhu by Gaslight or Space: 1889: This was the great age of Egyptology with most European countries digging up Egypt. It was dominated by the greatest expert of Ancient Egypt ever—William Matthew Flinders Petrie. His 1885 book, *The Pyramids of Gazah*, adds 10% to the investigators' knowledge of Egypt, and his massive, three-volume *History of Egypt* adds 25% but should be published too late for this era. These books will, of course, be available in the 1920s or 1990s. If the investigators wish to contact Petrie for help, he will be excavating the pyramids at Hawara and be out of contact.

The investigators may also learn of Charles Piazzi-Smyth, the astronomer royal for Scotland. His book, *Life and Work at the Great Pyramid*, attempts a mathematical analysis of the pyramids and was much derided by his peers. It was used by subsequent writers to prove a magical basis for pyramids. Anyone reading this book must roll against Intelligence. A successful roll reveals the book as rubbish; a failed roll indicates the theories are believed and means a loss of Egyptian Knowledge of -5.

In this age, Dr. Usher is killed by a horse-drawn vehicle and is decapitated by iron-rimmed wheels.

1920s: It will be well-known to all investigators that Howard Carter and Lord Carnarvon discovered the tomb of Tut-ankh-amen in 1922 and opened it in March 1923. A curse fell on all the members of the team. Carnarvon died later from an infected mosquito bite to his cheek, and 30 other members all died soon afterward. The curse of the Pharaoh became well-known via the press—there was an Egyptian mummy on the *Titanic*.

1990s: The plundering of Egypt has ended, and Egyptian treasures remain in the Cairo museum. Research still continues, however. In a present-day adventure, the scarab is also slightly radioactive, sufficient to show on radioactivity detector badges and to register on Geiger counters. The scarab is not immortal, but its life span is linked to the radioactive decay. Tut-ankh-amen has, of course, changed his name to Tutankamun.

GHATANOTHOA

The full description and statistics for this ancient evil god are found in the 4th edition of *Call of Cthulhu*. Its most important aspect is the fact that when summoned to appear in an enchanted

mirror, all present must save against their CONx5 on 1D100 each round the image is present, or they will start to mummify. A victim loses 1D6 DEX a round as his body stiffens until at 0 DEX he is totally petrified, only his brain remaining alive forever (or until destroyed) in an immobile body. Everyone seeing the god also loses 1D100 SAN on a failed roll or 1D10 on a successful roll. (The petrification process will occur even if the god is not actually seen because the victim has his eyes shut or is asleep, although no SAN is risked in such a case). Seeing a friend mummified costs 1D10/1D3 SAN. The summoning spell takes one round to cast.

SCARAB BEETLE

The scarab beetle, a lesser independent race, is approximately one and a half inches long. It is not the common black scarab of Lower Egypt (*Scarabaeus sacer*) but the original golden-green scarab of the Upper Nile (*Scarabaeus egyptorium*). It is evil, highly intelligent and very dangerous. It is also bent on revenge.

STR: 1, CON: 10, SIZ: 1/10, INT: 15, POW: 18, DEX: 1 Crawling/17 Flying, APP: 18, EDU: 18, SAN: 0, HP: 1, MOVE: 1 Crawling/9 Flying.

Skills: Bite 60% for one hit point of damage. The bite is poisonous, inflicting an infection of (CON 19).

The wound is often mistaken for an ordinary mosquito bite but soon goes septic and can be fatal. The beetle deliberately attacks exposed areas of skin, especially the face and eyes. A specific attack area is still at 60%.

Unless a room has been specifically sealed with cloth or similar substance around the doors, over the fireplace, etc., and all windows are closed, the scarab will find a way to enter.

Spells

Summon Ghatanothoa: Because of the differences in the eye structure and nervous systems, insects are not affected by the appearance of Ghatanothoa and do not become petrified. Scarab beetles worship him. If an enchanted mirror is present they will

summon him.

Mist: The scarab can raise a thick mist for an area up to 200 yards around itself but can only do so where there is a large body of water. The ability can be used at sea, or on or near a large lake or large river.

Misdirect: Although not magnetic itself, the scarab uses the Earth's magnetic field to navigate as do many insects. The scarab can however also cause a temporary local variation in the magnetic field and so change compass bearings. It can use this to make ships sail off course.

The scarab has a high flying dexterity and is very small. It is impossible to hit with a rifle or hand gun. Shotguns at point blank range however are at their normal percentage chance. It is susceptible to fire but not to poisons—the normal insect sprays are useless against it. All other blows with blunt instruments are at 1/4 their normal chance.

The scarab is golden in color and rather attractive to the greedy. It can remain still for long periods of time (centuries) and can pretend to be an ornament until someone touches it or tries to pick it up when it will bite their hand.

It is intelligent enough to wait to attack victims while they are driving a car, causing them to crash. It will normally try to make its attacks appear like accidents. Ω



THEY SAID IT WAS A DARK FUTURE, BUT THEY DIDN'T COUNT ON US. AFTER ALL, WE ARE CHILDREN OF THE DARK, SO, FOR US TO BE PRESENT IN THIS "DARK" TIME IS ONLY... LOGICAL, NO?

SOME CALL US LEECHES, VRYOLAKLAS, MONSTERS OR SIMPLY VAMPIRES. BUT WE KNOW WHAT WE ARE: MASTERS OF THE NIGHT, CHILDREN OF THE DARK, FOREVER PRESENT IN THE MIND AND HEART OF GENERATIONS.

WE'LL ALWAYS BE THERE, HIDING IN THE NIGHT. COME PLAY WITH US, WON'T YOU?

By Justin Schmid

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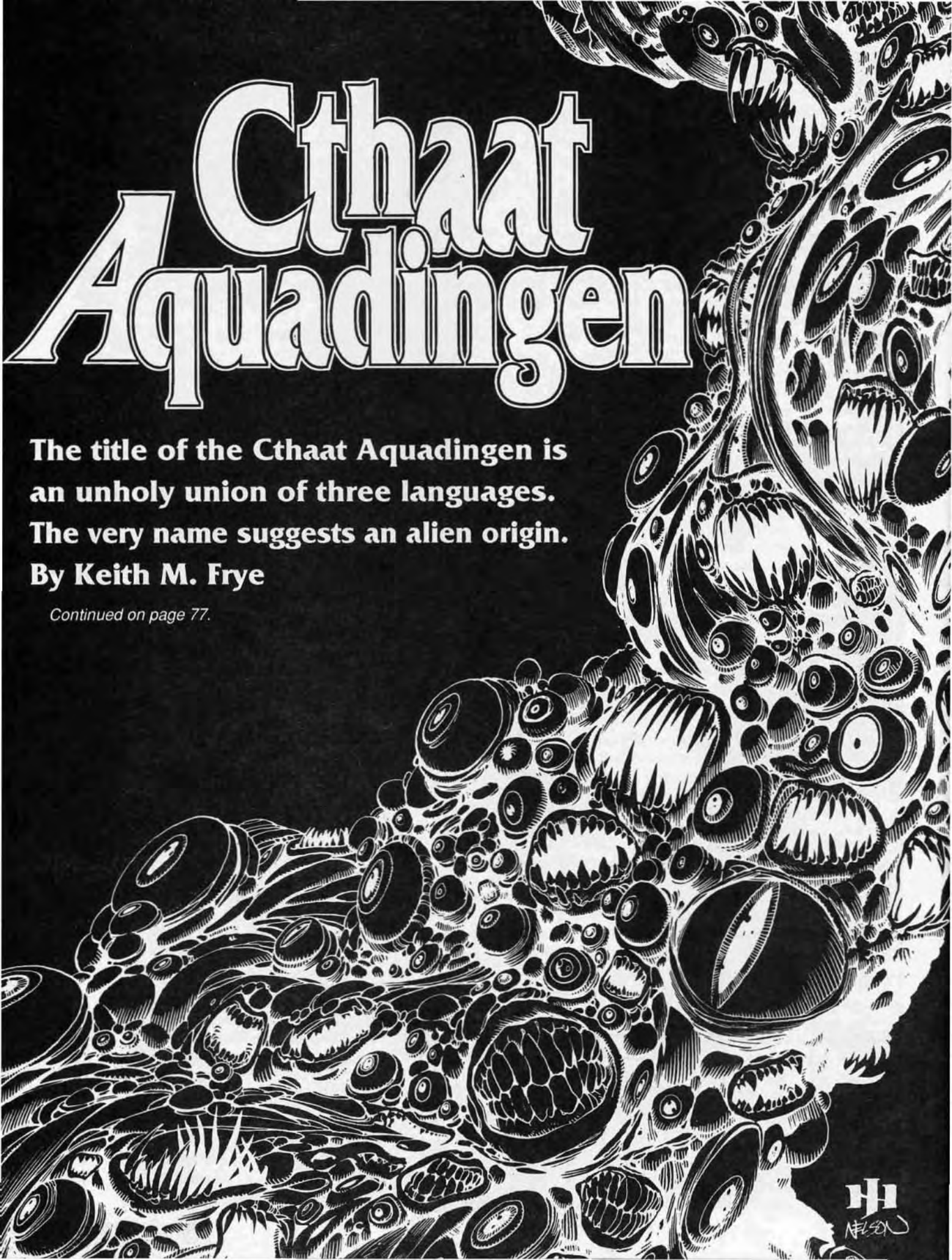
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Cthaaat Aquadingen

The title of the Cthaaat Aquadingen is an unholy union of three languages. The very name suggests an alien origin.

By Keith M. Frye

Continued on page 77.



HN
NELSON

Continued from page 74.

The *Cthaat Aquadingen* is a book whose name suggests an alien origin. Ranked by Brian Lumley as second only to the *Necronomicon*, the *Aquadingen* appears most often in his fiction as an English work. Yet there is darkly hinted at the rumor of another, even rarer tome. This article investigates the existence of this second volume, which bridges the previous nonhuman version with the safer, English one.

The title of the *Cthaat Aquadingen* is an unholy union of three languages. The first word may be derived from ancient Kthatan, a language said to pre-date primal Nacaal (Betelguese). Is this an implication that the book, or at least its language, is older than the Elder Gods?

The second word, "aquadingen," translates as "water-things." It is a combination of Latin and German, implying that the edition preceding the English one may have been in both Latin and German. This was not uncommon among certain German monks during the Middle Ages. The monks of Medieval Benedictburn, who compiled the *Carmina Burana*, were partial to bilingual and even trilingual compositions.

As for physical characteristics, the English version was translated from Latin/German circa 1550. The printing run must have been very short, since we are told that only three books remain in existence. One of these is bound in human skin that still sweats when the barometer falls.

The Latin/German edition would be rarer still, being in hand-written calligraphy, possibly illuminated with painted scenes from the Mythos (lots of sanity lost here—just the book for players who like to "flip" through the pages to see what its about!). Thus, the possible existence of the older edition, in alternating Latin and Medieval German, derived from a third inhuman—and probably bloody—tongue.

CTHAAT AQUADINGEN (MIEVEAL EDITION)

Compendium of lore by a nameless monk (Latin/German, +15 Cthulhu Mythos, -2D10 SAN, x4 spell multiplier).

Spells: Elder Sign, Contact Formless Spawn, Contact Tsathoggua, Contact Star Spawn, Contact Cthulhu, Call Bugg-Shash (described below), Call Yibb-Tstll (see *Call of Cthulhu* 5th edition).

We are warned that this book contains complete sets of working spells and invocations, devised to raise things out of the water—demons of the ocean or Cthulhu. Among these is the Nyhargo

Dirge, the spell for the Elder Sign, the Tsathoggua Rituals and at least four of the Sathlatta (spells for summoning a variety of beings). The tome also introduces us to the concept of Cthylla, a being described vaguely as the "daughter" of Cthulhu. Her significance in re-vivifying the Lord of R'lyeh is, mercifully, only hinted at.

CALL BUGG-SHASH

Contained in the Third Sathlatta, this is an extremely dangerous spell, due to the nature of the entity. An enchanted pentagram, with a circle in the center, is drawn. Candles and braziers of mild hallucinogens are placed in a precise pattern around the pentagram. After magic points are expended, the lights within the pentagram wink out, one by one. Then the bubbling mass of mouths and eyes that is Bugg-Shash will fill the pentagram in an ever-increasing pillar. A human sacrifice will allow the caster to command Bugg-Shash to perform one service. The command must be phrased carefully, for Bugg-Shash will attempt only to obey the working, not the spirit, of the command.

If there is no sacrifice at hand, Bugg-Shash will attempt to engulf and take the caster. Bugg-Shash can be dispelled by any direct source of light, even a candle. However, the next time the caster finds himself in near or total darkness, Bugg-Shash will be waiting.

DISMISS BUGG-SHASH

The Dismiss Bugg-Shash spell is very rare, involving reversing the Third Sathlatta. The pentagram is drawn as before, with the caster standing inside it. As in the summoning, the candles dim as the spell is cast. Bugg-Shash will then fill the area around the boundary of the pentagram, gradually forming a grotesque ceiling above. If the caster neglects to keep a light source in the pentagram, this ceiling will slowly descend and engulf him. The Dismiss spell is found only in the *Cthaat Aquadingen* and must be learned separately.

Bugg-Shash

Eibon described Bugg-Shash, the Filler of Space (Great Old One), as a "drowner," one whose "kiss is the slimy kiss of hideous death." Its trail is like that of a monstrous snail, leaving pools of clear, stinking liquid. It attacks its victims by engulfing and drowning them in its own hideous essence.

Bugg-Shash can only manifest itself in darkness and can be dispelled with the flick of a light switch. Unfortunately for the victim, such dispelling is only

temporary. At the next opportunity, when the lights fail or a cloud obscures the moon, Bugg-Shash will appear and engulf the screaming wretch.

Starting with the first round, anyone who is engulfed by Bugg-Shash must make a drowning saving roll, as per the *Call of Cthulhu* rulebook. If the roll fails, take damage as normal, as the lungs fill up with the juices of Bugg-Shash. If the victim is near an electric light, he may make a DEXx4 roll to turn it on and dispel the horror. Should the character die, then Bugg-Shash departs for its own dimension, taking the body of the victim with it.

The final horror is that Bugg-Shash, who "wakes the very dead to his command," can reanimate anyone it has drowned. These undead servitors retain much of their earthly knowledge, can cast any magic they knew and can perform complex tasks (like sabotaging the lights).

Statistics: STR N/A, CON 40, SIZ 80, INT 21, POW 35, DEX 20, Hit Points 60, Move 7, Weapon Atk 50%, Engulf 90%.

Armor: None, but Bugg-Shash will take minimum damage from firearms, ignoring impales. Fire and electricity do half damage but are more likely to dispel it (temporarily). Spells will affect Bugg-Shash.

SAN: If seen at the instant of dispelling (in a beam of light), 1D20/1. If the subject of attack, 1D20/1D3.

Game Suggestions

Kiss of Bugg-Shash: The investigators are visited one night by a frantic man who claims to be cursed by a "thing/demon" that visits him in the dark. He may be an associate of the investigators. Unless the characters are willing to help him, he will briefly turn the lights out, subjecting all present to the horrible "kiss" of Bugg-Shash. Needless to say, the investigators who have been visited are now prone to attacks themselves. Now they must help in banishing the thing—or suffer the same fate.

Revenge: An enemy invokes Bugg-Shash against the investigators, but makes a mistake in the summoning/binding and is carried off in their place. Soon he returns to this world, undead, slime coated and seeking revenge—revenge that Bugg-Shash is all too ready to assist with.

Summoning: The investigators discover the spell Call Bugg-Shash, and after learning the spell, decide to try it. During the summoning, either one of them or an assistant goes insane and oversteps the boundary or, worse, accidentally puts out the last candle. Ω

DEATH ON THE DOCKS

By Robert
James
Christensen

The news sweeping London in late October 1893 is that Jack the Ripper is back plying his trade in the back alleys of Whitechapel and Stepney. Seven prostitutes have been murdered in less than three weeks. Scotland Yard is saying nothing about the details of each case, but rumors and gossip have told of such horrid details as missing organs, bodies drained of blood and necrophilia (among other gory tales). The entire East End of London is in sheer terror, and neither the London Police nor Scotland Yard have any clues.

THE INVESTIGATORS ARE BROUGHT IN

The investigators are summoned by Col. Edmund Warnford, an ex-soldier of the Queen's Army, who is distressed by the sudden disappearance of his youngest son, Oswald, last seen three weeks ago. The police conducted a search, but with no sign of foul play, the case was put on hold. Oswald is a bookish yet very eccentric young man with a keen interest in things occultic. Warnford is worried that Oswald, a part-time cellist with the Primrose Chamber Orchestra, has either run off with his "strange, devilish friends" (other occultic fans, including an "Aleister something") or has come to foul play in the lesser sections of the city. With his wife in Cornwall visiting her sister, the colonel has offered £250 for the investigators to find out what happened and if possible find his missing son.

KEEPER'S NOTES

What has happened is that young Oswald, in his diligent studies in the Royal British and Royal Natural History museums, believed he discovered the cave where legendary Merlin lies—right here in London on the Isle of Dogs!

combs. Here, he found a single stone coffin. Ironically, this was *not* the resting place of Merlin, but rather of Mhae-Yrn, an ancient Druidic priest of Shub-Niggarth. Using the Charm of Waking, Oswald woke the sleeping wizard, who took on the eager young man as his apprentice. Mhae-Yrn was interred here by Roman troopers who thought they had executed him.

On the night of the New Moon, Mhae-Yrn will attempt to call Shub-Niggarth to Earth. To do so, he must have 200 SIZ of human blood to first summon five Dark Young and then Shub-Niggarth, who will probably flatten the city. Right now, Mhae-Yrn and the now-insane Oswald are doing the dirty work themselves, but they are also conjuring up ghouls and ghosts to hunt fresh victims. One victim has not been sacrificed to Mhae-Yrn's experiments but rather to his lust—she is kept in the catacombs. If Mhae-Yrn gets enough blood, he will use Greenwich Park to enact his summoning. The investigators will have six days in which to solve the case or London will be destroyed by the malignant entity.

SEARCHING FOR OSWALD

Upstairs in the Warnford home, Oswald's bedroom is cluttered with hundreds of books, notes, and an odd assortment of art, sketches and trinkets. A successful Occult roll will determine a large number to be of various mystical and occultic natures. The artwork in the room is all in an Arthurian Britain slant. Most of them deal with Merlin the Magician. The housekeeper, with a successful Persuasion or Psychology roll, will reveal to the investigators that Oswald was nearly obsessed with the legend of Merlin.

According to Warnford and the house-

keeper, Oswald's main retreats were The Natural History Museum (two blocks away), Albert Hall (where the orchestra often practices), Regents Park (another music locale), the London Library (mostly in the Legends and Lore stacks), the Royal British Museum (in the British and Medieval Antiquities department with Partridge) and London University College (a hangout for his "occultic" friends).

The staff at the Natural History Museum and London Library all know Oswald from his nearly daily visits. With successful Fast Talk or Persuasion rolls, the investigators will convince the staffers to discuss Oswald's most recent research. Otherwise, the investigators are referred to the History and Literature sections.

Vernal's Poem: The references that helped Oswald deduce the whereabouts of Merlin are in the London and Royal British libraries, which have an old copy of Vernal's "Merlin" poem that contains reference to a year 999 quest to seek Merlin to "save the world from the millennium."

10th-Century Manuscript: The second clue is a 10th-century manuscript, written by a Christian monk, located in the attic of the London Library. A successful Library Use roll will uncover this text in one to three hours. A second roll is allowed after the third hour of searching. The writer suggests that "old Roman records in the City Center could tell of Merlin's resting place" (where the witch Nimuë imprisoned him). There, the mage would be awakened and help bring forth King Arthur (considered an ancient British persona of Christ). No evidence of a successful quest by the monk are to be found.

The Mage of the Isle: Another book in the London Library, *The Mage of the Isle* by R.J. Davidson, contains a reference to Merlin's long slumber, including the "Charm of Waking," an alleged magic spell that will awaken the sleeping wizard and restore Camelot. However, the charm is actually a spell to return a dreamer from Earth's Dreamlands, where Mhae-Yrn sent his mind before his execution. The page has been written on, and an investigator with a sample of Oswald's handwriting will see that it is his.

Professor Andy Partridge: Partridge is the assistant director of the museum's Antiquities department. He can be found in his office, mulling over some recent archaeological finds. He has been worried about his young friend, and when informed of his disappearance, will be cooperative as possible. He knows a bit of Oswald's more bizarre habits, nota-



bly hiding in the building after hours, spending up 10 hours a day researching trivial items and other compulsive habits. The professor also knows of Oswald's present research area, but not of its results. The last time the professor saw Oswald was the day before his disappearance.

Islas Caninus: The Royal Museum contains old Roman records, which are actually those of an execution by drowning of a suspected barbarian "wizard," the Druid priest Mhae-Yrn. The death occurred three miles away (Roman equivalent) on "Islas Caninus," a sharp bend in the river resembling a dog's tooth. Oswald's enthusiasm and poor Latin skill made him miss the part of the execution.

Oswald's Friends: Oswald's occultic friends—Geoff and Lydia Page, Harlan McGuillicutty, Esther Daniels, Christopher Simms, Shephanie Nichols, Roger Kemp and young Allister Crowley—may be found in a bohemian-type coffee house, The Myst Eternal. They all appreciated Oswald's interest in magic and knowledge of Arthurian Britain, but sometimes tired of his dull academic attitudes. Most of them are into the occult for prankish fun, except for the sinister-looking Crowley, who will quietly tell the PCs that Oswald is a fool who will be swayed by powers greater than man. The PCs are left with the vision of Crowley's evil smirk.

TERROR IN THE EAST END

The problem in Whitechapel is officially cited to Jack the Ripper, but police sense several disturbing differences in these new crimes. First, the only wounds found were two lacerations in the back of the head and four deep gashes in the pressure points, indicating blood drain. None of the victims suffered any other type of injury. The investigation is not going well, and police are none too cooperative to nosy investigators with wild tales of "monsters and wizards."

Inspector Roland S. Hanson is the Scotland Yard detective in charge of the "Jack" case. Not in the mood for more crackpot insights into the murders, he is quite disturbed by the case, as it is definitely not the work of the original. In order to talk to the inspector, the investigators need to roll a successful Fast Talk, Law or Persuasion task to avoid being shown the door, physically removed from the scene or even arrested as a public nuisance. If convinced of the investigators' intents, Hanson will provide as much aid as he can.

Local Reaction: The locals in White-

chapel are terrified. Citizens are now extremely wary of all strangers, so any "strange" behavior could warrant a call for the bobbies, who are nervously trying to prevent more murders or even an unruly mob intent on dealing out "justice."

Streetwalkers: Local prostitutes are either flippantly uncaring, paranoid (travelling in armed groups) or on temporary leave. The numerous brothels are searching their patrons for weapons and turning over any armed men to the police. One of the local "dollymops," Mitzi Robbins, is certain she's seen "Jack," along with "pagan heath'ns." A young but seasoned veteran, she reported to the police "a bony-white noble-looking devil whi' a ferrin' accent" and "a strange little lad 'cumpnin' a tall, old, bearded feller with Arab clothes sneakin' about the alleys." Authorities discount such fantasies. The investigators will have to interview 3D10 streetwalkers before hearing Robbins' story. The "bony-white feller" is actually an innocent Romanian official taking in the local "business," in case the investigators decide to go vampire-hunting.

McRory Brothers' Meat Market: Another less conspicuous story is that the McRory Brothers' Meat Market in Rotherhithe had several whole steer carcasses stolen with no sign of forced entry. This is the work of Mhae-Yrn's conjured ghosts, who worked their way through the city sewers and then into the slaughterhouse for collecting blood and a light snack.

Yi Sooang: If the investigators choose to do so, an expedition into the Chinese section of the East End (Limehouse) will reveal more clues.

A number of Chinese laborers have disappeared, but the authorities flat out ignore these events as unimportant. Inquires will generally be directed to an elderly shopkeeper, Yi Sooang. He allegedly saw one of the victims being attacked by what Sooang describes as "the most evil of the Yeti race," the creature being tall, semi-human, with "flaming eyes, burning like two lanterns in the night." The thing slipped underneath a sewer grating with a motionless body in its clawed hand. If the party members take him seriously, Sooang will present each investigator with a clasp of "magic herbs" and advice that the "Yeti" fears the day and will die if caught in sunlight. The herbs smell pleasant, but are rather useless against the ghosts.

TRACKING DOWN THE PAIR

As the area was industrialized, the

network of caves in which Mhae-Yrn was interred have been covered over with streets, docks and warehouses. With successful Persuasion/Fast Talk rolls, the investigators will learn that local workers have noticed a "rather excited young pup of a lad" snooping around several sewer openings.

City engineers have noticed a mysterious loss of water at Pump 44, but it is not serious enough to warrant repair. The water loss comes from the reopened cavern that leads to Mhae-Yrn's chamber.

Also, workers have noticed that three local beggars have seemed to "move on." A resident hobo of the area, "Wheezer" Evans, has been trying to get the local police to investigate a sewer, where he claims, "tree o' me mates got 'et by a demon, sir'd by ole Scratch he'sef." Known for his tall tales, the terrified old man is ignored by the police as either a drunken hallucinator or just a great storyteller. The demon was actually one of Mhae-Yrn's conjured ghosts which left the cave entrance searching for more victims. The three unlucky hobos ended up as dinner. Wheezer will latch onto any professional-looking investigators who happen through the area and plead his story. Belief and perhaps a little nip of alcohol will reward the investigators with a wealth of information.

The old man does not know of the exact location of Mhae-Yrn's cave, but he will lead the investigators to where he's seen the ghosts, including the site of the attack on his friends. Roll Spot Hidden to locate bizarre footprints of unknown origin. Three successful Track rolls are required by the group to follow the prints to an isolated sewer opening. Otherwise, the investigators will have to search the dark and fog-strewn alleys for two to 12 hours before meeting one of the ghosts.

Roll the party's average LUCK. If the roll is successful, the investigators will spot a hulking and hideous shape dart into a sewer opening. If the party fails the roll, a PC or NPC will be snatched by the monster (keeper's discretion). That unlucky person will have to roll a successful Dodge in order to escape the ghost's vicious claws. Otherwise, the other investigators will hear a bloodcurdling scream and see a pair of struggling legs sail forever into the shadows.

THE WORLD OF WIZARDRY

Upon discovering the sewer entrance, the investigators can either heroically enter the underground viaducts or intelligently return later with maps readily

Continued on page 77.

Continued from page 74.

available (with Fast Talk/Persuasion/Credit Rating) from the London Public Works Office. The sewers are pitch dark, clammy, and filled with malodorous sewage. If the weather is rainy, the flow is moderately swift and deep. Since the tunnels are big enough, small boats can be used for travel. The investigators will have to search the entire Isle of Dogs sewer system, taking three to 18 hours, unless they have the clue about Pump 44. In this case, the trip takes just under one hour, the long boat ride taking just as long as walking.

Unfortunately, Mhae-Yrn has several ghouls patrolling the sewers for unwary interlopers. One to three ghouls will attack from their overhead grottoes using their inherent Sneak skill to determine surprise, if the investigators are not inspecting the ceiling. If the investigators are actively on guard, use their average Spot Hidden on the Resistance Table (ghouls are a passive 16).

After the investigators reach the Pump 44 section, the current pick ups, and the sound of rushing water fills the putrid air. A section of the sewer has broken away into a six-foot-high cave entrance, with water pouring through. Use either a Climb or DEX percentile roll to enter the cavern. Wading through knee-deep water, the investigators must watch out for several holes and side passages that end with bottomless waterfalls. While travelling in the cave, the party will meet up with one or two ghosts, who stand guard near the main chamber.

Just past the guards, the investigators enter a lighted cave room adorned with new carpets, faded tapestries and rugs, rough-hewn shelves filled with Druidic scrolls, two large pillows and a 10-foot-long stone table covered with furs. A Critical Success on a Spot Hidden roll will also reveal a secret passage to the shore of the Thames. In a rear room, there will be several large barrels of blood (human and animal) and a dazed female chained to the wall. She is a kidnapped scullery maid who was spared being sacrificed in order to become Mhae-Yrn's mesmerized consort. After a week of hospital care, she will regain her identity and recover. If the fifth night has past, the barrels will have been taken to a secret location in Greenwich Park, awaiting the summoning.

Mhae-Yrn is in the chamber 70% of the time and will be alerted to the intrusion. If the investigators arrive on the fifth day or sooner, the wizard and Oswald will attempt to escape with the majority of their magic items to set up shop elsewhere and wait for the next

new moon to attempt the summoning. But if the investigators arrive on the day of the new moon or overwhelm the ghosts in short notice, Mhae-Yrn will be forced to combat the intruders with spells. If the battle goes badly for him, Mhae-Yrn will have Oswald throw several smoke bombs and escape via the secret passage, leaving his "apprentice" behind.

Oswald will be in a half-crazed, bewildered state, sobbing maniacally and wondering aloud why Merlin has forsaken him. A successful Psychoanalysis or halved Persuasion will induce Oswald to reveal that "Merlin will call forth the King at midnight at the Center of the World." This pertains to the fact that Greenwich Park is at 0 degrees longitude. Only Oswald knew this—the ancient Druid has no concept of modern cartography. If the investigators are just as ignorant of the fact, permit them an Idea roll.

Using Library Use skills with Mhae-Yrn's scroll collection will reveal his worship of "the Black Goat with a Thousand Young" (they'll find a drawing of such a creature as Old Gaelic is not to easy to read) and the plans to summon it.

BAREHOAVED IN THE PARK

If Mhae-Yrn gets to Greenwich Park, he will first consecrate his stone altar (actually a memorial to George Graham, renowned astronomer and inventor) and then attempt to summon one to three Dark Young to assist in calling forth Shub-Niggarth (a base chance of 50%+10-30% per Dark Young summoned). The surviving ghosts are carrying four barrels of blood (200 SIZ worth), plus two bound and gagged female victims (one is English, and the other Asian). If not rescued, Oswald will loyally carry Mhae-Yrn's magic tomes, along with several of his own.

The best time for the investigators to stop the Druid is before he conjures the Dark Young or before Shub-Niggarth is summoned. The ghosts and any remaining ghouls will circle their master to protect him from attack. If the ghouls and ghosts are stopped, the Dark Young will then join in the fray with spells and physical combat. Smart investigators will cause diversions and then attack with long-range spells or weapons. If Mhae Yrn is incapacitated, the ghouls will run away; the ghosts will be dumbfounded for 10 minutes then run away; and the Dark Young will sop up the sacrificial blood and go their merry way. If Shub-Niggarth is summoned but dis-

missed by the investigators, the Dark Young will vanish with their "mother."

ENDING THE ADVENTURE

If Mhae-Yrn is captured alive in the cave and Oswald is rescued unharmed (although insane), the investigators will get 1D6 SAN and the assorted reward monies. If the PCs are forced to kill the Druid or Oswald, they only get 1-3 SAN and just the reward for the "Ripper."

If Mhae-Yrn gets to Greenwich Park before being stopped, the investigators will get 1D10 SAN plus 1-6 SAN for each defeated monster. However, if the Dark Young escape, the poor investigators will lose 1-6 SAN for allowing these horrors into the unsuspecting countryside.

If Mhae-Yrn is successful in summoning Shub-Niggarth, the investigators will lose 1D10 SAN plus the loss for witnessing the awful event. If the investigators cannot dismiss the Great Old One, London will be trampled under hoof, and thousands will die or go utterly insane, destroying British society and possibly the world.

NPCs

Oswald Warnford: Oswald is a 25-year-old cellist with a nearly obsessive interest in the supernatural, notably that dealing with Arthurian Britain. He is bookish, with rather wild tendencies punctuating his duller moments. Somewhat elfish in appearance, he has short black hair and small reading glasses. He now wears old street clothes when on the surface and Druid robes below. Although not completely insane, he is utterly enthralled with his "master" and oblivious to the murder and mayhem going on. Oswald seriously believes he has become Merlin's sole apprentice and cannot be readily cured of this disorder.

STR: 9, CON: 8, SIZ: 10 DEX: 13, APP: 12, POW: 8, INT: 15, EDU: 14, SAN: 20, HPs: 9.

Skills: Art (Cello) 55%, Bargain 30%, Credit Rating 45%, Fast Talk 25%, History 60%, Library 65%, Occult 50%, Gaelic 40%, Latin 50%, Persuade 30%, Sneak 35%, Spot 50%, Babble Wildly 80%, Follow Idol 90%.

Weapon: Enchanted cane.

Mhae-Yrn: He is an ancient resurrected Druid priest intent on conquering the world for his god, Shub-Niggarth. Clad in a mix of robes and modern, colorful fabrics, he stands seven feet tall, with long, grayish-silver hair flowing over his pointed facial features. His speech is rough English with overwhelming Gaelic overtones. He does look the part of Merlin.

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STR: 13, CON: 20, SIZ: 17 DEX: 11, APP: 10, POW: 22, INT: 17, EDU: 21, SAN: 0, HPs: 18.

Skills: Astronomy 55%, Chemistry 30%, Climb 50%, Grapple 40%, Hide 35%, Listen 60%, Medicine 25%, Occult 60%, Sneak 45%, Throw 40%, Dagger 40%.

Spells: Call Shub-Niggarth, Summon/Bind Dark Young, Summon/Bind Ghost, Bless Blade, Command Animal, Create Mist of R'lyeh, Death Spell, Dominate, Enchant Knife, Enchant Stone, Entrail Victim, Flesh Ward, Implant Fear, Mesmerize.

Weapons: Enchanted cane, two blessed daggers, five flash-powder grenades.

Ghasts (3): STR: 22, CON: 13, SIZ: 21 DEX: 12, POW: 10, INT: 3, HPs: 20, Damage Bonus=2D6.

Weapons: Bite: 40%, Dam=1D10; Kick: 25%, Dam=1D6+bonus.

Armor: 3 points of skin.

Skills: Sneak 70%. Sunlight kills them instantly.

SAN Loss: 0/1D8

Ghouls (5): STR: 16, CON: 11, SIZ: 13 DEX: 13, POW: 9, INT: 10, HPs: 12, Damage Bonus=1D4.

Weapons: Claws: 30%, Dam=1D6+bonus; Bite: 30%, Dam=1D6+disease.

Armor: Projectile weapons do one-

half damage.

Skills: Burrow 75%, Climb 85%, Hide 60%, Jump 75%, Listen 70%, Sneak 80%, Spot Hidden 50%.

SAN Loss: 0/1D6.

Dark Young (1D4): STR: 44, CON: 16, SIZ: 42 DEX: 16, POW: 17, INT: 14, HPs: 27, Damage Bonus=4D6.

Weapons: Tentacle 80%, Dam=bonus+STR drain; Trample 40%, Dam=2D6+bonus.

Armor: Impaling weapons do 1 point damage; fire, electricity, poison do none.

Skills: Sneak 40%, Hide in Woods 80%.

Spells: Contact Ghoul, Create Gate, Summon/Bind Byhakee, Bait Human, Pipes of Madness, Dampen Light.

SAN Loss: 1D3/1D10.

NEW WEAPONS

Flash-Powder Grenade: Causes a blinding bright light and then a thick gray lasting seven to 10 minutes (D6+4). Treat as a CON 5 poison on Resistance Table for choking.

Blessed Dagger: Treat it as a typical dagger but with an additional 1D6 damage.

Enchanted Cane: When used to hit, the cane drains 1 POW from the target. If touched by anyone but the owner, it still drains the point of POW. Ω

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THEY

"Is it not wisely said that there are things buried in the earth that should never be disturbed? Is it not said that there are things best left alone in their dark slumbers? Woe be it to those who disturb such things. May Allah curse their names."

Translated from Arabic by Dr. Phileus Sadowsky

A down-on-his-luck miner named George Jones in 1849 accidentally freed a Gaunt from the shaft it had been imprisoned in by Native American shamans. The Gaunt killed the miner's companions, but took him as a servant. Jones was told to lure people into the area with the gold that had been used to imprison the Gaunt. He did so, and soon the Gaunt was feeding off the people who arrived and constructed the town of Green Grove.

After learning that the townspeople planned to flee the area, the Gaunt killed them all in an orgy of destruction. The horror of the experience broke the being's hold over Jones, and during the

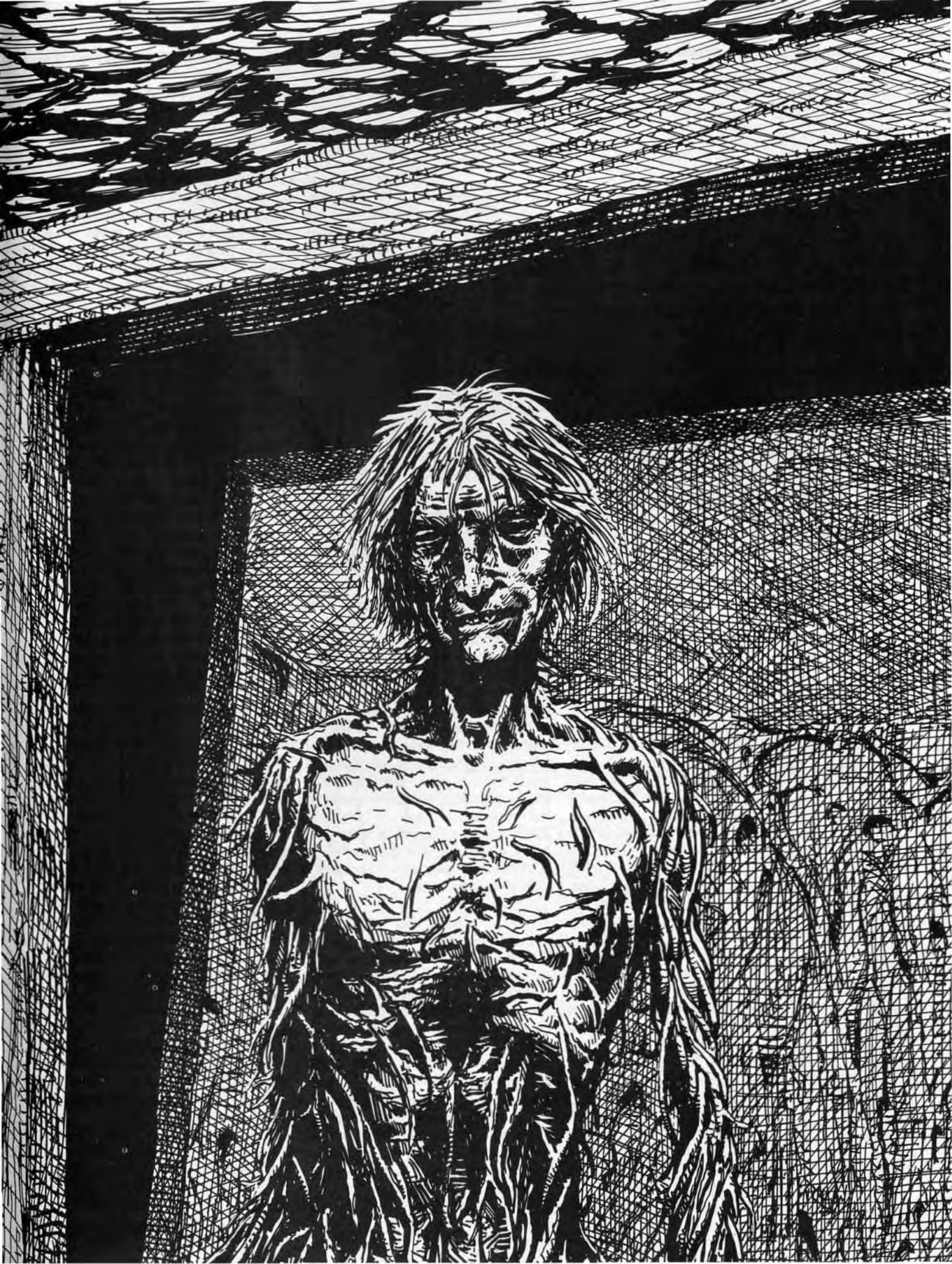
day, with the help of four mules, he used stones, wood and all his gold to seal off the entrance to the shaft in which the Gaunt slept. He died during his monumental effort, and his bones lay amidst the rubble and gold. The empty town was discovered later, and the incident became known as "The Mystery of Green Grove."

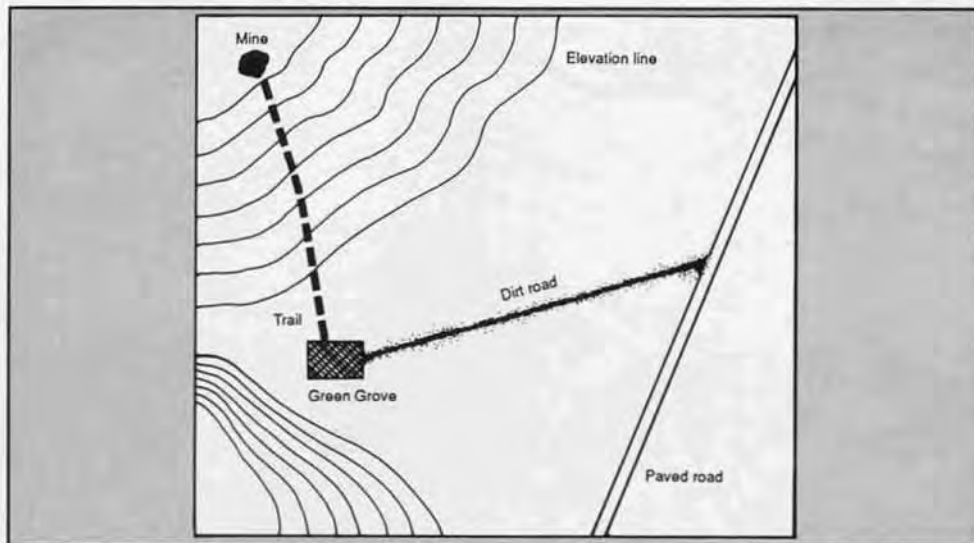
The area was undisturbed by anyone until 1992, when the King Movie Company began filming "The Mystery of Green Grove," a horror story loosely based on the historical mystery. The basic plot of the movie is that miners intruded on an ancient Native American burial ground and stole the gold within it. The ancient spirits that protected the tomb were released and set about killing off the miners and the rest of the town for good measure.

The filming went along smoothly until the company suffered financial difficulties and production stopped.

By Michael C. LaBossiere

Jack





Books

Title	Language	+ to Knowledge	Spell Multiplier	Effects on SAN
Book of the Underlands	English	9%	2	-1D6
Book of the Underlands	Greek	12%	3	-2D6

One of the actors, Dave Parker, wandering about while waiting to leave, came across the shaft and did some digging. He discovered some of the gold and later returned to dig the rest of it up. He sold it and used the money to fund the film, and the shooting began again, with Parker as the new star. The Gaunt, which had dug its way to the surface after the gold was removed, discovered the movie people three days after the shooting had started up. It began killing that night, taking an immigrant worker back to its lair. The next night it took a cameraman who had a fight with the director. The third night, it took Parker, who offered to serve it in exchange for his life. He told it about the nearby town and offered to drive it there at night if it would let him live and leave the film site alone. It agreed, and Parker has driven it to the city each night, where it takes a victim.

GETTING THE PCS INVOLVED

While the adventure must be located in an area that was part of the historical gold rush, it is up to the referee to decide exactly where to place it, based on his campaign needs. The PCs will be drawn into the adventure by a letter (or fax) from an old friend. William Gardner, a horror story writer, will write to say that he believes something unnatural is occurring. The letter will say that two people vanished from the movie site about two weeks ago and that there have been six reported incidents of people disappear-

ing in the nearby town. He will also write that the local paper reports that Joe Miller, a nightwatchman, went insane, babbling about "a thin thing, a thin thing that ripped him apart." And two days later, Gardner writes, the paper reports that a wino saw something that took one of his buddies. The night after the incident with the wino, Gardner writes, there was another reported disappearance, and the locals have started calling the unknown criminal "Thin Jack." Gardner will conclude his letter by writing that he thinks there is more here than just a psycho grabbing people, and he will ask the investigators for aid. Most of Gardner's money is tied up in the film, so he will only be able to provide very minimal financial aid to the investigators for their travel expenses.

ARRIVAL

If the investigators decide to aid Gardner, they can secure transport via airplane or bus, or they can drive out on their own. If they go by airplane, they will have to take the bus to the nearby town (a three-hour drive), and Gardner will pick them up in town. If they go by bus, they can go directly to the town, and Gardner will pick them up. If they drive, they can go all the way to the film site, and Gardner will meet them there.

Gardner will offer the investigators a place to stay on the film site, or they can seek lodging in town at their own expense. There is one motel in town (\$20 a night for a single) as well as a YMCA

(\$5 a night per person). If they select the film site, they will be sleeping in the barracks-like building along with the camera crews, gophers and minor actors.

BOOKS

Relevant books are detailed below.

Newspapers: The local newspapers contain the articles Gardner mentioned in his letter. One article makes reference to "The Mystery of Green Grove," and the writer wonders (but not seriously) if the same thing is happening to the town that happened in Green Grove.

"Unexplained Vanishings": This book (and others like it) is available in almost any public library, and the town library has a copy of it. The book briefly mentions the town of Green Grove, which was found empty in 1849. The book goes on to note that none of the missing people were ever heard from again, even though almost all of them had relatives in other places.

"Indian Legends": This book (and others like it) is available in almost any public library, and the town library has a copy of it. One section of the book discusses a monster "that came from the earth" and was driven back from whence it came with magic and gold. It was supposedly sealed beneath the earth by the use of golden wards. According to the book, the monster's name translates into English as "The Thin One" or "The Skinny One."

"Book of the Underlands": This Mythos book contains information on the various beings (such as Chthonians, Ghouls and Dholes) that dwell beneath the surface of planets or are associated with the underground places (known as the Underlands). The book is very difficult to find in English and almost impossible to find in the original Greek. The town librarian, a descendent of an investigator who was active in the 1920s, has a copy of it. She will only reveal it if the investigators earn her trust. The book has a section describing a race of beings known as Gaunts (no relation to Nightgaunts) that dwell beneath the earth. These beings are described as "inhumanly thin" and are known to "fear gold, for it is their bane." While these creatures are reported to be "invincible in battle," they are supposedly vulnerable because they had to "reside within their foul pits" during the day "and could not abide the light of day."

The English version of this Mythos book contains Contact Ghast and Contact Ghoul, and the Greek version contains both those spells, plus Contact Chthonian. See the Books table.

INVESTIGATION

Following are individuals/groups the investigators may wish to talk to and the information they can provide.

Police: If the investigators go to the police, they will only be told that the police are working on the case. If the investigators have enough clout, fame or status to impress or influence the police, they will be told that the police have no leads, except that the person they are looking for (if it is just one person) is thin. The crimes are particularly baffling because they seem to have no common element, except for the fact that a person is taken each time. The police will be grateful for any help the investigators can offer, provided they stay within the law.

Joe Miller: Joe Miller is the security guard who went insane due to seeing the Gaunt feeding upon one of its victims. He is currently at the town hospital and will be transferred to the state mental institution if he does not recover soon. The investigators can see him if they get permission from the police or are able to bluff or persuade their way into doing so. An investigator using his Psychoanalysis skill will be able to calm Miller down and draw out a description of what he saw. He will say: "It was horrible. Thin, very thin. Yes. It had him in its claws. Was ripping him apart. Eating him bit by bit. He was alive. At the start. Alive. Yes. It was thin. Very thin. Yes." He will then stare up at the ceiling and begin drooling profusely. (He will eventually recover and have no recollection of what he saw.)

Bill Newsmith: Newsmith is the wino the newspaper article mentioned. If the investigators inquire at the newspaper office, they can find out who he is and where he tends to hang out. Newsmith is a Korean veteran who was captured by the Chinese during the war and escaped after severe mistreatment from which he never quite recovered. If the investigators buy him a drink, or are willing to listen to his war stories for a while, he will tell them what he saw: "It was real thin and smelt like a dead body, like the ones in the war. It grabbed up old Will, and his screaming woke me up. Haven't heard screams like that since the war. It ran off with him. I think it was going to eat him."

People at the Film Site: Anybody at the film site can tell the investigators that three people vanished from the site. The first was Manual Padre, a migrant worker who had been hired to do manual labor at the site. Most people think he simply moved on. The second person to vanish was Homer Wilson, a

cameraman. He was seen fighting with the director over pay and the way the film was being done. Most people think he just left one night. The general consensus is that there is some psycho loose in town, but that the incidents in town are totally unrelated to the people who left the film site.

Dave Parker: If the investigators talk to Parker, a successful Idea roll will reveal that he seems to be under a great deal of stress (which is not surprising, given that he is playing his first major role), and a successful Psychology skill check will reveal subtle signs of mental disturbance. Parker, being a skilled actor, will handle the investigators' questions well and will do his best to keep them from suspecting him. He will say that he thinks "this Thin Jack is a psycho, like the ones you hear about all the time. I hope they catch and fry the bastard." He will say he thinks the people vanishing from the film site simply left and were not victims of Thin Jack.

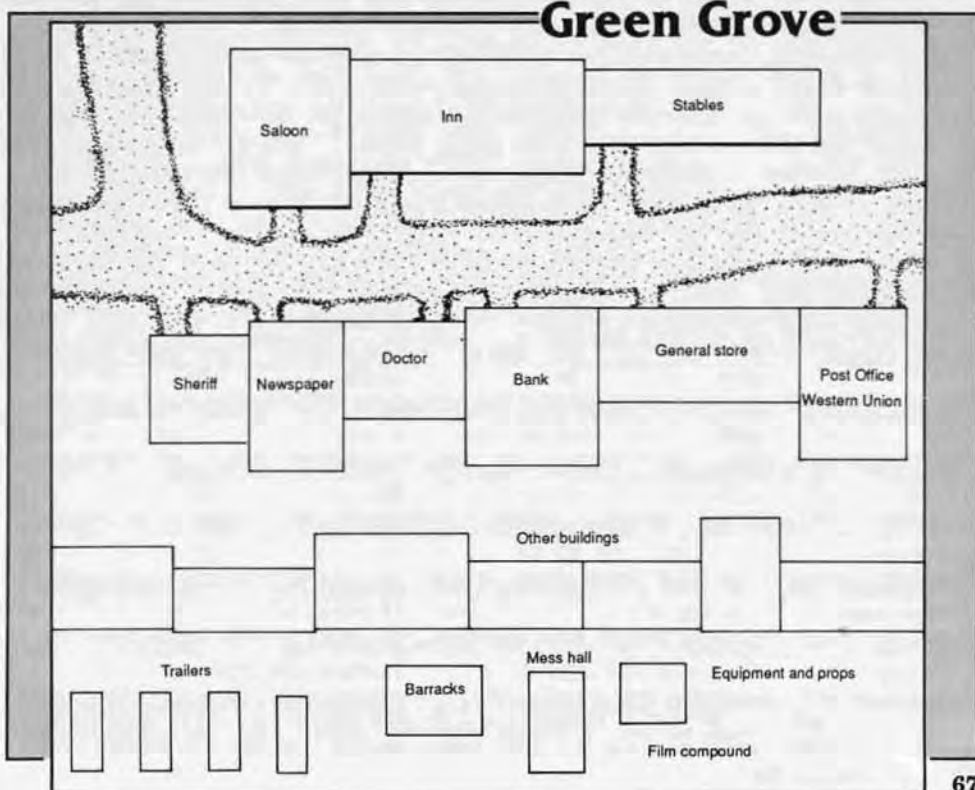
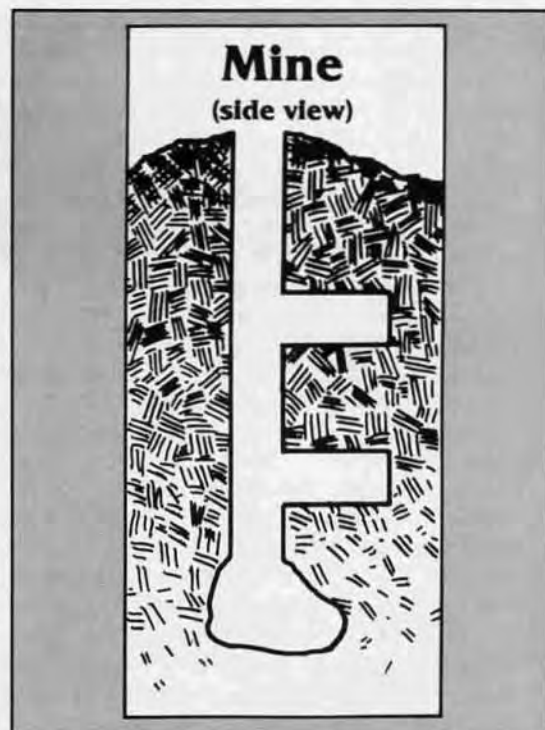
CLUES

The following describes various clues the investigators may find.

Parker's Jeep: If the investigators examine Parker's jeep, a successful Spot Hidden skill roll will reveal small blood stains on the back of the fold-down seats in the rear of the vehicle (Parker puts a plastic sheet down, but some of the blood has run off it). The blood, if tested, will be found to be human blood. A rolled-up sheet of plastic can also be found under one of the seats. If confronted, Parker will claim it

is from a hunting trip (Parker does hunt and has often bragged about his kills to the others), and he will tell the Gaunt about the investigators. The Gaunt will then seek out the investigators and try to kill them.

Personal Effects: If the investigators examine the barracks, they will find that the missing peoples' lockers are still locked. If they pop or pick the locks, they will find that both men's personal effects are still present. The fact that Padre "left behind" all his hard-earned money will probably convince the inves-



Gaunt

(Lesser Independent Race)

Gaunts have a three-stage life cycle. The first is an egg stage in which the Gaunt is encased in a thick globule of slimy resin that gradually hardens into a shell-like material.

The Gaunt then enters its second stage, in which it assumes a human-like form by using the body of the human that it was provided with by its "mother." A Gaunt in the second stage of life looks like a desiccated corpse of a person who died of starvation. The skin of the Gaunt is coated with a thick slime that is grayish-green in color, and there are thin tendrils coiled all over the surface of the body, which writhe and move in a most disturbing manner. During this stage, the Gaunt feeds on the flesh and power of living creatures at the rate of one per night (it can kill many more, however, but cannot use their power). When it has consumed 500 power points of sentient beings, it will undergo a metamorphose into its third stage. This takes one night to occur.

The third stage Gaunt emerges the next night and captures as many humans as it can, up to six. It then inserts an egg into each human and digs a hole for each egg, puts a slimy globule of resin in the bottom of the hole, then pushes the human into it. After laying six eggs, the mature Gaunt dies, having expended its life energy producing the eggs and globules. A Gaunt in the third stage looks very much like an adult Chthonian, but their tentacles are longer, and they are not accompanied by a chanting noise.

Gaunts at stage one or two communicate via telepathy and can communicate with humans that way. They can communicate with one another up to a distance of 100 miles, and can communicate with (and detect) humans at a distance of one mile.

Armor: Because of their nature (which is largely nonphysical), Gaunts at all stages take minimal damage from all physical weapons (even impaling weapons). Gaunts at stage one must be attacked through the globule (it is meters thick), but they have no armor of their own and are easily killed. Gaunts at stage one have 4 points of armor and regenerate 6 points a round, while Gaunts at stage three have 8 points of armor and regenerate 12 points a round. Gaunts take normal damage from magical weapons or weapons made of gold or magical gold weapons.

Vulnerabilities: Fortunately, Gaunts have vulnerabilities. First, they are extremely vulnerable to solar radiation and take 1D10 during each round they are exposed to direct sunlight or its equivalent.

Second, they must sleep at least six hours a day in their egg. For each day they go without such sleep, they take 1D10 points of damage and lose 1 point of power permanently.

Third, they can only consume power within their egg. If a Gaunt cannot bring its kill into its egg within six hours of the kill, it will not be able to gain the power of the victim. Destroying the egg is one obvious way to destroy a Gaunt. Doing so would require explosives, lots of acid or any other means of large-scale destruction. The egg is vulnerable to conventional weaponry.

Fourth, Gaunts are vulnerable to gold. The intrinsic properties of gold act in such a way as to repel Gaunts. Each ounce of gold will create a "repulsion zone" one meter from the center of the gold mass which a Gaunt cannot enter. If it is trapped within a repulsion zone, it will be paralyzed for as long as the gold is present, although it can still communicate telepathically.

Spells: None.

SAN: Those who encounter a Gaunt egg lose 1 SAN if their rolls fail, none if they succeed. Seeing a stage two Gaunt costs 1D8 if the roll fails, only 1 if the roll succeeds. Seeing a stage three Gaunt costs 2D6 if the roll fails, only 1 if the roll succeeds.

Gaunt Life Cycle

	Stage Two		Stage Three	
	Statistics	Average	Statistics	Average
STR	4D6	14	4D6x3	42
CON	4D6	14	4D6x2	28
SIZ	3D6	10-11	3D6x3	30-33
INT	3D6	10-11	3D6	10-11
POW	4D6	14	4D6	14
DEX	3D6	10-11	2D6	7
Hit Points		12-13		29-31
Move		8		7/1 Burrowing
Regenerate	6 points/rd		12 points/rd	
Armor	4 points		8 points	
Weapon	Claw 60% 1D6+1D4		Tentacle 40% 2D6	
Weapon	Bite 40% 1D6+1D4		Crush 3D6	

tigators that he didn't leave voluntarily.

Financial Matters and New Roles:

The investigators are likely to learn that the film ran into financial difficulty a while back, and shooting had to stop until new funding could be found. If the investigators can access the records of the film company (either by hacking into their files or by good old-fashioned breaking and entering) they will learn that Parker provided the money (almost \$1 million). If the investigators check on Parker's financial dealings and gain access to the broker he did business with (it is listed in the movie company's files) they can learn that the money was from the sale of a great deal of gold. It is well known that Parker replaced John Stand (a fairly well known actor who left after being replaced) in the role of the main character. Some of the people at the site think Parker must have had something to do with the new money, but they don't know what. If asked, Parker will say that he doesn't know where the money came from, but he got the new role because of his talent.

AREA MAP

The area map shows the general details of the area around the rebuilt Green Grove.

Paved Road: This infrequently traveled road leads to town (north).

Dirt Road: This road was put in by the movie company.

Trail: A successful Track skill roll will reveal the presence of the tracks of some sort of creature, about the size of an adult male. However, the footprints are very odd and are clearly not human. This is the path that the Gaunt takes into Green Grove each night to meet Parker. A roll against one-quarter of an investigator's Tracking skill will reveal that a truck or jeep went up this way some time ago. This was Parker's jeep.

GREEN GROVE MAP

The original Green Grove was eventually worn down by the elements. The current Green Grove is a movie set. All of the buildings are plywood mockups of the buildings they are supposed to represent, with nothing inside (interior shots are actually done on a sound stage back in Hollywood). The stables, however, are real and hold the animals used for the filming (six horses).

Trailers: There are four trailers. Each houses two people (four actors, the director and Gardner) in relative comfort (shower, color TV, small kitchen, etc.).

Film Compound: The compound contains three buildings. One is a wooden barracks-style building with two

bathrooms, two sleeping rooms with bunk beds and lockers and a common area. The minor actors, camera crews, gophers and so forth sleep here. There are 20 men, 17 women and 12 children housed here. The second building is what amounts to a mess hall where food is prepared and served. The third building holds the equipment and props.

Power for the buildings and trailers is provided by three generators located adjacent to the equipment building.

MINE

The mine is a 30-foot shaft dug down into the earth that ends in a chamber. Parker knows about it, but no one else does. The mouth of the shaft is still clogged with hunks of stone and wooden timbers. There is a pile of rubble near the edge of the shaft, and the timbers and stones show recent marks from the cables Parker used to winch them out. Any people in the area will notice a hint of a vile odor, and a successful Idea roll will indicate that the investigator notices that no animals go near the shaft entrance and that the plants around it are unhealthy looking.

If the investigators examine the shaft, they will notice that the smell is stronger in it, and a successful Spot Hidden skill roll will reveal to the investigators that there are odd scratch marks on the timbers and stones in the shaft, as if something with claws had been climbing out of it. If the investigators decide to climb down into it, they must make their Climbing roll once every 15 feet. The old shorings are in poor shape, and there is a 20% chance that one will give way. Such an occurrence will require a Luck roll on the part of the investigator to avoid falling. Of course, if the investigators think to use ropes, the descent will be much easier.

Chamber: The walls and floor of the chamber are odd looking. They resemble some sort of solidified dark green resin material, and from the walls hang tattered strips of some sort of reddish material. The chamber stinks of death, and the floor is lined with human bones and is stained black from blood. During the day, the Gaunt resides in this chamber, and this is where it feeds.

ACTION

The Gaunt will leave its lair each night when it is fully dark. It then will lope to the saloon mockup and wait until Parker meets it there. The two will go to Parker's jeep, and Parker will drive it to the town, where the Gaunt will select its next meal. Parker will then drive the Gaunt back, and it will return to its lair to finish

its meal. Parker will then clean out his jeep, and wash off and hide the plastic under the seat. He will then go to sleep.

If the investigators are watching Parker and he is not aware that they are doing so, they will be able to see him meeting the creature and transporting it. If Parker notices that the investigators are watching him, he will pretend that he doesn't notice and lure them into a trap. If the investigators attack the Gaunt, Parker will aid it, but not at the risk of his own life. If the investigators decide to go into town and wait for Thin Jack, it is up to the keeper to determine what results their efforts yield.

It is important that an aura of horror and mystery be built up over the course of the adventure. To build horror, the keeper may find it useful to allow the investigators to catch a glimpse of the Gaunt (they might see it leaping from rooftop to rooftop, clutching its latest victim) and see some of its handiwork (it may tear someone apart for no reason). The exact nature of what is going on should not be revealed too quickly. The investigators should have to work for their clues and information and should have to think things through carefully before realizing what is actually going on. The keeper may also find it useful to introduce red herrings and sidetracks into the situation to keep the investigators guessing. For example, the keeper may wish to have a minor earthquake nearby which might lead the investigators to suspect Chthonian activity (especially if they have access to the "Book of the Underlands"), or the keeper may use a copy-cat psycho as a red herring.

RESOLUTION

The Gaunt is an extremely dangerous opponent, and it will be difficult for the investigators to defeat it. If they do succeed in imprisoning it, each investigator involved will receive 1D3 SAN as a reward. If the investigators actually destroy it, each involved investigator should receive 1D6 SAN as a reward. If the investigators defeat the Gaunt, they will earn the goodwill of the movie company as well as that of the people of the town. The movie company will offer the investigators roles in the film (which will turn out to be the year's surprise box office smash), and the townspeople will be willing to aid the investigators in the future. If the investigators flee without imprisoning or destroying the Gaunt, they will each lose 1D3 SAN. In such a situation, the Gaunt will continue to terrorize the town, and it will soon kill Parker and the entire film crew. Eventually, it will undergo its metamorphosis (it

is left up to the keeper as to how much power the Gaunt has consumed), and its reign of terror will end until its offspring start theirs.

WILLIAM GARDNER

Gardner is a famous horror writer who earned his fame with his novel, "Days of Hell," which became a successful movie. Like many horror writers, Gardner believes little about the supernatural or occult, and it will be difficult for him to accept the existence of a real supernatural horror. However, he cannot escape the facts of the situation. Gardner will aid the investigators to the best of his ability and will not shy from any tough situations.

STR 12, CON 14, SIZ 10, INT 14, POW 14, DEX 12, APP 11, EDU 15, SAN 64, HP 12.

Weapons: .22 long pistol 30% 1D6.

Skills: Computer Use 25%, Credit Rating 85%, Drive Auto 30%, Library Use 75%, Occult 75%, Handgun 30%.

BILL NEWSMITH

Newsmith is a wino. During the Korean War, he was shot down and captured. He later escaped, but never recovered from his mistreatment. Despite his run-down appearance, Newsmith is still in good shape and still remembers a lot of his training. If the investigators ask for his help, he will clean up, shave and ask for a gun. Newsmith saw the Gaunt take one of his buddies, and he is eager for revenge.

STR 13, CON 15, SIZ 13, INT 13, POW 15, DEX 14, APP 10, EDU 13, SAN 45, HP 14.

Weapons: .45 service automatic 60% 1D10+2, Knife 45% 1D6+1D4.

Skills: Climb 35%, Conceal 40%, First Aid 45%, Hide 55%, Listen 40%, Navigate 50%, Korean 15%, Pilot (Sabre jet fighter): 66%, Handgun 60%, Rifle 30%.

DAVID PARKER

Parker is a fairly talented actor, but he is obsessed with his own fame, which he sees as his ticket to immortality (his greatest fear is dying an unknown). When he found the gold, he used it to fund the movie on the condition that he be given the starring roll. When the Gaunt took him, he pleaded for his life, and the Gaunt recognized a person it could use. He will serve the Gaunt loyally as long as doing so serves his own end. Parker has six ounces of gold hidden in cutout books on his bookshelf in the trailer.

Skills: Acting 65%, Fast Talk 45%, Listen 40%, Persuade 45%. Ω

Tea and Biscuits

This scenario is intended for a single investigator. It can be used as an initial background for a young investigator and could be stated as being the motivation for the character to begin investigating the Mythos in the first place. Alternatively, the keeper can run this scenario as an episode from the investigator's past—perhaps one that he has chosen to divulge years later to compatriots for their consideration.

The investigator has taken up residence in a boarding house owned and operated by the MacGillivray family. The character could have been hired as a servant or else is simply a boarder, perhaps living there temporarily while working through university. Either way, the investigator should have considerable time to spend in the MacGillivray house.

The MacGillivrays

have a special

dinner planned.

But where

in the world is

Junior?

By Greg Unger

KEEPER'S INFORMATION

The MacGillivray family has gone insane. Roy Jr. (or just Junior), son of Roy and Millie MacGillivray, has been living as a ghoul beneath the Boston area for some time now and has decided to pay his old family a visit. Seeing as ghouls are, by our definition, insane anyway, Junior has decided to eat a civilized meal with his family. The human MacGillivrays are all afflicted with Panzaism and consequently act as if everything is perfectly normal. It is up to the investigator to notice that the family is acting rather peculiarly. It should be quite clear that since the MacGillivray family is providing the character's wages and/or keeping him as a boarder, the player character has no real business objecting to what the MacGillivrays say or do; he does so at the risk of being



dismissed or evicted.

If the investigator is a servant, he will be responsible for serving the family at meals, dusting, cleaning up, etc. The keeper should decide on additional duties for the character based on gender and the period. Servants eat in the kitchen.

If the character is a boarder, he will eat with the family and can, to a limited extent, participate in the family's conversations. The character has no say in the meal, and is limited to his bedroom, the veranda and the dining room.

BOARDING HOUSE

The MacGillivray boarding house is situated on Chapel Street in Boston, both facing and flanked by establishments of similar purpose. At the south-eastern end of Chapel Street lies the stone Grace Church. The house is constructed of crumbling reddish-brown brick and a brownish-black gambrel roof, offset by fresh green trim. Out front is a dun-colored veranda with thick wooden railing which overlooks a cobbled front walk and a roughly clipped yard. In the tiny back yard, amidst a tangle of dark and shriveled brown and green vines, is an ornate, lichen-encrusted fountain. The planked, wooden fences enclosing the back yard are rife with untended shrubbery, and a weathered tongue of stone pokes from one clump. An adequately maintained path of stone leads from the rear entrance of the house to the fountain, paralleled by a clothes line which has been secured to a spur of carved stone extended from the fountain's top.

Occupants: The master of the house is Roy Jonas MacGillivray, a 30-year veteran of the army. He is a large and boisterous man in his early fifties, with several commendations to his record. Roy is currently a warrant officer and works as a military engineer. He is planning to retire from the service in May and maybe begin sharpening his carpentry skills.

His wife, Millie, is the one who manages the boarders. The MacGillivrays are placing the petty money gained from their boarders toward Roy's retirement. Millie is not afraid to speak her mind. She is small, a busybody, and a bit stern and caring in a schoolmarmish sort of way.

Also living in the house are the MacGillivrays' daughter, Mabeline, and her fiancé, Dirk Brotworth. Mabeline is normally a very reserved girl, but is very talkative in the presence of her betrothed, almost condescending in her manner. Dirk is generally pleasant, but

a Psychology roll reveals that he is only putting on a facade of nicety for the MacGillivray seniors. He is rather well-to-do and somewhat arrogant, and often injects subtle sarcasms when conversing with those he dislikes.

Interior: The house's interior is done in polished hardwood. The living room, dining room and all bedrooms have been wallpapered, with mahogany trim. All the furniture in the house is very well-crafted. Both the foyer and the living room contain plush Oriental rugs. Convenient shelving is fitted in the corridors and the rooms, providing space for brass-framed photographs, ornate kerosene lamps, statuettes, sculptures and carvings, among other bric-a-brac.

The master bedroom is used by Roy and Millie. The other four rooms serve Mabel, Dirk and the investigator, with the last to be tenanted by Junior when he arrives.

The smallish library also doubles as a study and contains a number of old books. These include many family journals, histories, genealogies, military accounts and military fiction, carpentry and craft books, a 65-year-old medical text in Latin and many Christian religious books (Protestant-oriented), including a fat Lutheran Bible. The room contains an oaken desk and two bookcases, and several family photographs and war commendations hang on the walls. A small glass case rests on an ornate corner table, displaying a pair of war medals and a monocle.

Policy: Millie will tolerate no cussing, no alcohol and no night visitors. Smoking is allowed after dinner, but no one may begin smoking until Roy has lit his after-dinner cigar. Also, no one may read the newspaper, which is always folded neatly on the mail table, before Roy has. The family generally eats its meals at 6:30 a.m., noon (sans Roy on weekdays) and 7p.m. How serious missing a meal is depends on whether the investigator is a boarder (minor) or servant (major).

EVENTS

1: The scenario starts with the investigator overhearing a dinner conversation in which Millie mentions, "Brother should be arriving soon, tomorrow perhaps." If questioned, Millie will answer that the person mentioned is their son, Junior, who has been away for quite a while. If pressed as to the exact reason for Junior's absence, Roy responds, chuckling, "Oh, to get away from the nest a bit, I suppose, and try his hand at some things. Just like Mabel here will be doing soon." The MacGillivrays are

pleasant and discuss a few courteous inanities with their boarder.

2: Due to either an errand, work or studies, the investigator will not notice whether Junior has arrived or not. No new boots, coat or other outerwear are present in the main closet if the investigator is of the mind to look.

The keeper should secretly make a Spot Hidden roll for the investigator. If successful, the investigator notices considerable dirt smeared on the Oriental rug in the foyer. An Idea roll gives him the idea that someone has wiped his feet on the rather expensive hall rug. Some crumbles of dirt are also on the stairs.

By either curiosity, cleaning duties or chance, the investigator should notice a weak trail of damp soil that leads up to the only vacant guest bedroom. Knocking will elicit no answer, and a nosy investigator will find the door locked. If the investigator is uncouth enough to try to break down the door, the room is unoccupied.

3: Sometime the next day, a freshly pressed gray suit arrives. If the investigator is a servant, it is likely that he will be the one to pick up the suit from the tailor. Millie is rather busy, but if asked, she will say the suit is for Junior.

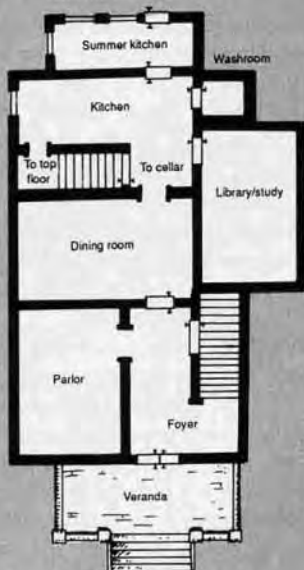
4: Later in the day, the investigator notices an unholy odor that seems to be permeating the halls of the house. The smell is faint, but rank and putrid, with a vague hint of sulfur mixed in. The rest of the family appears not to notice this smell at all, and everyone insists they smell nothing out of the ordinary if it is remarked upon by the investigator.

5: Another day passes, and the investigator has yet to see Junior, who is apparently not showing up for meals. Millie says that he has some business to attend to and that he will be having dinner with the family tonight at 7:30 sharp. If the investigator is a servant, Millie will announce that this is to be a special meal, so the good silverware and royal china are to be set out.

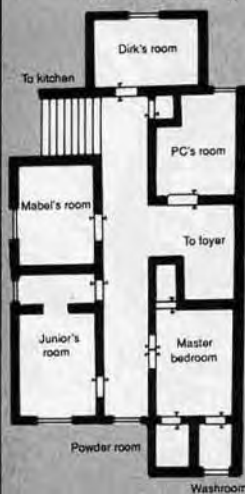
With the exception of the dining room and the kitchen, the investigator will notice that the house is getting a bit shabbier. The family members are not picking up after themselves, and dirt has been tracked throughout the house. Various ornaments are in disarray. A servant will notice when dusting that there are a few deep scratches on the mahogany mail table in the foyer. Some of the food in the icebox, including the milk, has gone rancid unexpectedly (Junior has been thirsty). The stench noticed earlier is more pronounced. There is a large, filthy stain on the Victorian sofa in the living room.

MacGillivray House

MAIN FLOOR



TOP FLOOR



CELLAR



6: When going up to his room, or when on cleaning duty, the investigator will overhear arguing in the spare room (Junior's room). The only voice discernible is that of Millie. A Listen roll, if the investigator chooses to try to eavesdrop, reveals that only Millie is speaking, apparently scolding someone in the room. "Look at this terrible mess," she says. "Now, I don't care how old you are, I expect you washed up for supper. Here, give me this. Can't you control yourself? And lying in it all night? Dear oh dear oh dear." If the investigator is a servant, add the following, "Now move. We can't expect poor (insert servant's name) to clean up this filthy mess, can we?"

Any knocking at the door or attempt to enter will result in an angry Millie ushering the investigator away, rather insulted that this person would intrude on what she calls "personal business."

CLUES

Some clues are only available at certain times, based on which events have occurred. Such clues will have a range listed after their title (e.g., "4-6") which indicates the first event and last event in which the clue is available.

Back Yard: The tongue of stone protruding from the shrubbery is in fact a tombstone, which the MacGillivrays say has been there since they moved in. The inscription has been removed.

Grace Church: Church records lists the tombstone of Roy MacGillivray Jr. to have been erected in the church cemetery in absentium. Anyone bothering to search the cemetery will find no such tombstone.

Public Records: Junior was listed as missing and presumed dead over five years ago. A tombstone was erected in Grace Church Cemetery.

Newspaper: Any research into the disappearance of Junior uncovers an article dated five and a half years earlier that details the search for the boy, who was 15 at the time, when he failed to come home from school. He was thought to have run away until several articles of his clothing were found near a drainage ditch. He was then presumed drowned, and a memorial service was held at Grace Church. Millie, who did not attend, was reported as being quietly adamant in her belief that Junior was still alive.

MacGillivray Library/Study (4-6): Anyone looking at the display case in the corner will notice that the monocle is gone. No one will admit to have taking it, though a Psychology roll reveals that the investigator is the one suspected.

A Library Use roll made in here, with the intent of researching the family or Junior, reveals that there have been several officially undocumented cases of insanity in the MacGillivray line, taking place in isolated incidents, with the exception of a single violent outburst involving the entire clan about 65 years ago.

A second Library Use roll uncovers a journal written by Junior's grandfather (now deceased), who began the compilation of family history. This journal states that both of the MacGillivray children (Mabel and Roy) had difficult births, and that Millie had four stillborn children prior to her two successful pregnancies.

Cellar (4-6): Should the investigator go into the cellar (to fetch some potatoes for the meal, for example), he will notice a depression in the floor. Examination reveals that someone was apparently digging here. A wooden bucket in a corner has some fresh soil clinging to the inside. The strange smell noticed earlier is stronger here, even mixed with the cellar's dank and earthy smell.

Junior's Room (5): A servant investigator will have a legitimate reason to enter this room, which will be unlocked and unoccupied. The room is rather shabby, and there is dirt tracked on the floor. The furniture is not quite in disarray, but far from neatly arranged. Underneath its covers, the bed is coated in damp soil, within which squirm a few small earthworms. It emanates a terrible smell. An Idea roll yields the realization that there is no luggage, no suitcase, no personal effects and no clothes in the room—except for the room's general disorder and filth, no one appears to be living here.

Guest Washroom (6): A look at this washroom reveals a tub with a ring of mud and filth. The sink and toilet have fared slightly better. One of the towels on the rack is black with dirt. A frayed toothbrush, sticky with baking soda and a yellowish slime, is stuck to the counter.

DINNER

Junior finally decides to sit down to a meal with his family. Regardless of whether the investigator is a boarder or servant, he will enter the dining room last, without seeing Roy until then. A boarder will be sitting down to have dinner, while a servant will enter only when after-dinner tea is called for. A servant eavesdropping on the dining room conversation will hear laughing, talking and, beneath this, a horrendous smacking, sucking and slurping, as if someone were eating grossly.

Within the well-furnished dining room,

the entire MacGillivray family is sitting down to dinner around the large hardwood table. Everyone is enjoying a splendid meal of roast duck garnished with rich gravy, spiced bread and creamy butter, all of it served in the family's best china. A freshly baked apricot pie and basket of sweet rolls and biscuits are waiting on a nearby serving table. Everyone seems to be thoroughly enjoying the meal, and the family is laughing, discussing things, reminiscing old times. Millie has put on a lovely pink silk dress and her good pearls for the evening, Roy is wearing his military uniform complete with medals, and everyone around the table is looking quite impeccable and in good humor. Evidently, a bottle of white wine has been opened for the occasion, probably with the slight disapproval of Millie, though she has a dainty wine glass in her hand.

This is not what makes your jaw drop in horror.

Perched awkwardly on one hard-backed ornate chair, sipping wine from a glass held with freshly manicured digits, and interacting normally with the rest of the family with a bubbling laugh and nods, is a well-dressed figure in a handsome gray suit, replete with flowered lapel, cufflinks and monocle. This warped parody of a man, which more resembles a scabrous canine with

hooked, crocodile teeth, freshly brushed, sets the engraved wine glass down, wipes its mouth with an embroidered cloth napkin grasped delicately in one crooked, leprous claw, and beckons for the potatoes.

Millie notices the PC standing in the doorway, and asks if he would like to join Junior and the rest of the family for tea.

RESOLUTION

Seeing Junior prompts a Sanity roll, with failure indicating that the investigator loses 1D6 SAN.

There are several possible outcomes to this adventure, probably including the investigator fainting, or running screaming from the MacGillivray house and off down the street.

The investigator may even decide, while in the clutches of madness, to sit down for some tea and biscuits with Junior and his family. Ω





THE BOOK THE BOOK

By Greg Unger

The moldering tomes of forbidden knowledge and sorcery found by investigators are without a doubt one of the greatest prizes to be had in Call of Cthulhu. Below is a scenario based on the discovery of The Revelations of Glauki. The keeper can substitute any other book title, if desired. This mystery works best if it is integrated with a campaign or a more fast-paced scenario; this gives the investigators an ongoing sub-mystery which may or may not prove relevant to their current investigations.

The investigators have discovered an unusual, brass-bound, ornate, locked book of unknown origin. The pages of the book are not visible, as the cover is completely enclosing. It is the

keeper's prerogative as to whether a title, English or otherwise, is inscribed on the book. A locksmith will determine the existence of tiny filaments woven through the tumblers, making the locksmith hesitate. A Biology roll on the part of the locksmith equates these to trigger-hairs such as those found on carnivorous plants like the Venus' flytrap. Biology is at one-half for anyone not making the Locksmith roll to reach the same conclusion. The locksmith may proceed to pick the lock at this point; no further rolls are called for. However, anyone present who makes an Idea roll will put forward the concept that the book is trapped in some way, to be triggered by anyone picking the lock.

There are few ways of examining the book in depth. Taking the book apart at the seams will probably set off the trap by default. X-ray machines are uncommon in the '20s, but a well-established doctor late in the decade might have access to one. The trigger-hairs will not show up on X-ray photographs, but several vials are seen to be embedded in the casing and binding. These might theoretically contain chemicals of some kind—perhaps explosives or acid, designed to destroy the book's contents or kill the opener. A Knowledge roll at x2 can make an analogy between this and certain obscure Oriental puzzle-boxes, which were designed to store both rare treasure and a grenade—which would explode were the correct technique not employed in opening the box.

Investigators with access to 1990s technology can determine that the vials contain conflagratory chemicals released by the reaction of trigger-hairs to, apparently, any opening of the book. There are even a multitude of these triggers embedded in the cover and binding itself; opening the book by brute force is no solution, either.

The book was written in the fifth century by Chinese scholars, who recorded what they learned of Glaaki and the Cthulhu Mythos from their journeys to Polynesia. The book experienced many change of hands (the actual journey can be pieced together by clues 5, 6, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12 and 14 below) before arriving in the hands of the investigators. It contains an ingenious (perhaps nonterran) pressure- and tamper-sen-

sitive mechanism which destroys the book's contents if the book is opened incorrectly. The key can be simulated by an expert locksmith. However, the book can still only be safely opened when in a low-pressure environment, equivalent to 18,000 feet above sea-level or higher (hence clues 16 through 18). This desensitizes the trigger-hairs, disconnecting the destruct mechanism. In the 1920s, no plane existed which could fly that high, but such heights had and could be climbed.

The book contains a sheaf of tightly packed, brittle parchments. These have been written on each side of each page. Fortunately, these parchments were penned for reading to an emperor, so they are not cryptic or as incomplete as one would suspect a 1500-year-old book to be.

ADDITIONS

The book is in excellent condition, and many museums and libraries would be very anxious to get ahold of it. The more professionals and institutes contacted by the investigators with regards to this book, the greater the chance that one or more such institutes or collectors will offer to purchase the book. Exorbitant amounts might eventually be quoted by eccentric dilettantes; failing this, some museums might even resort to criminal activities to acquire such a priceless treasure. The keeper can expand on this as desired, including curious black-market dealers, cat-burglars, and ruthless art and curio dealers.

Were the book's contents to reach a major institute of learning, the presumed knowledge of Polynesian and Indo-Chinese myths and culture would be seriously expanded; mankind would thus creep ever closer to the mind-shattering revelations of the Cthulhu and Glaaki myth-cycles.

CLUES

The PCs can attain the following clues throughout their investigation. The sources of each specific clue are detailed under the Acquiring Clues section, below.

1. The book is definitely Chinese in origin—bronze was used by Oriental cultures earlier than any Middle East or Western nation.

2. Such books were written between 450 and 515 AD.

3. There may be many such books, each with a different solution.

4. Reference to the "Gordian Knot" myth: Alexander came upon an intricately knotted rope in his conquest of the Middle East. It was presented to him

by a Chinese scholar and was fabled to unlock great secrets if opened. Alexander failed to solve the puzzle and cut the knot with his sword in fury. A possibly related article explains that Alexander of Macedon fell into a state of depression after failing his quest of knowledge—an ancient locked book bound in brass and foreign in origin was destroyed in its opening.

5. Each book needs a key to be opened.

6. Keys to temples and cases (and possibly books?) were kept around the neck of a high priest or monk in many Eastern religions. Taoist monks wore keys to their most sacred writings.

7. The books were prolific and were burned on the orders of Emperor Vang in A.D. 550. Scribes copied the manuscripts (a Library Use roll shows that the manuscripts were originally copied from stone tablets), then later locks were forged so only the emperor and the scribes could use them.

8. The books originally went to monastery vaults in distant Nepal after the fall of Emperor Vang.

9. The books were taken by the monks to escape persecution, and travelled to India, then to the Middle East (in a pilgrimage).

10. The Ottoman Empire swallowed up the Middle East in the 14th-15th centuries. Many books were destroyed or scattered with the disruption of monasteries. Moslems imported relics, and they adopted techniques of embalming, even to the extent of importing corpses.

11. Great disturbances involving foreign cults from the East (either India or the Afghan/Kazakh area). Many tombs were desecrated and looted in Turkey between 1810 and 1822.

12. Turkey previously possessed Greece, but Greece gained independence in 1833.

13. The books probably originate from China or the south Pacific. Chinese scribes ventured to Polynesia—which may explain many cults' origins from and references to that area.

14. The high priest of said cult was reputedly buried in eastern Turkey in the early 1800s in an old city-fort. The cults often holed up in such places.

15. "Such knots may only be safely opened at the full height of Mount Ximvane." An Idea roll translates "knots" into "books."

16. A translational quirk altered the proper pronunciation of "Dimvane" to "Ximvane." "Dimvane" translates to "Demavend."

17. Mount Demavend is located in central-east China, north of the Himalayas.

18. The old Athens Library burned down in A.D. 625.

19. The new Athens Library was built on the ruins of the old.

20. Some cults hid out in old, abandoned city-forts. A History roll yields these facts: Such forts were built in early Greek history. These forts ruled over neighboring mud-hut villages. Many forts were built on islands, while others were built near the Pindus Mountains.

ACQUIRING CLUES

What follows are the various sources from which the PCs can attain the specific clues listed above. The clues attainable (with the right questioning, obviously) are listed as numbers beside each heading. The keeper is encouraged to add more clues and clue locations, as consistent with the setting or campaign storyline.

College Professor (1, 5, 13, and maybe 11 and 20): This professor can be an acquaintance of the investigators or may be recommended by library authorities as an expert in archaeology and anthropology. He can be convinced to examine the book as a favor by good roleplaying or Persuade rolls. If bribed, he will certainly examine the book, but will become suspicious and may later discuss his findings with an institute he is associated with, perhaps giving rise to the events described in Additions to this Scenario, above.

If cults are mentioned, add 11 and 20 to the attainable clues.

(Professor's College) Library (1, 2, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 12, 16, 17, 18): This can either be the library associated with the college professor, above, or else any major American or British library.

British/American Museums (1, 5, 11)

Athenian Scribes (1, 11, and maybe 20): These are assumed to be working in the Athens Library. They might be contacted independently or recommended by an acquaintance familiar with Greece. They speak no English. A successful Persuade roll yields clue 20.

Athens Library (3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 12, 17, 18): This is the largest such institute in the city and is the focus for the nation's scholars.

Athens College Library (4, 10, 11): This is the center of learning for the nation.

Athenian Authorities (12, 19): These include public record archives and government offices. Making use of these all require Greek rolls.

Local History (Athens) (12, 14, 18, 19): These clues can be acquired by virtue of History rolls.

Scroll/Other Papers (13, 15): These

can be found in the ruins of the old Athens Library. The clues require Greek rolls to be read. If only one Greek roll is made, clue 15 should be the one that is understood.

BENEATH ATHENS LIBRARY

The dark cellars beneath the library are accessible by way of the old, grumpy librarian (this requires a Fast Talk or Persuade in Greek); through the college professor speaking on the investigators' behalf; or, failing those, by breaking and entering. The door to the cellar is large and is kept padlocked at all times.

The cellar is a chilly, unlit, disused jumble of hewn stone halls, crumbling rooms and cracked flagstones. Spot Hidden rolls in various rooms will turn up nothing but animal bones and shattered glass. In a room at the end of the hall, where the floor has not yet cracked, a Listen roll reveals a continuous drip-drip coming from the corner. Investigation reveals the cause as a cracked pipe in the ceiling. Since the smooth floor is not cracked, why doesn't the water fill the room to some degree? Sure enough, the water is actually leaking into space below the cellar: namely, the old Athens Library. A look around the room reveals that the stones in one section of the walls are loose and crumbling inward. A few good kicks can send most of the rubble tumbling down a rocky incline beyond the wall.

This is actually an ancient marble stairway, which can be followed down into the crushed and claustrophobic ruins of the old library—a thick stone tangle of fractured pillars and collapsing archways crouching over stained and buckling marble, with sprinkled remains of sculptures and books disintegrating in the dusty puddles. A search of the accessible sections will turn up several withered parchments unreached by water, including a fat scroll partially pinned by a SIZ 45 pillar. Keepers should play up the realization that nobody has been down here for over 1000 years; at any moment, the entire mass, settling slowly for centuries, could be unbalanced by this intrusion and lurch down onto the intruders, crushing or pinning them.

Investigators may notice a skeleton pinned from the waist up under several tons of rock. This corpse was actually that of an assassinated scholar who had planned to burn the manuscripts relating to the book.

CITY-FORT

The old city-forts in the Pindus Moun-

tains in Greece have been around for as long as anyone can remember. A few venerable old Greek men living in the villages outlying Athens still remember stories of dark sects and their unholy rites, of secret pilgrimages of the dead, and the strange, alien peoples from the Far East and India, who brought with them the bound corpses of their priests and hid them in the decrepit forts. Showing these men the book brings a collective gasp of horror, and they speak in hushed tones that there are reasons—which they will not discuss—why such books were given such locks.

Any competent guide scoffs at such superstition and can quickly locate the city-forts closest to Athens for paying customers. Walking there will take a full day, but transport by horseback or truck can be purchased, cutting the travel time to two or four hours, respectively. The Pindus Mountains are covered with scrub and provide challenging and twisting trails (hence the advantage of horses).

One of the forts—a decaying, moss-covered stone affair overgrown with tough scrub, built on the side of a mountain—sports an archway fronting a passage that has been chopped out of the mountain. Considerable brickwork near and around the arch have been laid to rubble by the knotted shrub that has diligently worked its roots through the fort's wall over the decades. An Idea roll spawns the thought that this entrance was formerly bricked up.

CRYPT

Beyond the archway, the short tunnel angles awkwardly into a ragged, very crude stairway. This unexpectedly ends at a large, black, iron-banded door filling the entire passage. The door is STR 18[?] to be opened. Unwitting investigators who push the door wider than needed to get through will realize, belatedly, that it had been supporting part of the decaying ceiling, at the cost of 2D6 HP; those making a Luck roll think to look up in time enough to move mostly out of the way, losing only 1D3 HP.

Beyond the door is what looks like a low-ceilinged natural cavern partitioned by mud-bricked walls. The layout is rather simple, if chaotic, so that a person making his way forward comes out into a large open area containing another arch. Anyone wandering around, however, finds the brickwork to be a veritable maze, which periodically fuses with natural channels and caves in the rocks which lead further into the mountain. If a few moronic investigators stalk off into this maze, allow them each a

Track roll to return once they quit exploring. Failure means they are hopelessly lost in the natural cave system and will wander into a large natural cavern in 1D4+1 days. This cavern contains a 15-foot, rectangular, black, stone arch set in one wall. Geology rolls confirm the stone as basalt. Archaeology rolls indicate the architecture to be unlike anything known. Astronomy rolls recognize what appear to be faint carvings on the arch to be star charts. A light breeze goes inward through the arch. Twenty yards in is a large impression like a one-toed print. Zoology rolls prove this to be of no known creature. Cthulhu Mythos rolls convince the hapless investigators to turn tail and run before they get 100 yards in.

Anyone *not* getting lost (i.e., they go forward, as above) will be able to continue through the low cavern and into a naturally narrow and vaulting chamber within which are two large stone sarcophagi. The first is empty, but the second contains a mummified "corpse." This is in fact a hibernating Servant of Glaaki, but it is much too far away from Polynesia and much too rotted to move anymore. If its flesh is exposed to sunlight, the Green Rot will run rampant through it, destroying it hideously within hours. However, if it is ever taken 2000 yards or more above sea level, it will make contact with Glaaki and rise to kill

again. (Keepers should have some fun if the thing is airlifted back to the U.S.)

On the far side of the chamber, a dangerously steep and cramped, but short, passage winds into a third chamber, which is apparently a deserted shrine of some sort, replete with crumbling candles, torch holders, and what appears to be the body of a shrouded warrior monk desiccating away on a low stone table. There is a strong, strange smell here. (A Knowledge roll identifies this as embalming fluids.) The corpse is clutching a carved wooden scepter. Anyone examining the scepter notices that one end is pointed and deeply stained. One guesses as to with what. Anyone daring to look under the shroud will see that the corpse wears a tiny key around its neck. The chain is fairly strong, is not long enough to pull over the corpse's head and has rusted shut. To free the key, the investigators must either rip this STR 9 chain or else pull it off through the corpse's head (0/1 SAN loss).

SCEPTER

This length of teakwood has been carved, and a smooth piece of obsidian is inset at one end, while the other end has been sharpened to a blood-stained point.

The scepter is in fact enchanted; anyone with at least 1% Cthulhu Mythos

is allowed to attempt to roll his POW or less on 1D100 to realize this. The staff currently has 6 Magic Points stored in it, and these are involuntarily expended when spellcasting, before its wielder's MP's are drained. If the scepter is used to kill someone or something by stabbing it through the head or throat with the pointed end, all Magic Points possessed by the victim are absorbed into the scepter. If the scepter is broken, or the obsidian tampered with, the scepter becomes permanently inactive. Ω

WHEN THE VIRUS INFECTS
HOUSEHOLD APPLIANCES...



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Call of Cthulhu

DANCE of DEATH

A Call of Cthulhu
adventure by J.B. Hill

Investigators who believe they face a vampire expect a mature gent in a black cloak, and usually arm themselves with wooden stakes and garlic. Unfortunately for them, this is not one of those stories.

A friend has disappeared. In this scenario, she is a journalist by the name of June Kelly, but the keeper may substitute any NPC known to the investigators. The adventure can be set in either the 1920s or modern day and in any location, although a city with a large Italian or Irish immigrant population is preferable.

Kelly is the type of journalist who specializes in unusual stories of the supernatural or the occult, travelling great distances to look into reports of ghosts, hauntings and any other strange happenings. She has not been seen or heard from for over a week now. If the investigators enter her flat, either legally or illegally, they will find a list of events she considered worthy of investigation. Each will have a newspaper clipping, letter or other notes attached. The keeper may invent any red herrings he wishes to the list for the investigators to research:

1. Car driver forced off road by ghost car. Phantom saloon causes accident. (This is really a drunk driver who cannot think of any better story to explain why he crashed.)

2. Devil's footsteps cross garden. Hoof marks in flower bed. (This is really a practical joke played by students.)

3. Suicide woman's ghost returns home. Devil woman seen in house. (This story is genuine. It occurs four days before the vampire story, below. The additional notes state that Mary Wilson saw her neighbor, Pat Bibby, return to her house the night after her funeral. She had hanged herself. On a pad by Kelly's telephone is the number of the nearby Falcon Hotel.)

4. Devil dog attacks child. Boy bitten by black dog with glowing eyes. (This is really a frightened child attacked by a Rottweiler.)

5. Vampire attacks pet animals. (This story is genuine. It occurs four days after the ghost story above and in the



same city, only half a mile from the ghost story location. The notes state that several residents in that area have had pet dogs and cats attacked and had blood sucked from them.)

FALCON HOTEL

A visit or call to the Falcon Hotel confirms that Kelly did register at the hotel, but after two days, she failed to return, leaving all her clothes, books, notes and possessions in the room. They have now been moved to a storage room. If the outstanding room rent is paid, the books and notes will be handed over. The books include a dictionary, a book on classical mythology and one on traditional mythology. Each has a paper slip in it. There are also further notes:

"Saw M. Wilson—seems genuine. Entered Bibby house—hanged—dancing. This may be more serious than first thought—must see priest." Wilson's address is also here.

MARY WILSON

Mary Wilson is an honest-looking woman in her sixties. She can give the following information:

Bibby was a typist, poor but honest. She had been married to an Italian sailor, but he deserted her. He was really a bad man. Bibby was a Catholic. On the day of her death—a Saturday—Wilson saw Bibby when a parcel was delivered to her. Later, she had seemed very happy. Wilson had seen her dancing in her house—it was a strange sort of jig—all jerky movements. On Monday morning, the police came around and found that she had hanged herself on Saturday night. The funeral was on Thursday at Our Lady of Grace—Father O'Brian held it. Wilson doesn't know where the burial was, but as a suicide, it would not be on sacred land. That night, she saw Bibby walk up to the house and enter it: As large as life, the dead woman went back to the house. Wilson is positive it was her. Twenty minutes later, the ghost left the house again. Wilson also remembers Kelly asking about it all. Kelly was interested in the dancing and the church.

BIBBY HOUSE

Bibby's house is easily entered via the back door. Kelly removed the boarding put up after the police broke in here. The contents are poor but clean. In the lounge is a picture of the Virgin Mary, and over the bed hangs a crucifix. In the hall hangs a rope from the ceiling, with a chair on its side beneath. In the lounge, a Spot Hidden roll reveals a wooden

box approximately 15 cm square with brown wrappings. These have Bibby's address, Italian stamps and a postage stamp from Taranto, Italy. The box has air holes drilled in it and is lined with silky gossamer material with a central spherical depression as if something fragile had been contained. Close examination also reveals some very small crystals. Analysis shows them to be crystals of uric acid (they are excreted by spiders).

FATHER PATRICK O'BRIAN

Bibby was poor but honest, a member of his church. She was 48 years old, and Bibby was her maiden name. She knew suicide was a mortal sin. Her office called the police when she failed to show up at work on the Monday morning after her death. She had been deserted by her husband, an evil and ungodly man. He had come from Southern Italy but was no longer Catholic. Her death was a great shock and had no apparent reason. O'Brian conducted the funeral. As a suicide, Bibby could not be buried in sanctified land. Her grave is in the grounds of the house of the Sisters of Mercy, who made all the necessary arrangements. O'Brian has not visited the Sisters since, but is due to make a routine call tomorrow. If asked about other injuries, he will remember that Bibby had a puncture wound on her right wrist. If asked about vampires, he knows that three foolish parishioners claim that their pets (two cats and a dog) have had blood sucked from them. This is in the area immediately around the house of the Sisters of Mercy. O'Brian has bigger problems to worry about. The O'Connors' toddler—a child of three years—went missing last night.

SISTERS OF MERCY

This is not a religious order but a charitable organization devoted to aiding the sick and relieving the poor and destitute. They are referred to as "sisters," but the head of each house is a matron, not a Mother Superior. The sisters are usually young Irish Catholic girls who wish to help the needy and train to become nurses without becoming nuns. They have houses in many large cities.

If the investigators visit the Sisters' house before or with Father O'Brian, he will be killed during his visit. If they delay for more than two days, they will see a newspaper headline: "Priest Missing."

RESEARCH MATERIAL Dictionary

Provide the investigators with a real dictionary.

Tarantella,-elle (n). Rapid whirling Italian dance once held to be cure for tarantism.

Tarantism (n). Dancing mania, especially that originating in Southern Italy among those who believe they had been bitten by the tarantula.

Tarantula (n). Large spider of Southern Europe whose bite was formerly held to cause tarantism; other kinds of large spider especially found near Taranto in Italy, where it abounds.

Books on Natural History

Tarantula, or tarentula. A family of large, hairy Arachnids of the suborder Orthognatha (Mygalomorpha). An extremely ancient suborder who mainly construct subterranean burrows. While the males only survive one year, the females often live upward of 20 years. They appear to be highly intelligent and are often kept as pets—the red-kneed tarantula being especially popular. Other species are very venomous, producing a strong neurotoxin which causes severe pain and muscle cramps which can lead to either paralysis or to hypertension and a twitching or "dancing" motion. Fatalities are recorded among children, although most victims can recover within a few weeks without permanent injury. The spider is carnivorous or haemovorous, sucking blood and body fluids from its victim.

Any Book on Classical Mythology

Arachne. A Lydian maiden, daughter of Idmon, a famous dyer in purple. She excelled in the art of weaving and challenged Athena to compete with her. The goddess tore her cloth after finding no fault in it, and Arachne killed herself. Athena made her immortal, but changed the rope into a cobweb and Arachne into a spider.

Any Book on Traditional Mythology

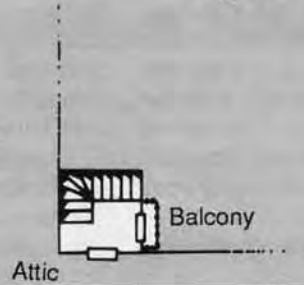
Vampires. Traditional blood-sucking corpses of the dead. It is often believed that only suicides can become vampires. The stake through the heart beloved of films and Gothic novels will not destroy a vampire. By tradition, the head must be removed and destroyed. Some traditions also advise that when dealing with the undead, the mouth should be sown up with thread.

Very Rare Mythos Books (especially the Book of Elbon)

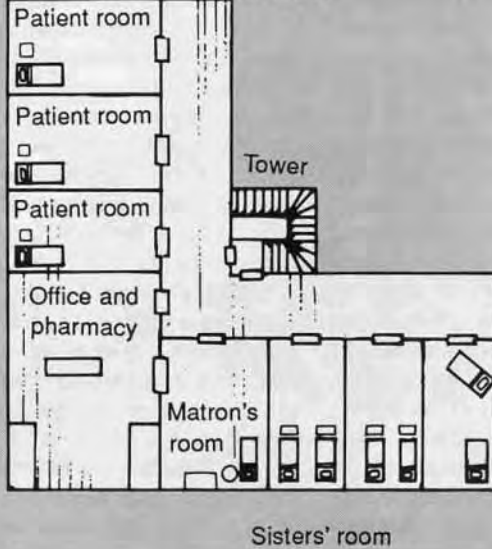
Attach-Nacha. An ancient god resembling a huge spider. It lives underground and is eternally spinning a huge

House of the Sisters of Mercy

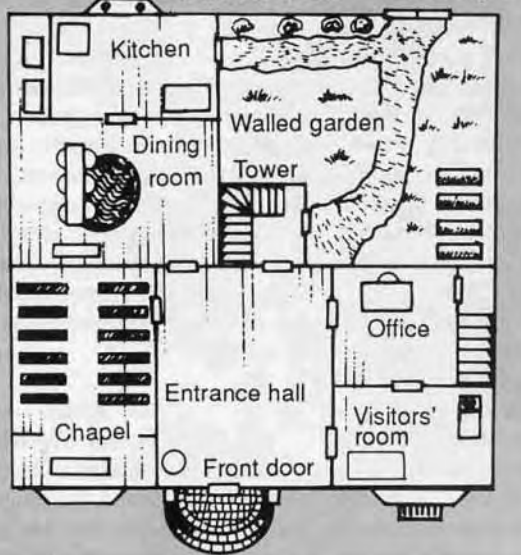
Top of Tower



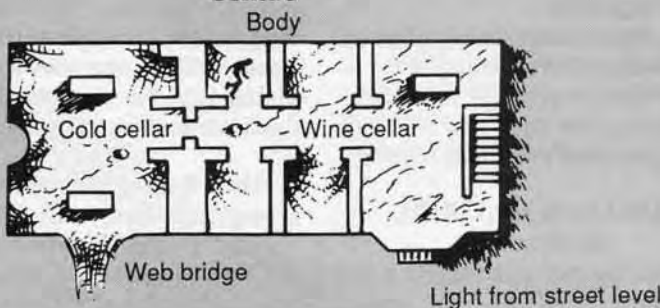
Second floor



Ground floor



Cellars



bridge. It is worshiped by earth spiders, and there have been limited human cults in Turkey, Southern Italy, and Rumania. (Dance appears to have some significance in the worship.) Its worship is extremely ancient, and some believe it is the same spider god known as Zath and worshiped in the city of Yesud in Zamora in the Hyborian Age, an area which roughly equals the modern Carpathian mountains of Transylvania. The worship of Zath involves many dancing maidens.

THE HOUSE OF THE SISTERS OF MERCY

In the enclosed rear garden are four graves. These are quite old. The most recent has been dug up. There is fresh soil and two spades nearby. The cheap coffin is empty. The headstone reads "Patricia Ann Bibby RIP 1944-1992" (amend the date for a 1920s scenario).

All the rooms in the house are clean and neat, except for the abnormal quantity of cobwebs, which seem to cover the whole house.

Entrance Hall: A sister hangs by her neck from a rope from the ceiling. A tarantula hides nearby. If Father O'Brian visited before the investigators, his body lies on the floor. There are fingerprints deep in his throat, and a puncture wound in his throat and a puncture wound in his neck. He died of a heart attack.

Visitors' Room: The body of a three-year-old child lies here. It is drained of blood, with several puncture wounds.

Offices: A Spot roll or a specifically declared look reveals a rope tied to a ceiling beam. It has been cut through a few inches down. The door to the cellar is in here.

Kitchen: Two more sisters hang by the neck from ropes. Two tarantulas hide nearby.

Chapel: On the altar lies a body. It is tied to the altar by a web of fine silk threads. It has numerous puncture wounds over the neck and shoulders, and has been sucked dry over a number of days. Investigators recognize the body as Kelly (San 1 on 1D6). Ten tarantulas hide in here.

Dining Room: A dead cat in here has been drained of blood.

Second Floor Office and Pharmacy: Empty except for first aid equipment.

Patient Rooms: Each bedroom contains a bed with one elderly patient the sisters were nursing. All are dead with puncture wounds in their necks.

Matron's Room: Like each sister's room, it has a bed, locker, dressing table, personal effects and a Bible.

Sisters' Rooms: There are two single beds in each room. In the center room is a dead sister drained of blood and covered in cobwebs. One tarantula hides in here.

In the last room hides surviving Sister Mary Ruth. She has barricaded the door with her bed and locker. Mary Ruth is weak from hunger and almost insane through fear (SAN 2). Successful Oratory and Psychology rolls will reveal her story (Fast Talk or Debate will lead to automatic failure).

She will tell of Bibby's funeral, then of one of the sisters seeing her ghost re-enter the garden through the rear gate and enter the house. Matron ordered the grave dug up. The coffin was empty. Matron went down into the cellars, and when she came back up, she was ill—doing a strange dance. Matron then hanged herself in her office. The sisters cut her down, but then Matron came back from the dead.

Then Mary Ruth fled to her room, barricading herself in. Since then, she has heard intermittent screams from various parts of the house and clawing at her door. With much care and psychoanalysis, Sister Ruth will eventually make a complete recovery and become a nun.

Attic: This is used for storage. It is dusty, but nothing of importance is in here.

Cellars: The cellars are very dark and musty-smelling. There are considerably more cobwebs here.

Above the cellar steps, five tarantulas hide to drop on intruders.

Down here are the bodies of Pat Bibby and Matron. Both are undead servants of Atlach-Nacha. Bibby is slender and dressed in a shroud. Cobwebs cover her hair and body. Her eyes bulge, and her mouth hangs open. A trickle of fresh blood can be seen on her chin. Matron is dressed in her uniform. Around her neck, she still wears the noose she hanged herself with. She also has bulging eyes and an open mouth. The Sanity cost of seeing each of these undead is 1D4/1D8. Also in the cellar is the body of the last sister. She is so covered in cobwebs as to be almost cocooned. She has been dangerously drained of blood and, although still alive, is beyond saving. She is also insane by now.

At one point is a complicated web over the wall. It is possible to pass into the web. This costs 6 Magic points. On the far side, investigators find themselves standing on a web bridge-like construction which spans an area of interdimensional hyperspace. (SAN

loss 1D6/1D12). If the player characters stay there, Atlach-Nacha approaches them after 1D20 rounds. The bridge is far incomplete, and the spider god will not pass through the web gate until his bridge is finished.

It drains another 6 Magic points to pass back through the gate. The web gate is very easy to destroy from the cellar side—the investigators need merely tear the web up. But they must destroy Bibby and Matron first.

TARANTULA (MYGALOMORPHA)

(LESSER INDEPENDENT RACE)

STR 1

CON 3

SIZ 1

POW 12

DEX 8

HP 2

INT 12+1D6

Movement: Climb (any surface) 3, jump 4, scuttle (1 move only) 6.

Spells: Create Servant of Atlach-Nacha.

Skills: Hide 90%, Detect Movement via Webs 10%.

Fangs: 60%, venom (see special rules), suck 1 HP blood a round.

Venom: The spider can at will use its venom either to paralyze or to create a servant of Atlach-Nacha. Its strength is 12 plus a factor dictated by the location of the "bite" (actually, spiders do not bite): leg=12+2=14; lower body or arms=12+4=16; head, neck, upper body=12+6=18.

However, extreme physical activity on the part of the victim, such as performing a whirling dance (the tarantella), will disrupt the venom and halve its strength.

SERVANT OF ATLACH-NACHA

This monster consists of two parts: a large tarantula spider and an undead zombie-like host. In its normal condition, the spider inhabits the host's mouth, controlling all its body movements. First, the tarantula "bites" the victim, but the venom attacks only the arachnoid membrane—a cobweb-like structure which covers the brain, spinal cord and back of the eye. As the venom infiltrates the membrane, the victim is subject to uncontrollable twitching and jerking spasms which resemble a strange dance. This "dance of death" lasts as many rounds as the victim has CON points. When the membrane is fully penetrated, the spider has limited control—it now forces the victims to kill themselves. This must be a suicide by

hanging. The victim then becomes an undead zombie. The spider crawls into the victim's mouth and gains full control over its host via the envenomed membrane, which it connects to its own silk. The spider controls all the body's movements, including the ability to see through the zombie's eyes. If the spider leaves the victim's mouth, it has only limited control, but can summon the zombie to come to it. The zombie host is extremely strong and resistant to damage—all gun shots do minimal damage.

They have two special forms of attack:

- The zombie can open its mouth and the spider leap on a victim. The zombie remains stationary until re-entered. This attack always commands a first initiative and is at 60%.

- The zombie can grip the victim by the throat with its hands on a successful grapple. The hands and the arms are then locked, and the spider can crawl out of the mouth, down the arms, and bite the victim's throat. This takes one round and is successful unless the spider is successfully engaged in that one round. The attack also causes a 1D6 SAN loss.

PAT BIBBY UNDEAD SERVANT OF ATLACH-NACHA

STR 20

CON 12

SIZ 5

HP 18

INT 17 (spider)

Move 5

Grapple 40%

MATRON UNDEAD SERVANT OF ATLACH-NACHA

STR 24

CON 16

SIZ 11

HP 20

INT 8 (spider)

Move 4

Grapple 30%

REWARDS


1D8 for destroying each servant.

1D6 for rescuing Sister Mary Ruth.

1D20 for destroying the web gate.

Anyone suffering insanity will subsequently suffer from arachnophobia—a fear of spiders—and possibly sciophobia—a fear of shadows. Ω

For further adventure, don't miss "Momento Mori" by J.B. Hill in Challenge 74.



When you think
the battle's over,
the fight has
just begun.

Memento Mori

A Call of Cthulhu adventure
by J.B. Hill

The haunting of houses can often be explained by mundane circumstances—airlocks in the water pipes, the wind blowing from an unusual direction, or movement due to settling caused by mining subsidence or subterranean clay beds drying out. It is very rare that the house is actually possessed by a hideous evil entity. The house in this scenario, however, falls within the latter category.

This adventure is designed to follow on from the previous Call of Cthulhu scenario, "Dance of Death" in Challenge 73, but this is not essential. It can be set in any country in any age.

The investigators are approached by a representative of the Sisters of Mercy. The Sisters are a charitable organization, not a religious order. They help the poor and run a series of hospitals to care for the elderly. The nuns are called "sisters," but the head of each hospice is referred to as Matron, not Mother Superior. If the adventurers were involved in "Dance of Death," they are approached by Father O'Brian and Sister Mary-Ruth (assuming they survived that scenario). If not, the PCs are approached by Dr. Eastman, who is the local regional director of the Sisters of Mercy. In any event, a meeting with Eastman will be arranged, and he will describe the situation to the PCs:

I hope you can help solve an extremely serious mystery. It involves a house the organization has inherited. The original owner was Mrs. Bibby, or rather her husband. He was an Italian seaman called George Gino Granelli. He lived there alone at first, then took Pat Bibby as his wife to live with him. After many unhappy years, he eventually deserted her—probably returning to Italy. She remained in the house and reverted to her maiden name. She continued to live there alone for 10 more years, until recently, when she committed suicide by hanging herself.

She was buried in land attached to the Sisters of Mercy—leaving the house to us.

The house remained empty for several months. Then, a local poor family, the Conrads, lost their home and asked the Sisters for help. The empty house seemed the obvious solution, and the family moved into the house as a temporary measure. The next morning, they were all dead.

The father, Herman, was laying on the floor, with the mother, Sophia, crouched in the corner of the bedroom, and their young child dead as well. All three apparently died of heart attacks, but with expressions of utter horror on their faces. And all had been bitten—a small animal bite on their throats.

We hired a private investigator to check out the house—Simon Batesby. He spent the night there, too, armed with a .38 revolver. The next morning, he, too, was dead. He died of a heart attack like the Conrad family—with the same look of horror, the same strange bite in the throat. He was found sitting in the chair of the parlor.

All told, we have been responsible

for the deaths of four innocent people, including a young child. Please help us.

Eastman will answer any questions put to him. The following topics may be covered:

George Gino Granelli: A sailor and adventurer. A evil man who was widely travelled, as he had visited America, Britain, Turkey, South America and the South Seas.

Pat Bibby: No one ever understood why this good Catholic woman married the likes of Granelli. According to reports, she apparently hanged herself after receiving a letter from Italy which upset her. She was buried in a private garden. Alas, tragedy followed, and all the sisters in the house died later of extreme food poisoning. This is the official story. If pressed for the real story, Eastman will give a second version: Bibby was sent a live spider from Italy which bit her. After her burial, she returned as a vampire, destroying all the Sisters (except Sister Mary-Ruth). Now all the vampires have been destroyed. Unless the PCs actually took part in that adventure, Eastman will not admit that Bibby was not a true vampire but a host to a Cthulhu Mythos parasite.

Conrad Family: The Sisters provided clothes and supplies to this poor but honest family, and gave several second-hand dolls to the five year old, Beth. No one can now trace where the dolls came from. Eastman attended all three autopsies. They definitely all had heart attacks.

Simon Batesby: A lone private detective hired to stop local "vampire" and "ghost" stories. Immediately before his death, he fired his gun four times—all the bullets were found in the wall facing him.

Strange Bites: All four who died had nonfatal bites on the throat. The bite radius was just less than one inch. They were definitely not spider bites, not traditional twin vampire punctures, and not rodent bites. They looked like very sharp, small monkey bites. None of the bodies had suffered any unusual blood loss.

BIBBY HOUSE

The investigators may search the house by day but eventually will have to spend the night there. Each room is furnished with poor but clean furniture. There is rather too much furniture, so there are many shadowy areas for something evil to hide in.

Parlor: The window has heavy, folded drapes. By the fire is a bucket with wooden logs in it. The wiring in here is defective, causing the lights to flicker.

Kitchen: Shelves contain pots, pans, mugs and cups. A basket still holds fruit—most now turning brown. A cheap mirror has aging defective silvering on the back, causing a roughly human-shaped shadow to appear in the mirror.

Hall and Stairs: A hole in one raising tread is large enough for a rat to pass through.

Main Bedroom: One cupboard door refuses to stay closed. Inside are a number of toys, including a teddy bear, a stuffed toy monkey with its head missing and a clown doll. On the floor stands a mechanical doll. (In an 1880s or 1920 setting, this is a Swiss clockwork doll. In *Cthulhu Now*, it is a plastic battery "Good Pal" doll [remember Chucky?!]) It has a defective on-off switch, and as the investigators look around the room, it will suddenly activate, walking jerkily across the floor, opening and shutting its little mouth. (SAN loss O/IDA). A Mechanical Repair roll shows the fault is quite ordinary and not supernatural.

Cellar: The cellar is in two halves. One side is not as deep as the other, and the far wall is obviously of much newer brick with amateur mortaring. It should be clear to any investigator that something is walled up in the space behind. An hour's work with a pick or heavy hammer reveals the headless body of a man. It is mummified in the warm still air, and its head has been removed cleanly with a sharp blade. There is no sign of the head, and its hands are normal.

Attic: This is an overcrowded storage area full of boxes and cases. Two dead rats are to be found here—both with bites on their necks.

A Spot Hidden roll reveals at the back of the area an old sea chest with the initials GGG (or could it say 666?) on it. It is padlocked—STR=12. Inside are sailors' clothes and a strange mixture of other items—a bundle of pornographic pictures, a small green statue of a hideous creature with a squid-like head and wings (SAN loss of 1D4), a photograph of a sailor with a repulsive half-fish mutant girl, a photograph of the same sailor in which his hands have a web of skin joining his fingers together. Both photographs have notes on the back indicating that they are of George Granelli. Also in the chest is some tree bark wrapped in cloth, a glass jar with brown paste, a black obsidian stone knife and a metal rasp file. An oilskin wallet contains notes written in Italian of Granelli's travels in the South Seas and explorations in South America. It tells of his time with the Jivaro Indians and describes several spells he learned.



GRANELLI'S NOTES

Granelli's notes in Italian and Jivaro multiplied by 2 Mythos 2%. Spells are: **Call Choc-Tula.**

Create Were Jaguar.

Create Tsanta: The notes do not give a clue as to what a tsanta is except that a human head is an essential ingredient.

Summon/Bind Vampire Bat: This does not affect vampires in bat form.

Summon/Bind Amazonian Tree Frog.

The notes also detail how to create two poisons—curare from tree bark and arrowhead poison from the tree frog.

OTHER VISITORS

The investigators are not alone in having an interest in what is happening in the house. A pack of 12 black rats have already discovered the answer. Having already lost two of their kin, the remaining 10 are seeking a way to turn the secret to their own advantage. They are living in the attic—black rats prefer to climb rather than burrow. They are extremely intelligent and will try to prevent the investigators from entering either the attic or the cellar, even by sacrificing the lives of more members of the pack.

Black Rat (*Rattus rattus*): Lesser independent race. Also known as the Old English, Ship or Plague Rat. They worship Y'Golnac. The body is about seven inches long, and the naked, scaled tail is another eight. The nose is more pointed than on the Brown Rat, and the fur is blue-black with gray or silver tips.

Statistics: STR=2, CON=4, INT=15, DEX=18, Move=14, HP=3.

Climb=85%, Jump=70%, Locate Food=99.5%.

Attacks: Bite 60%, 1 HP of damage but will try to attack the eyes to blind the victim.

Special Attack: Victorian writers observed a special attack. If the victim opens his mouth to scream or shout, a rat will dive into the mouth and wedge itself in the throat, leaving only its hind legs and tail visible—the victim dies of shock and suffocation. The attack is at 40%, and the drowning rules apply after the first round, with an added SAN loss of 104/1D6.

RESOLUTION

An acephalous body behind a brick wall in a cellar apparently protected by rats may make players think of Y'Golnac. They will be wrong.

Granelli's ancestors were sailors. One was the only non-Innsmouth man to sail with Captain Obed Marsh to the Panope Islands in the South Seas. The family now worships Cthulhu. George Granelli sailed to the Pacific to revisit Panope,

taking his small statue of Cthulhu with him. He found that the tribe members had all been killed by the neighboring islanders. On his return, he jumped ship in Ecuador and travelled inland, where he was captured by Jivaro Indians. They were just about to kill him when they discovered the statue of Cthulhu and immediately recognized it as their own god whom they knew as Choc-Tula. Following his release, he stayed with them for a year and a half learning their language, customs and much of their magic, including the ability to create the famous Jivaro shrunken head—the tsantsa.

Eventually, he settled down and married, but remained an evil man, often sneaking away at night. Without his wife's knowledge, Granelli kidnapped a stranger and took his head, walling the remaining body up in the cellar. When he eventually completed the tsantsa, he was ordered to kill anyone, except himself and his wife, who stayed in the house overnight. Eventually, his night-time adventures led him into conflict with a stronger sorcerer and forced him to flee suddenly for his life.

TSANTSAS

The traditional Jivaro shrunken head is about the size of a grapefruit. It is very repulsive to see. The face still retains human features but is very wrinkled. The lips are drawn back, revealing the gums and pointed teeth, sharpened by being filed to razor edges and tipped with the curare poison. Its eyes are black and bulging, giving it the look of a dead monkey. It is capable of movement. Its jaw muscles are extremely strong, and by snapping its jaw, it can spring up to five feet. It is also an intelligent being, able to hide, for example, in curtain folds or on the shoulders of the toy stuffed monkey. Although it will spring for the throat, it normally will haunt from behind. Its victims will hear a sound from behind, or catch a glimpse of movement, but when they turn to look, they will spot nothing there. It is very difficult to destroy. Bladed weapons do no damage, blunt weapons only one-quarter; pistols and rifles do full damage but only hit on one-quarter of ability.

Statistics: STR=6, CON=20, INT=5, POW=20 DEX=4.

Move=Spring 5 feet. HP: 13. Hide=90%.

Attack: Bite 60% fatal. The bite contains curare poison and will kill within three rounds. The victim will appear to have suffered a natural heart attack. Curare poison will only be discovered at an autopsy if it is being specifically sought after. Sanity loss is 1D4/1D6. Ω



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Horror of the Centuries

A Call of Cthulhu adventure by J.B. Hill Art by Mark Ryberg

The adventurers recently investigated the mysterious death of Professor Leslie-Smith, an eminent Egyptologist who committed suicide by slashing his wrists while examining the mummy of a servant of Nephra-Ka, an evil ancient Egyptian priest. In Lesley-Smith's book, *Khefu the Black Pharaoh*, the PCs read of the power struggle between the evil pharaoh Khefu and his daughter-wife Nitocris and the high priest Nephra-Ka. Khefu and Nitocris overthrew Nephra-Ka and killed him. But before they could destroy his body, it was stolen and hidden deep in the western deserts by the priest's followers. In revenge, Nitocris hunted down these followers of Nephra-Ka and subjected each of them to the ultimate horror of living mummification. They were each exposed, via an enchanted bronze mirror, to the image of the ancient god Ghatamothoa, which resulted in their still-living brain becoming encased in a petrified body. It was the body of one such mummified servant that Leslie-Smith discovered and was examining at the time of his tragic death. For more details of his fate, refer to "Curse of the Centuries" in *Challenge* 65.

The investigators are approached by museum authorities concerning the notes of the late Professor Leslie-Smith. Three museum professors sit facing the investigators. Behind stands a man introduced as a representative of the government. He does not speak, and neither does he smile. One of the professors speaks:

"Gentlemen (and ladies). You were of great assistance to the museum at the time of our friend Lesley-Smith's tragic, er, death. As you know, many of his papers, diaries and notes were in his own personal shorthand. We have now



translated these and made an amazing discovery. The good professor had for many years sought the resting place of the priest Nephra-Ka. It is reputed that when his body was taken to the desert by his servants, they took many of his possessions—gold and precious gems—now worth a king's ransom. Also left were papyrus scrolls with ancient knowledge dating back to legendary Mu. Oh, and one other item—the secret of eternal life.

"Lesley-Smith discovered a map and certain other objects and clues, which we believe reveal the tomb of Nephra-Ka. Because the tomb lies not in Egypt but to the west of Libya, the recovery of the secrets of the tomb must be undertaken with as little publicity as possible. We would like you to enter the desert, locate the tomb and recover its secrets, bringing them back to us. We will arrange an escort for part of the way, and they will protect your return. We are assured that the whole expedition will be perfectly safe, and, of course, you will be provided with the best equipment available at our expense.

"You may secure one half of the value of any gold and other treasure recovered. The scrolls will be deposited in the

museum. As far as the secret of eternal life—well, it is of course pure fantasy, hardly worth speaking of. But if it should have some, er, beneficial effects in prolonging life, you would share these secrets with us three here and well, let us just say, a certain influential person in the government."

The investigators are then shown a map. From Wadi et Sheikh, they are to proceed west to the Bahamya Oasis, then further to the south of the Qattaru Depression to Sitra and Bahrain to the Siwa Oasis. Here they will leave their escort and travel west into Libya, south of Jaghbut to a location marked on the map as the Lost Oasis of Phorcydes.

"One other matter," the professor adds. "The professor mentions a key of life. This object was found within the servant's body which Leslie-Smith was examining, and it fits the description of the key of life. It seems that this must be carried to the tomb by one of you. Regrettably, we know not why, nor what it opens, but its relevance is obviously of foremost importance."

The investigators are handed a quartz ankh with an udjat-eye engraved in the top. An INT roll will indicate that both are symbols of life.

The referee should note which character carries the key of life.

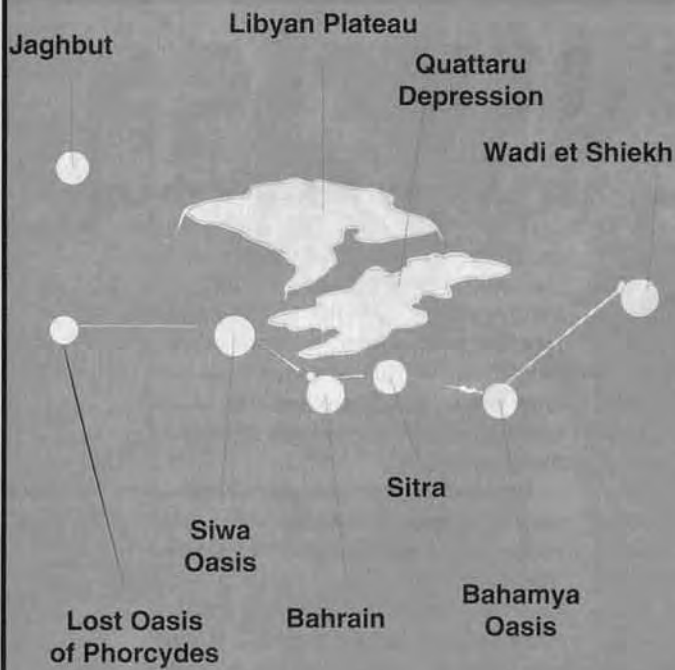
KEEPER'S BACKGROUND

The scenario can be set in the 1880s, 1920s or present times. In each case, a trip into Libya is a dangerous operation, as the investigators will realize.

1880s: The desert is the domain of the Bedouin Arabs, who will protect their home from infidels. Any outsider captured by the Bedouins will be tortured to death in a hideous manner.

1920s: Libya is an Italian colony. In 1922, Mussolini's Fascists came to power. They are now exploring the Libyan desert, seeking the lost city of the Gorgons. If they capture the inves-

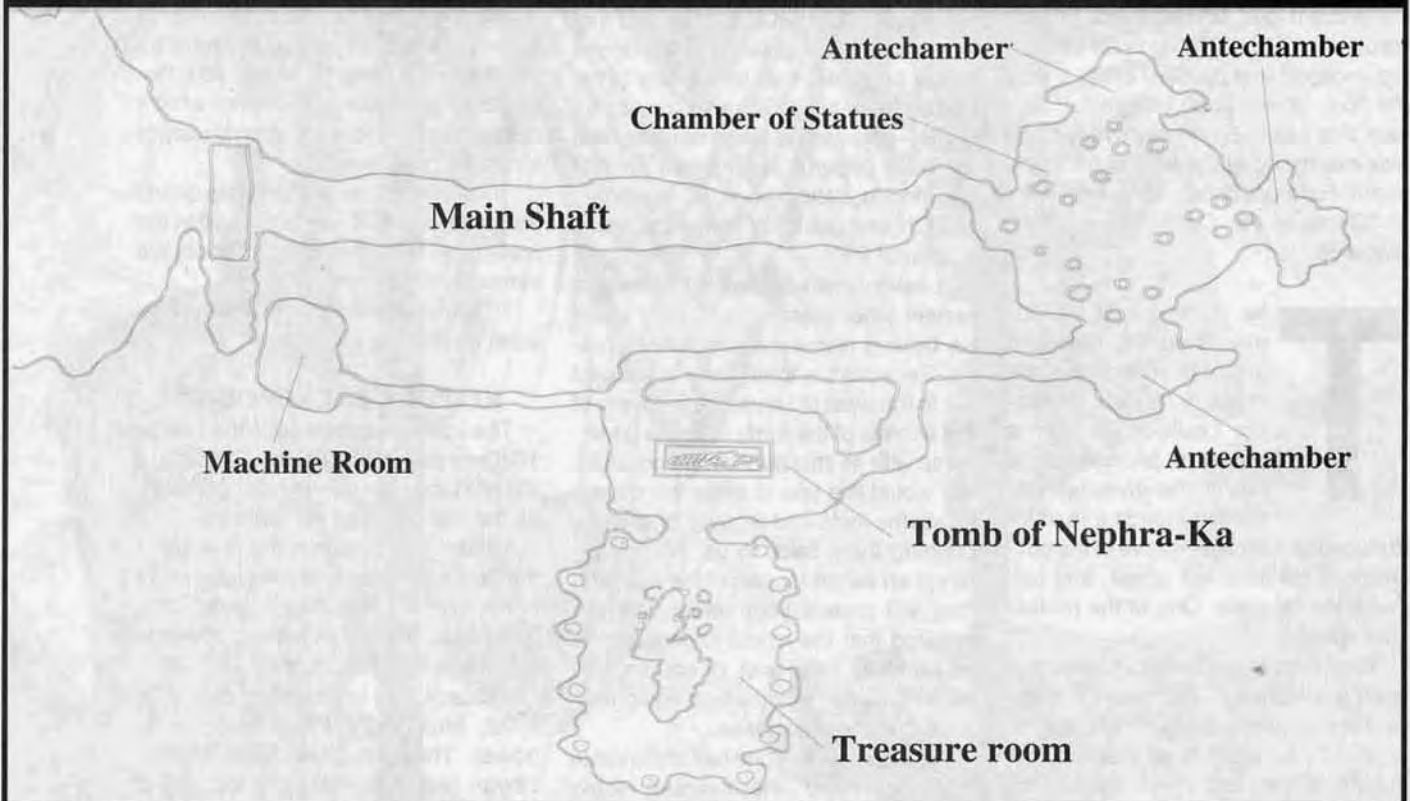
JOURNEY



Lost Oasis of Phorcydes



The Tomb of Nephra-Ka



tigators, they will certainly shoot them or worse. (This adventure can be influenced by the *Indiana Jones* films.)

Present Day: Libya is under the control of the mad ruler Gaddafi. It is used as a training ground for such terrorist groups as the PLO and the IRA. If the investigators are captured by these groups, they will be shot if they are lucky.

JOURNEY

If the investigators research the name "Phoracydes," upon a successful library roll, they will find that it is a name associated with the mythical Gorgons who by legend derived from Libya.

Sitra: The passage through Egyptian territory goes without serious incident. While at Sitra, one investigator, the one in possession of the key of life, will be quietly visited in the night by a tall black man. He will speak perfect English and be expensively dressed, wearing dark glasses even though it is nighttime.

"My friend," he will say, "there are many mysteries in the desert. Rely on the hand of the desert for help, and he will send the Children of Thoth to protect you. Remember, the eye will protect you from evils you can see."

The mysterious stranger will then leave. No trace of him is ever seen by the party.

Siwa: A Siwa, the adventurers meet a drunken Irishman living with the Arabs. He will welcome any visitors, except British, which he hates. In any event, he will mumble about mysterious activity in the desert before becoming unconscious. In the morning he is dead—his throat is cut—and the Arabs are preparing to move on.

LOST OASIS OF PHORCYDES

Eventually, the party will enter Libya and locate the oasis. It is set within a rocky valley and seems very peaceful—there is cool fresh water, shade and swaying palm trees. It is an ideal place to camp.

It will not take the investigators long to locate the tomb entrance, which, according to the map, is at the north end of the oasis.

Suddenly, the camp is attacked and surrounded as follows:

1880s: By Bedouin tradesman each armed with a sword and a rifle.

1920s: By fascists armed with machineguns.

Present Day: By terrorist guerrillas armed with AK-47s.

In any case, the PC group is completely surrounded. The leader approaches the group and is obviously hostile. The adventurers should suspect that they have only minutes left to live.

Sacred Baboon of Thoth or Hamadryus Baboon (Cynocephalus hanadryus) (Lesser Independent Race)

An average troop will number over 200 individuals. The males are silver and the females more brown. Although worshiped in Egypt, the Sacred Baboon himself worships the moon.
STR 4D6, CON 3D6, SIZ 2D6 + 3, POW 3D6, DEX 2D6 + 12, INT 2D6.
Move 18, HP 20.
Armor—point of fur.
Claw 60%, 1D6 + 1D6, a baboon has one bite and two claws.
Bite 40%, 1D8 + 1D6, attacks each round.
Climb 80%, Jump 50%, Sneak 80%, Track 40%, Operate Machinery 10%.

Egyptian Cobra-Naja or Asp (Naja Haje)

STR 2, CON 6, SIZE 2, POW 3, DEX 14.
HP, Move 4 (3 swimming).
Hide 80%, Track 60%, Climb Tree 30%.
Bite 40%—damage, extremely poisonous, neurotoxic.
Venom strength 12—death occurs in minutes.
+Save against CON or suffer 1D4, local tissue destruction.
Save against CON again or gangrene sets in.

Mummified Sand Dweller

DEX 10, Amor 6, Hit point 20, Attack—claw 25%, 1D6 + 1D6.

Then, just as suddenly, the enemies are attacked by baboons. These are fearsome creatures of high intelligence, with great manual dexterity. Although many baboons are killed in the battle, the baboon band savages every enemy, tearing out throats, ripping off heads and creating carnage. Some of the enemies attack the investigators, but the baboons fight to save any party member in danger, especially the person carrying the key of life.

After the savage fight is over, the baboons will depart back into the desert. The investigators should have several injuries to treat before they can enter the tomb.

TOMB OF NEPHRA-KA

The tomb may now be entered. The stone door rolls aside easily.

Main Shaft: This leads steeply down into the rock. It is cool down here. The tunnel is partially blocked by a wall. Engraved upon the wall is a figure of an Egyptian goddess with a snake's head. She appears to be staring at the investigators. A successful Egyptology roll reminds the investigators that the figure is of the Goddess Buto, protector of sacred places. Like most snakes, she had the power to petrify victims with her stare. The Egyptian cobra was sacred to her, and this serpent was also used as a guardian. The figure has one hand raised, as if warning trespassers to proceed no further. The keeper may wish to have an Egyptian cobra at this location. It is pale brown on top, with a yellow belly and the famous hood. It was often used to guard tombs.

Chamber of Statues: Limestone statues are randomly distributed around this room. All are most lifelike and appear to be warriors from various ages. Some are Greek, some Roman and some Arab, but all have expressions of grave horror on their faces. All are definitely post-Egyptian. If the investigators try to leave after entering this room, the baboons will return and prevent their retreat. The baboons will not hurt the one carrying the key of life, but will activate a mechanism on the outside, closing the store door. It cannot be opened from the inside.

Antechambers: There are three bronze mirrors, one in each room. As the investigators enter, the mirrors shimmer, and an image appears. A priestess of ancient Mu materializes—each mirror is a gateway. The priestesses are extremely beautiful, with exquisite faces and figures. Not even the hissing snakes in the place of hair spoil the beauty of these women. Anyone who see a priestess (except the holder of the key of life) must save against CON. If they fail, then in one round, their joints start to stiffen with what appears to be arthritis, and they lose half of their DEX. If they fail a second roll the next round, then muscles start to calcify and ossify, their skin becomes dry and chalky, and they lose another half of their new lower DEX. If they fail a third roll on the third round, they turn to a chalky limestone-like statue. The holder of the key of life suffer the ill-effects, but if he holds the key up and orders the priestesses to depart, they will obey his command. So beautiful are the priestesses that they charm any human, male or female. A successful POW roll must be made to look

away and a DEX roll each round thereafter to prevent an accidental looking at the priestesses. The priestesses cannot be attacked—they only appear in image in the mirrors. There is no SAN loss to see them, but there is a SAN loss of 1D6-1D20 to witness the petrification of a friend.

Treasure Room: This is everything the investigators hoped for—full of gold, diamonds, emeralds and pearls. Unfortunately, it is guarded by mummified sand dwellers. If anyone attempts to move any treasure, a sand dweller mummy activates and prevents the removal. Sand dwellers are even more hideous than human mummies, similar to wooden statues with hard black claws. Seeing one still has a SAN loss of 0/1D6. To see one activated has a SAN loss of 1D4-1D10. They will not attack the person with the key of life.

Machine Room: A lever opens the stone door if it is closed.

Tomb of Nephra-Ka: The tomb is plain stone with a stone sarcophagus in the center. The wooden lid is in perfect condition and is easily removed. Nephra-Ka is a typical human mummy—swathed in bandages. He holds in his hands a scroll parchment. If anyone removes and examines the parchment, the viewer will have to save against POW or be paralyzed as many rounds as he has magic points. He loses 1 magic pound a round until all are gone, and he then falls to the ground

unconscious. The spell is a visual pattern. It needs to be viewed, not read.

Nephra-Ka was not killed by Khefu (as Khefu realized, hence the search to destroy the body). The priest was mummified alive, voluntarily viewing his god Ghatanothoa. His brain is still alive and functioning. He is as sane as he ever was—that is, he is mad, but not totally insane. He has one remaining spell, a mind transfer, which he can cast on the person carrying the key of life. It is the key to Nephra-Ka's life. He also has an unnaturally high POW. The person carrying the key will apparently suffer a seizure. The PCs have as many rounds as the victim has magic points to solve the problem, or Nephra-Ka will transfer to the victim's body. After a successful transfer, Nephra-Ka (with the keeper now running that character) will claim to have lost his memory. He will agree to return to civilized society, but will try to kill each of the other investigators in turn. The victim of the spell will indeed have discovered the secret of eternal life—he is now trapped within the living brain of the ancient mummy forever.

RETURN

Upon their return, the PCs will be interviewed by the representative of the government, who will cross-examine them in detail—especially about the desert activities of other governments

or organizations. He will advise them in the strongest way not to discuss what they have seen with anyone.

Afterwards, characters will realize that they are being followed, that their mail is being opened and that their telephone is tapped. If they act foolishly, a large black saloon will sideswipe their car off a remote road. If they continue to act foolishly, another large black saloon will overtake them and open fire with at least three submachine guns of government-issue caliber.

UNREWARDS

If the mind transfer is completed, the victim becomes an NPC with a great knowledge of the fourth dynasty of ancient Egypt, but has a complete lack of understanding for anything modern. His fellows lose 106 SAN for the loss of their friend.

If they realize what has happened, they lose 1D10 to realize that Nephra-Ka inhabits his body and 1D12 if they kill their friend's body.

If they realize that their friend's mind is trapped in the mummy, they lose 1D20 whether they destroy the mummy or let their friend continue to suffer. Ω

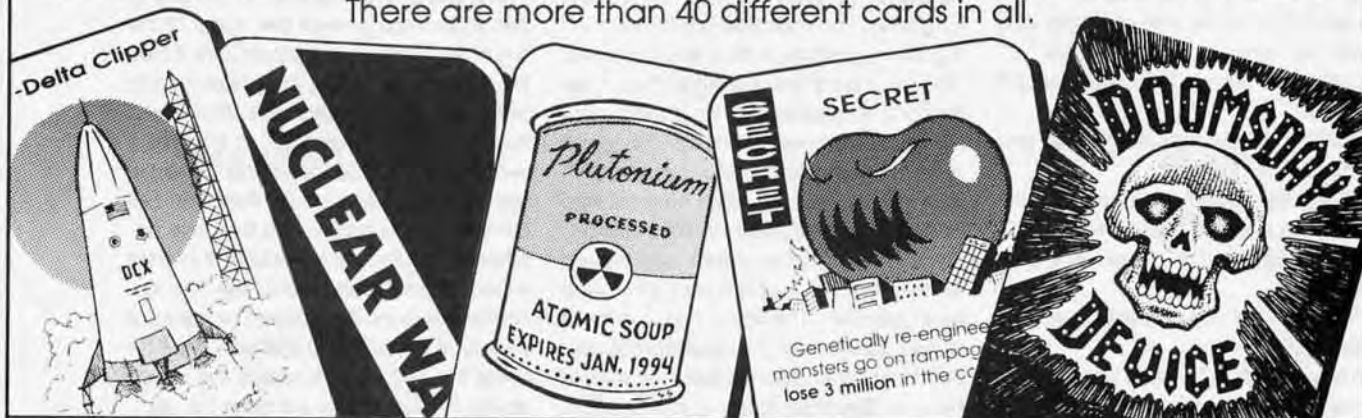
This scenario follows from "Curse of the Centuries," which was published in Challenge 65. And don't miss "Evil of the Centuries," also by J. B. Hill, in Challenge 76.

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Evil of the Centuries

A Call of Cthulhu adventure by J.B. Hill

In a scenario involving a mummy, players generally assume they are to be chased by a bandage-swathed monster. If only life—and death—were that simple.

This adventure follows "Horror of the Centuries" (**Challenge 76**) and "Curse of the Centuries" (**Challenge 65**), both by J.B. Hill. The adventure may be set in any period.

The PCs (or another group) have recently returned from Libya, where they found the lost tomb of Nephra-Ka, an evil priest from the chaotic fourth dynasty of Egypt. While in the tomb, one of the explorers fell into a deep coma and later suffered from total amnesia, remaining knowledgeable about ancient Egyptian history but totally unable to relate to modern life. Whether the victim of the strange affliction came back to this city and if the mummy of Nephra-Ka were brought back to the museum are both irrelevant.

Art by James Mravec

The PCs are involved with a museum which specializes in Egyptology. The museum must contain a large collection of Egyptian relics and mummies. It may be either Cairo museum—an ugly square brick building, or a London museum—the British museum on Great Russell Street, Westminster would be ideal. The museum should be large and dark, and have corridors, back rooms, storage areas, cellars and dark threatening places in large number. It should also have a large library for research.

The original victim of the mind transfer remains in a deep coma. He is an empty body with no mind and has no prospect of recovery.

THE STORY

Rumors have started to spread—especially among the night security staff, that one of the mummies has come to life and is searching the museum at night looking for something. No one has of course seen it but strange footsteps have been heard. The museum now has a cold threatening feeling, and strange musky smells of death have been noted. The museum authorities have laughed at these ridiculous stories—they are the product of over-imaginative guards with too much time on their hands. (In the 1920s and 1930s, they suggest the guards should stop reading trashy pulp magazines with stupid stories by that man Lovecraft and others. They are obviously putting foolish ideas in the men' minds.)

It is a pity that the young secretary Susan White did not pay more attention to the stories when she stayed late to finish cataloguing the Nephra-Ka exhibits. She was found dead later that night by the security guards Arthur and Bob. They had been alerted by "strange demonic laughter" and her screams when they found her in a corridor. Both feet had been severed above the ankle. She obviously dragged herself some distance down the corridor until she died of shock and loss of blood—SAN loss 1D4 if the investigators find her. Both guards were arrested and kept in custody but both denied the killing—they only described the horrible laughter. Her feet were never found.

The following night the other two guards, Charles and David, were obviously very nervous, and both kept loaded firearms with them. Alas, it did not help. When the police arrived the next morning, Charlie was shivering with fear behind a glass case in the

Egypt room. David was also found—or at least quite a lot of him was. His limbs had been severed with what appeared to be single bites of extreme strength. Most of his body was eaten. It looked like a shark attack on dry land—in the locked museum. SAN loss 1D6 if investigators find him. The guards had fired many bullets between them to no apparent effect. At least Arthur and Bob were released from custody. Charlie is now in the asylum. Now no one will enter the museum at night.

MUSEUM STAFF

The guards have all been loyal employees for many years. The strange disturbances have only started since the Nephra-Ka expedition returned from Libya. The footsteps, dark feeling, smell, attacks and inhuman laughter all appear to be separate, individual and distinct manifestations. The glass case Charlie was crouched behind contains various Egyptian objects. These include a set of ceremonial daggers used in a strange ritual called "the real death." No mummies were stored in this immediate area. The mummies here had all been examined, and none have bullet holes in them.

MEDICAL EXAMINATION

Both bodies exhibit severe injuries. The girl's amputations could be single bites from a large animal. The injuries to the dead guard certainly were. None of the severed flesh has been recovered, but examination of the torso shows the teeth configuration to have been:

Incisors	3-3
	3-3
Canines	1-1
	1-1
Premolars	4-4
	4-4
Molars	1-1
	1-1
	=34 teeth

The human bones were severed cleanly with immense strength. On the guard, all the limbs were torn from the torso and the long bones snapped, the marrow sucked from them.

CHARLIE'S STORY

"It was horrible—horrible. Me and Dave, we was brewing up a cup of tea, and Dave—he says he heard a sound outside. He draws his gun and goes to the door. Suddenly, it goes

very dark, and there's this smell like an old graveyard opened up. Dave, he goes out. I hear him fire—bang, bang, bang, bang. Then he screams horrible. In the door appears the devil itself. With a dog's head, but stood upright at first like a man with a dog's head. He comes in. Then he goes down on all fours and he's changing into a dog. A huge misshapen dog—all up at the shoulders and down at the back. A hunchback dog with black and gray stripes. It comes at me, and I run and run, and it comes after laughing—laughing like a devil—all inhuman. I'm in a room, there's no other doors—I know I'm gonna die. I crouch behind this glass case thing. Then suddenly it goes away—vanishes. But it'll come back for me. Laughing. Laughing. Help me, please help me." At this point, nurses have to subdue the man, who has sunk back into insanity.

NATURAL HISTORY RESEARCH

The tooth pattern appears to be that of the striped hyena (*hyena striata*) which is found all over Northern Africa, Asia, India and Persia. It is considered by the Arabs to be an unclean and cowardly animal. It is particularly found around graveyards and ancient burial grounds, where it exhibits ghoulish practices. Its teeth and jaws are extremely strong, being able to sever the leg of a cow with ease. It has been known to torture its victims—biting off their feet to prevent escape and then watching as they die. Its laughing sound is famous, but extremely eerie and frightening when first heard. It is also attributed with a high, albeit evil and cowardly, intelligence.

STRIPED HYENA

LESSER INDEPENDENT RACE

STR 16, CON 15, SIZ 12, INT 8, POW 10, DEX 8, HP 15, MOVE 10.

Bite 30%, Damage 1D10 + 1D4, can crash through heavy bone armor.

1 point for Track by smell 50%, Locate grave 80%.

SAN loss caused by laugh O/1D4.

EGYPTIAN SPIRITUAL BELIEFS

In the West, some believe in several different types of spirits or ghosts. But the ancient Egyptians believed each person had several distinct spiritual aspects, and upon death, they separated and could have distinct individual existences. These are as follows:

1. Khat, the physical body, which is

mummified.

2. Ba, the mind or intelligence.
3. Ka, the soul or emotional aspect.
4. Sekhem, the store of magical power.
5. Sah, an astral body or doppleganger.
6. Khaubit, the shadow or aura.
7. The Ren, a true name which gives power over the others.

After death, it is believed that each of these—especially the Ba and Ka—have separate existences while still remaining one persona.

In a ritual called “the true death,” several enchanted daggers are used to destroy each spiritual aspect. A silver dagger with a jackal head destroys the Ka; a bronze dagger with an ibis head destroys the Ba; a copper dagger with scarab beetle destroys the Khaubit; an iron dagger with ram’s horns destroys the Sah; a gold dagger with a hawk’s head destroys a Sekhem. Each can be destroyed separately after the death of the Khat.

From more obscure occult times on Egyptian beliefs including the “Necronomicon” and “Cults des Ghouls”:

1. By ceremony known as “The Curse of the Centuries,” the Ba could be imprisoned in a mummified body. Often it was a punishment, but sometimes powerful priests would undergo the ceremony willingly.

2. By using a mild transfer spell, the Ba can be transferred into the body of another person, or into another “empty” mummy.

3. The Ka often hides in and travels with the Khaubit after death to materialize as it wishes.

4. The Ka often takes on an animal appearance according to the nature of the individual—this is also known in Chinese, Indian and American Indian beliefs. In ancient Egypt, this could often be a hyena if the person was sufficiently evil.

5. If the Khaubit is destroyed while the Ka is separate in a materialization form, the Ka must remain a physical and material entity and can be destroyed. The Arabic (and Cthulhu) ghouls with its dog’s head is a half transformation. The ghouls are trapped in this hyena form in a material physical body—hence ghouls come upon the Earth. A powerful wizard can complete the transformation of his Ka into a full material hyena. In Arabic countries, hyenas are known to be semi-spiritual ghouls creatures—unclean and cursed.

6. Lycanthropy is a physical manifestation of the Ka.

KEEPER’S INFORMATION

The players must obviously track down the various and separated aspects of Nephra-Ka’s spirit. It is very dangerous. Modern weapons have no effect at all—guns are useless. Ancient-style weapons, like knives and spears, do half damage but do not destroy—at nil hit points the spirit dissolves away if it has a physical manifestation, only to reappear at full strength after 20 hours. Each spirit must be destroyed with the correct dagger. Fortunately, the museum has a set.

The Ka is the most dangerous. The Ba can move from mummy to mummy at will, but a stab with the correct dagger through the head will destroy it in combat.

The Ba needs to be at rest and meditate for one full round to transfer to another mummy. To transfer to a living human, it must overcome his POW for as many rounds as he has magic points (i.e., it must drain his Sekham). The Ka can become material or dissolve into a nonmaterial state at will, but if the Khaubit is destroyed before it becomes physical, or while it is physical, it is trapped in the physical state. This often happens accidentally upon death, thus creating many ghouls. The aura fades after death unless it is kept alive by a powerful magician.

THE SPIRITS OF NEPHRA-KA

Ba: Nephra-Ka’s mind can transfer from mummy to mummy at will provided he is at rest and not attempting to undertake any other action. He has decided against occupying a living person again for the time being but is still capable of doing so. At night he seeks his true name written on a roll of papyrus amongst the exhibits. It will take him 1D20 nights to find it. He also seeks the mummy of his handmaiden. Alas, he never will as long as it lies in a strongroom behind the bridge of the SS *Titanic* at the bottom of the Atlantic. His Ba has no hit point of its own but assumes those of the mummy or person presently occupied. The mummies fight as ordinary mummies under the rules. It is his Ba which is capable of casting spells. He may know whatever spell the keeper wishes.

Ka: Nephra-Ka’s Ka can take not only the material form of a ghouls—really a semiwere-hyena—but can

then transform into a full hyena. It must go through the change in this order. It cannot materialize as a hyena although it can dematerialize from one. It will normally dwell within the “aura,” but this is not essential. However, if the aura is destroyed prior to or while materialized, it will be trapped in material form. It will still be capable of transforming from ghouls to hyena and back.

It will fight and has the normal hit points for a ghouls or hyena.

Sekhem: This has no separate form. Nephra-Ka has a POW of 38 and 24 magic points comprising his Sekhem.

Sah: It is assumed in this adventure that Nephra-Ka’s normal “ghost”—his astral body or doppleganger—was destroyed in magical battle with the Black Pharaoh Khefu several centuries ago. However, if the keeper wishes, his normal ghost may also appear—use the normal ghost rules. After death, the Egyptians believed the Ba occupied the Sah.

Khaubit: His aura appears as a large black shadow accompanied by an evil smell and a distinct sense of coldness and blackness. It has 20 hit points as a shadow but is only destroyed by being stabbed with the correct dagger. It moves at a rate of 40. A successful roll against a half Spot Hidden is required to see it at night. SAN loss is O/1D4.

Ren: His true name is hidden on a papyrus scroll. Since the investigators can have no idea what it looks like, they have no chance of finding it before the Ba does.

If the Ba can find the Ren, Nephra-Ka can become virtually immortal, bringing all his spiritual parts together and taking over another human body, transforming it both visually and totally into a new self. Only being stabbed with all the daggers within one move will destroy him then.

REWARDS

The investigators receive normal Sanity rewards for destroying a mummy and a ghouls. They can receive 1D4 for destroying the aura. Anyone receiving a bite from a ghouls were-hyena will be relieved that they show no adverse effects at the next full moon. This feeling is only short-lived, as they become a ghouls at the next new moon—the night the ghouls priests worship their charmed god. Ω