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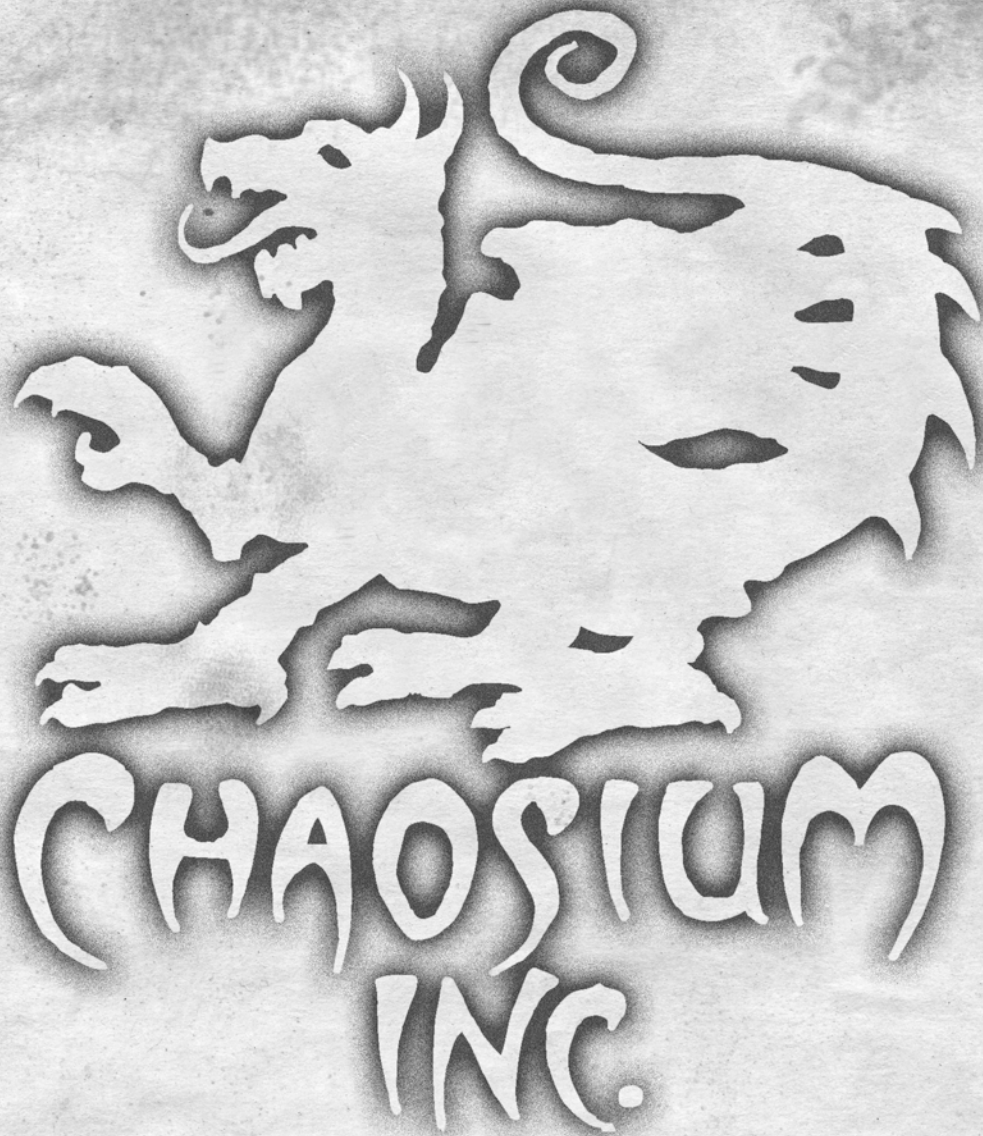


QUEENSGUARD



A STEAMPUNK
CALL OF CTHULHU CAMPAIGN





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QUEENSGUARD

A Steampunk Call of Cthulhu Campaign

Jeffrey Rissman



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Jeffrey Rissman is a graduate student at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. This is his first gaming publication.

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PROLOGUE

It is early morning at the docks of Cambridge. A young man leans against a rail and watches the sun rise from the sea. An old sailor approaches.

Listen Sonny,

I've known you since you were a babe, and I can see the change in you. You have the look of one who envies the Philosophers: the brooding mien, the distant gaze into the depths of the sea.

I know you've seen the bones they dredged out of the deep.

The Philosophers pore over them in the flickering, electric lights of Cambridge and Portsmouth. They poke and they scrape, trying to know a world removed by a thousand years and ten thousand leagues.

But understand this: the ancient world was a dark and terrible place. People clung to life in blistering deserts, scrounged amidst barren crags, and covered in black crevices. There were bloody sacrifices to ancient, unknowable beings.

Today, we have little history of those peoples: a tablet here, a bronze there. Almost as though their records were destroyed. Systematically. With purpose. Nobody asked questions about the past. Nobody, that is, until the Philosophers. They use their

arts to unearth ancient temples and draw strange artifacts out of the deep. Not once did they consider that those who destroyed and hid this knowledge... well, they might have had the right of it.

Listen! Don't go. I know you fear the Queen, son. And you think the Philosophers sleep soundly at night. Their phlogiston batteries and their consequence engines are too useful. At least until the Kmir's armies lay down their arms, and he bows before our Queen.

They're fools. That's what you must understand. They intrude into a domain undisturbed since the time of the Pharaohs, but to them, it's just a game. A search for knowledge. And the time is coming when they will find what they seek.

You'd best pay me heed. I may be an old man, but I've spent my life upon the darkening seas. I've seen things. Things I couldn't explain. Things I couldn't comprehend. Real. Alive.

Boy, don't join with the Philosophers. That way lies madness. Go back to the country. You might be able to weather the storm.

Or, would you do something about it?

Perhaps I know someone you should meet.



Two Philosophers cloaked in black, academic robes stand on a cliff overlooking the ocean. Half submerged by the waves, a massive boulder blocks the entrance to a cavern. Nearby rests an imposing device of wood and brass. Deep within its gears and pipes, a metal claw clutches a faintly glowing crystal.

VALEN Dmitry, we must have the engine ready. It is nearly time.

DMITRY This isn't going to work, Valen. We don't have enough chemical reactant to unseal that grotto. And even if there were some ancient mechanism...

VALEN Not a *mechanism*, Dmitry. They had mighty thaumaturgy, better than we've been able to manage. And thaumaturgy does not corrode in seawater.

DMITRY That boulder must weigh over eighty tons! There's a limit...

VALEN You saw the tomb near Luxor. We were both there.

DMITRY The Egyptians' work was unprecedented. They had wealth and countless slaves. This is the New World, Valen. We'll be lucky to find the smallest hex.

VALEN This isn't just some grotto. We have two independent sources. There's that journal you translated by Leaf something.

DMITRY Leif Gunnarson, Viking captain of the lost ship Tegnir.

VALEN Yes, him. And then the indigenous stone beacon. We don't find much stone construction in New England. It's obvious they wished to draw attention to the spot.

DMITRY I don't think they built it with archaeologists in mind.

VALEN Dmitry, I've had about enough of your doubts. If we find something big, our positions in the Queen's court are assured. If not, we've wasted some time...

DMITRY And an expensive reactant crystal.

VALEN Enough! Power up the consequence engine. I'll be mainline.

DMITRY [sigh] Okay, here are the electrodes. Engine coming online in three, two, one, now.

VALEN Ah, very nice. It's like opening a set of eyes you never knew you had.

Dmitry, why the thaumaturgical ward? We're exploring a cave, not facing down the Kmir's mind thieves.

DMITRY Your job isn't to study *me*, Valen. And if you want to move that boulder, you'll need all the charge you can get.

VALEN Very well, very well. Let's see. The rock is round from this side, but it looks like the inner surface is eroded. There is definitely some sort of thaumaturgy still active here. I can see it around the edges of the boulder and more faintly through the center. I can't see past it. It's some type of barrier. Not familiar with it. I'm taking a spectrograph.

DMITRY Got it. Let's take this page back to the tower and check it against the books.

VALEN I've still got three fourths of the charge left. I will not waste a good crystal! I'm going to phase out the barrier for a moment to see what's behind it.

DMITRY Valen, please! Let's just come back later.

VALEN Synchronized... and... phased. By the Queen, it's vast in there! *Huge* area, mostly underwater. Wait. What's that?

DMITRY Valen, what do you see? What?

VALEN Impossible, it's... No. No! [Valen begins to choke.]

DMITRY Valen!

The, the boulder! It's moving! Put the barrier back, Valen! Valen!



A messenger hurries into the audience chamber, bows deeply, and deposits a slim, metal case in Elaine's hand. The scroll within is water-stained and yellowed. Its wax seal bears the emblem of the Queensguard. Elaine cracks the seal and begins to read.

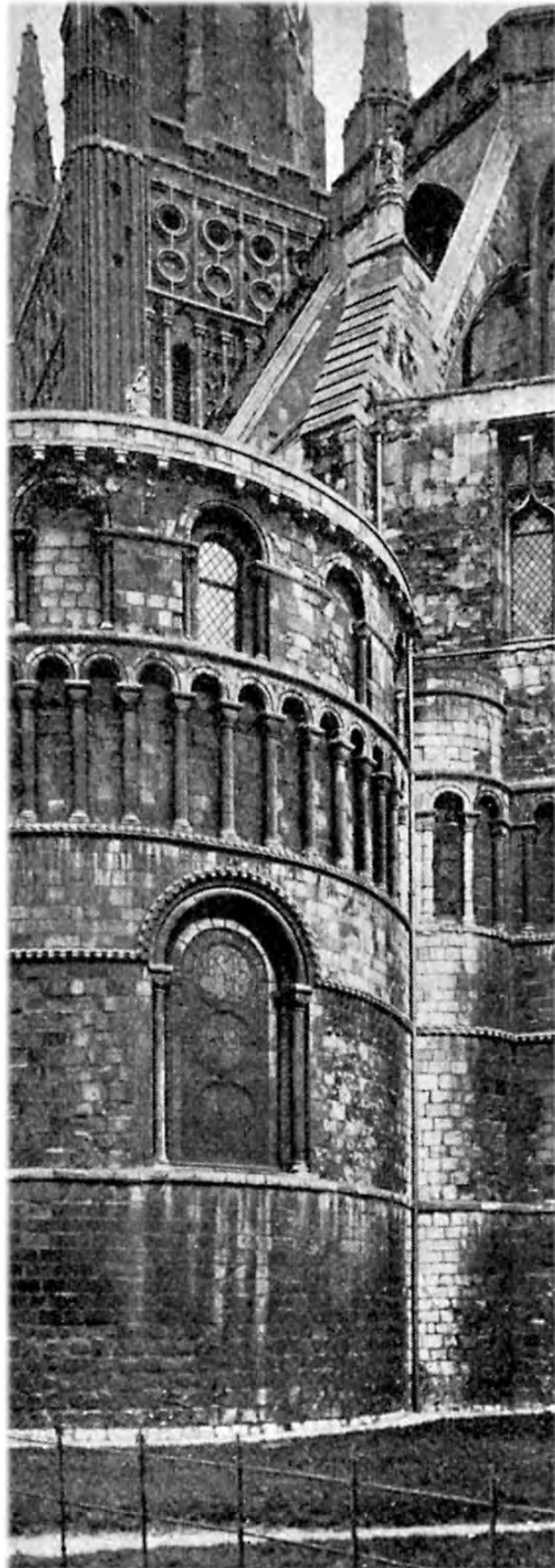
Your Majesty Elaine, Lord of Manhattan and High Queen of America,

Per your instructions, I set out to investigate the rumors of unrest among the Philosophers. At first, I was most skeptical. While the Philosophers have indeed grown in wealth and influence in recent years, they have little to gain and much to lose through any sort of insubordination. Independently, at least, they pose no threat to the Crown.

However, I remain deeply concerned about the possibility that the organization may have been infiltrated by the enemy. The Philosophers have a strict hierarchical structure, not unlike your own military or Queensguard. Knowledge of their projects, particularly knowledge with implications for the security of the realm, is often highly compartmentalized. If the Kmir could buy but a few key natural philosophers and thaumaturges within the Tower, it is possible the entire strength of the Philosophers could be turned against us in a time and manner chosen by the enemy. Needless to say, we must prevent this eventuality at all costs.

Unfortunately, I did not reach the Tower on schedule. A terrible, bitterly cold nor'easter has been ravaging the coastline, quite unusual so early in the Fall. It has grounded all airships, and even electric carriages are experiencing significant difficulties due to flooded roadways. I was able to secure a large courser and make my way cross-country, ultimately arriving in Cambridge on the 27th of September. The city has endured tremendous flooding, and the people of the town are suffering greatly. However, the Tower of Cambridge is constructed on a rise, and the floodwaters do not approach its base.

Despite the downpour, black smoke billowed from the building's many chimneys. Neither the fury of the heavens nor the misery of the people can stop the Philosophers' furnaces and laboratories.



I rode up to the great, steel doors and demanded to be let inside. It was ten minutes before any heeded my calls.

At last, the gateway was opened by the tower warden, a bear of a man clad in heavy chain. He recognized the symbol of the Queensguard on my breast and welcomed me inside. I was tired from the ride and angry over the delay. I dismounted and immediately asserted my authority to requisition food and lodging and to conduct an investigation into the Tower's activities.

This, perhaps, was a mistake.

I was provided with fine quarters and dry clothes before being led to a large dining hall. There, I met Valen Albrecht, a Philosopher who recently assumed leadership of the Tower following the death of the old Chancellor, Martin Rochelle. Valen is an interesting man, very calm and confident, yet driven with an inner fire. He spoke eloquently of the Tower's recent projects, including several that may be of great use in the southern campaign.

After dinner, I was beset with drowsiness. I retired to my quarters and slept for twelve hours. The next day, Valen provided me with a tour of the Tower's facilities. I must admit that everything seemed to be in order, and the projects appeared just as Valen described. I privately interviewed several Philosophers, selected randomly, and they all seemed preoccupied by their work and, so far as I could tell, loyal to Manhattan.

The most unsettling aspect of my visit may have been Valen himself. He watched me with disturbing acuity, and though he asked few questions, I often caught myself explaining to him my background and the purposes behind my investigative activities. By the end of the day, I had the odd feeling that he had learned more about me than I had learned through my exploration of the Tower.

Having identified no wrongdoing at Cambridge, I bid Valen farewell and rode out into the howling gale. I am sending you this letter before I carry on to Portsmouth, the Philosophers' smaller facility.

Although I felt unsettled by my visit, there is a long distance between unsettling and treasonous behavior.

I suspect that, as a man of arms, I am made uncomfortable by the single-minded pursuit of the arcane arts, and as a man of conscience, I find the Philosophers' complete ambivalence toward the people of Cambridge distasteful. However, if this is the manner in which they best serve the realm, so be it.

I anticipate a return to the High Court of Manhattan by the end of October. Should you have additional instructions for me, you may leave a message at any of the places on the enclosed list of addresses, which I shall visit on my return journey.

Your will be done,

Sigfried Falk

Inspector General
Second Captain of the Queensguard



RULES OF THE STEAM-POWERED AGE

Introduction

Welcome to Queensguard! Queensguard is a short campaign for the Call of Cthulhu roleplaying game published by Chaosium Inc. It is set in an alternate version of America in which steam technology and magic are woven into the fabric of society.

Queensguard is divided into two acts, each of which should consume approximately two four-hour game sessions. The campaign strives to be consistently fast-paced and exciting, and it takes advantage of the unusual setting. Investigation, clever planning, and physical combat are all important. For a plotted scenario, Queensguard grants players a large degree of freedom. Key tasks within each act may be completed in any order, frequent “Contingency” sections help the keeper adapt the plot to varied player choices, and players may succeed or fail in Act 1 without foreclosing opportunities in Act 2.

The four-session campaign detailed in this book need not be the end of your adventures in the Kingdom of America. A substantial amount of information about the politics, history, technology, and magic of the setting is provided in the next chapter, “A Tour of the World of Queensguard.” The two

campaign chapters contain many additional ideas and characters. Using this information and a little creativity, Queensguard can be a steampunk setting for Call of Cthulhu adventures of your own devising.

How to Use This Book

This book consists of a Prologue, five chapters, and an index. The Prologue and the first two chapters (“Rules of the Steam-Powered Age” and “A Tour of the World of Queensguard”) may be read by the players and the keeper. The final three chapters (“Act 1: Valen’s Tower,” “Act 2: The Queen and the Kmir,” and “Reference Materials”) are intended to be read only by the keeper, as they contain details of the campaign plot, which the players must discover.

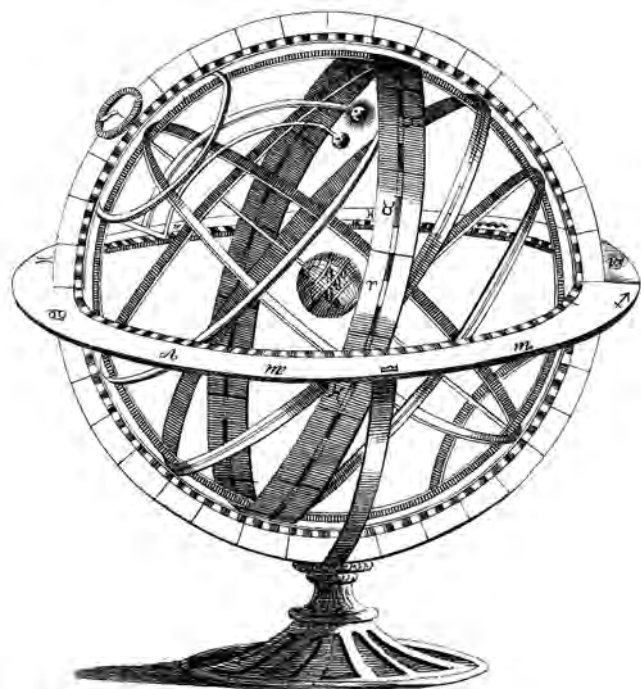
If you are the keeper and you are short on time, it is possible to get a complete overview of the plot of Queensguard by reading fewer than eight pages. First read the Prologue, then read the one-page summary of each Act that appears at the beginning of each corresponding chapter. Finally, read the two-page section called “Behind-the-Scenes Plot Elements” near the end of the Reference Materials chapter.

If you have more time, you can smoothly read this book from front to back. It is best if you have read most of the book before starting the game, although you should be able to safely put off reading Act 2 until your players have completed Act 1.

At times, you will see the words “section” and “subsection” referenced. Sections use headers like “How to Use This Book” (above). Subsections use headers like “Chapters of the Book” (below).

Chapters of the Book

The Prologue is a piece of fiction that introduces both the world and the plot of Queensguard. Think of it like a movie trailer. It is useful for people who are deciding whether or not they would like to play in the campaign, and it may provide players with ideas they can use when creating investigators. Note



that the investigators will not be aware of all of the plot elements revealed in the Prologue.

The first chapter, which you are reading now, is helpful for understanding the rules and character creation considerations that are unique to Queensguard.

The second chapter, “A Tour of the World of Queensguard,” provides a political and historical overview of the world. It also details the magic and technology that are prevalent in the Kingdom of America and four other great states. This material is public knowledge for citizens of America, although how much any particular investigator knows is a function of how learned or well-traveled she is. Information about nations that do not play a part in the campaign plot of Queensguard may be useful to a player who wishes to create a character from a foreign land or to a keeper who hopes to broaden the investigators’ adventures beyond the included four-session campaign.

The third and fourth chapters discuss the plot of Queensguard in detail. Each chapter begins with a one-page summary of the events contained within. These summaries exist primarily to help the keeper get a sense of the entire plot at once without a large time investment. Sections inside the campaign chapters are organized according to major locations and tasks. Investigators may explore locations and complete tasks in more than one order, so you will likely need to skip around. Some scenes include “Keeper’s Scene Notes,” paragraphs that explain the purpose of a scene in the context of the larger game.

The final chapter provides helpful reference materials for the keeper. Most of these lists and play aids should not be seen by the players. The exception is the last item, a Call of Cthulhu character sheet that has been customized for the world of Queensguard. You probably will wish to photocopy this character sheet for the players rather than use one from the core rulebook.

Character Creation in Queensguard

As Queensguard is not set in the everyday world, players will likely need to create new investigators.

The game assumes that the majority of the investigators are members of the Queensguard, an elite arm of the government that has both investigative and police authority within the Kingdom of America. The Queensguard needs individuals with a wide range of skill sets, so there are few constraints on the types of investigators that players may create.

In particular, investigators may have possessed different backgrounds before joining the Queensguard. One may have been a soldier in the Royal Army, another may have been a low-ranking Philosopher, while another may be a Nordic rune-caster who moved to America a decade ago. The Queensguard is eager to hire individuals with diverse experiences and abilities, so you should encourage players to be creative.

It is also possible for investigators not to be members of the Queensguard, so long as there is a plausible reason why the Queen should entrust them with an important mission. One investigator could be the crown prince, for instance, or a childhood friend of the Queen. It is preferable for you to avoid any character concept that involves tricking the Queen (e.g. “my investigator is a spy for the Central Asian Empire who has gained the Queen’s trust”), because the presence of a disloyal investigator can be disruptive to the party and the campaign plot.

The ranks and structure of the Queensguard are detailed in the next chapter. Investigators may all hold positions of the same rank within the Queensguard, or one investigator could possess greater authority and be the leader of the group. This choice should be made by the keeper and the players during character creation, as some player groups work best with an official leader and others work best without. Either way is compatible with the game’s world and plot.

Once players have character concepts, an effective way to rapidly generate the stats for a Queensguard character is to perform the following steps in order:

Character Statistics in Queensguard:Rolled Attributes:

- Roll 3d6 each for STR, CON, POW, DEX, and APP. Reroll if the total is below 46. Rearrange the scores at will.
- Roll 2d6+6 each for SIZ and INT. Reroll if the total is below 25. Swap the scores if desired.
- Roll 3d6+3 for EDU. Reroll if the result is dissonant with your character concept.

Age:

- Your age is EDU+6 years or 18 years, whichever is higher.
- You may (repeatedly) add 10 years to increase EDU by 1 each time.
- For every 10 years over age 40, subtract 1 from STR, CON, or DEX (your choice)

Derived Stats:

- SAN and Luck are both set to POW x5.
- Idea is set to INT x5.
- Know is set to EDU x5.
- Determine damage bonus (db) (CoC core, p. 43)

Point Totals:

- Starting Sanity points are set to SAN.
- Maximum and starting Hit Points equal the average of CON and SIZ. Round up.
- Maximum and starting Magic points equal POW

Skills:

- Allot EDU x20 skill points among occupation skills for a member of the Queensguard (those marked with asterisks (*) on the Queensguard character sheet). (Skills are capped at 99%.)
- Allot INT x10 skill points to any skills except Cthulhu Mythos. (Skills are capped at 99%.)

Starting Equipment

Investigators each possess 15 gold (equivalent to \$150 US). They may choose to begin with any weapons or armor they wish, selected from what is available to all members of the Queensguard:

Armor:

- Leather (-1 HP lost per hit)
- Chain (-2 HP lost per hit)
- Full Plate (-3 HP lost per hit)

Weapons:

- Sword (1d6+2+DB, 1-handed, 12 HP, touch range)
- Halberd (1d6+3+DB, 2-handed, 12 HP, 2 yd range)
- Crossbow (1d6+2, 2-handed, 3 HP, 30 yd range)

The crossbow represented here is rapid-firing with a low draw weight. A readied crossbow fires first in a round, and the weapon can be reloaded and aimed during that round. Therefore, a crossbow may fire one shot per round at no penalty. It is generally best to assume that a crossbow has plenty of ammunition for normal combat situations.

A character who wishes to use a different weapon or armor may do so. For simplicity, it is suggested that the keeper use the properties of the most similar standard Queensguard weapon or armor listed above to represent a new item. (For instance, a mace has the same damage code, range, and number of hit points as a sword.) This method of handling combat items allows players flavorful equipment choices without providing an incentive to loot fallen enemies, go shopping, or engage in other activities that interrupt the flow of the story.

Philosophers and Magic Users

A player creating a former Philosopher should select two pieces of alchemical or steam technology from the list in the next chapter. Neither a consequence engine nor any vehicle may be chosen by an investigator as a starting possession.

Each player who is creating a magic user should select four points worth of spells from the appropriate spell list (in the following chapter). Magic users have the option to use the Willful Ruthlessness rule (CoC core, p. 101, right-hand box, third bullet point) after determining derived stats but before determining point totals.

Rule Modifications

In order to better fit the steampunk setting and fast pace of this campaign, several modifications to the standard Call of Cthulhu rules are suggested here. Some of these changes (particularly those affecting the healing rate and insanity duration) serve two purposes. First, they help to make investigators slightly less averse to combat, so they act more confident and heroic, as befits members of the Queensguard. Second, they allow the story to move ahead without long periods of downtime, promoting a sense of urgency and avoiding delays at points when a delay could cause the investigators to miss out on important plot events.

Armor (CoC core, p. 59): A disadvantage to wearing the heavier types of armor has been added. Users of chain armor halve their Climb, Jump, Sneak, and Martial Arts skills and may not Swim or spellcast. Users of full plate armor halve their Dodge and Throw skills and may not Climb, Jump, Sneak, use Martial Arts, Swim, or spellcast. This information is noted on the Queensguard character sheet.

Combat Skills (CoC core, p. 70-74): Combat skills have been simplified. The four category skills for firearms (*Handgun*, *Machine Gun*, *Rifle*, *Shotgun*) and the melee skill *Head Butt* have been eliminated. The distinction between weapon skills and weapon category skills (CoC core, p. 61) has been removed. Instead, all weapons of a given type now have the same “base chance” to hit (starting skill %) and use the same skill. Thus, all swords use the *Sword* skill (which begins at 15%), all polearms use the *Halberd* skill (which begins at 10%), and so forth. Each weapon type’s starting skill percentage is indicated on the Queensguard character sheet in the “Reference Materials” chapter. If an investigator possesses a different sort of weapon (such as a mace or a bow), that weapon has its own skill with a base chance identical to whichever Queensguard weapon skill is most similar. For instance, a *Mace* skill would start at 15%, like the *Sword* skill, and a *Bow* skill would start at 10%, like the *Crossbow* skill.

Healing Rate (CoC core, p. 54): The healing rate for physical injuries has been hastened from 1d3/2d3 hit points per week to 1d3/2d3 hit points per day. (The use of *Medicine* or *First Aid* to immediately heal 1d3

hit points following an injury is unchanged.)

Insanity Duration (CoC core, p. 83-84): Under standard CoC rules, there are four insanity durations: short temporary, long temporary, indefinite, and permanent. In Queensguard, temporary insanity (triggered by losing 5 or more Sanity points due to a single roll) is always short temporary insanity with a duration of 1d3+1 combat rounds. Losing at least one fifth of current Sanity points within one game hour may result in either long temporary insanity with a duration of 1d4x10 game hours or indefinite insanity, at the keeper’s discretion. In either case, the disorder selected should not prevent the player from continuing to control her investigator and progress through the adventure. Reaching zero Sanity points still results in permanent insanity.

Skimming a Mythos Book (CoC core, p. 93): It is possible to learn spells and increase one’s *Cthulhu Mythos* skill by skimming a Mythos book. What can be obtained from a book and the time required is included with that book’s description in the “Reference Materials” chapter.

Spell Learning (CoC core, p. 101): It is possible to gain ranks in the *Cthulhu Mythos* skill and lose Sanity points by learning a Mythos spell. Costs are noted in the “Reference Materials” chapter.

Spell Resistance: Many spells that affect others call for a resistance test in which the caster’s remaining magic points are compared to the target’s current magic points. This causes many high-cost spells to be relatively ineffective, and it makes spellcasters who have previously used magic much easier to affect with spells than other people. In Queensguard, all spell resistance tests that involve magic points are instead made by comparing the POW of the caster to the POW of the target on the resistance table.

Weapon Breakage (CoC core, p. 59): A weapon used to parry only breaks if its hit points are equalled or exceeded by a single blow. Weapons do not accumulate damage.



Changes to Skills

To better fit with the Queensguard setting, the following skill changes have been made relative to the standard 1890s-era character sheet. These changes are reflected on the Queensguard character sheet (in the “Reference Materials” chapter).

New Skills

Alchemy: The study of chemical compounds intended to both help and harm. This skill should be used in place of *Pharmacy*, *Chemistry*, and some uses of *Biology*. (The rest are replaced by *Medicine*.)

Natural Philosophy: The study of the mechanics and physical principles of the natural world. Essentially, this skill encompasses physics and engineering. It is the core skill necessary to design or inspect steam-powered vehicles and gadgets. (Actual construction of such a device is handled by *Mechanical Repair*.)

Thaumaturgy: The study of non-Mythos magic. The term “Thaumaturgy” refers primarily to the ordered, mechanistic magic studied by the Philosophers; a blood sorcerer from the Central Asian Empire would call this skill “Sorcery” instead. When attempting to learn a spell, an investigator may choose to substitute a *Thaumaturgy* roll for the usual INTx3 roll (CoC core, p. 102).

Fame: The chance a citizen of the Kingdom of America has heard of your past exploits, good or bad. A player may roll *Fame* when his/her investigator meets an NPC, or the keeper may choose to roll *Fame* to see if an NPC has heard of or recognizes the investigator. *Fame* should be reduced by at least half when dealing with an NPC from another culture. This skill replaces *Credit Rating*.

Sword, *Halberd*, *Crossbow*: These are the core weapon-based combat skills in Queensguard. See the “Combat Skills” rule modification above for details.

Removed Skills

Accounting is not relevant in Queensguard.

Biology: use Alchemy or Medicine.

Chemistry: use Alchemy.

Credit Rating: use Fame.

Electrical Repair does not apply to the setting of Queensguard. Steam contraptions, even those involving electricity, use the Natural Philosophy or Mechanical Repair skills.

Geology: use Natural History.

Navigate: use Astronomy, Track, or the applicable piloting skill (Airship, Carriage, Boat, or Ride).

Pharmacy: use Alchemy.

Photography does not exist in the world of Queensguard.

Physics: use Natural Philosophy.

Name Changes and Clarifications

Pilot Balloon has been changed to *Pilot Airship*. Airships are dirigible-like steam constructs used in the Kingdom of America in lieu of hot air balloons.

Drive Carriage refers to electric carriages. (Horse-drawn carriages are rare in the Kingdom of America.) These contraptions are not intuitive to control, so the base chance has been reduced to 5%.

Travel Times by Mode

In Queensguard, players may travel long distances within the Kingdom of America via a variety of modes. The following table provides a guideline to help the keeper determine the length of time required for these journeys.

Each entry indicates how far an investigator may travel in one day via a particular travel mode. The table assumes the investigators spend the entire day traveling, except for any necessary rest periods. (Thus, the table assumes vehicles, including ocean-going ships and electric carriages, are en route for 24 hours per day. It assumes a person on foot or horseback spends 12-14 hours per day traveling.)

The values in this table are sustainable maximums. In other words, it is impractical for an investigator to go faster than this on a long, multi-day journey. However, an investigator in a great hurry who must cover only a short distance may exceed the rates in this table by 25% in a single day. The next day, a period of rest (or mechanical repair and tune-up) is necessary, reducing the next day's maximum travel distance by 50%. This rule does not apply to ocean-going ships, as they cannot be coaxed or jury-rigged into moving faster, even temporarily.

Travel Mode	Miles / Day
Average person, on foot	13
Experienced ranger, on foot	20
Mounted on a normal horse	21
Mounted on a powerful warhorse	27
Electric carriage	50
Average ocean-going ship	125
Airship	125
Fast ocean-going ship	200

Electric carriages may only operate on open plains and roadways. Dirt roads connect all major cities in the Kingdom of America.

Storm Conditions: In a storm, high winds fling airships about, and rain turns roadways into streams of mud. People on foot or horseback halve their speed when traveling in a thunderstorm. Electric carriages move at one tenth normal speed and require daily maintenance. Ocean-going ships are more difficult to control and may be blown off-course, but they are not slower when operating in a storm. Airships, which tend to attract lightning, may not fly in a storm at all.



A TOUR OF THE WORLD OF QUEENSGUARD

This chapter provides an overview of the political and social structure of the world, as well as a look at certain important institutions within the Kingdom of America and the Central Asian Empire. An overview of steam technology and blood sorcery is included, along with spell lists for characters interested in playing an investigator with a background in a non-Mythos magical tradition.

The plot of Queensguard begins early in November of 1850.

The Kingdom of America

America was founded in 1587 as a Crown colony of the British Empire under charter from Queen Elizabeth I. Roanoke Island served as the capital of the colonies until the Scandinavian Conquest of 1704-1710, in which the Vikings conquered the majority of northern and western Europe. The terms of Brit-

ain's peace treaty with the Norsemen included the surrender of sovereignty over the British Isles and other European holdings. Consequently, the British government was moved to the New World, and the British Empire was rechristened the Kingdom of America.

The colonial government at Roanoke was disbanded by Queen Anne in 1712, and Manhattan became the new seat of the kingdom. A bridge connecting the island to the mainland was completed in the 1720s, and a large castle with a courtyard surrounded by an outer wall was completed in 1740. The nearby hamlet of New York grew greatly as a result of the governmental and military activity, achieving its one millionth resident in 1830.

During this period, the Kingdom of America slowly but steadily advanced its borders. By 1850, the kingdom stretched along the east coast from the Gulf of Mexico in the south to Nova Scotia in the north.



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The Philosophers

This was an era of great scientific and thaumaturgical progress in America. Natural philosophy, once the hobby of eccentric aristocrats, began to show promising results. Recognizing its potential for civic and military applications, Queen Olivia established the semi-autonomous Order of Philosophers in 1748. The Philosophers were to serve the American Crown through the research and development of steam technology and magic of benefit to the realm. The Philosophers were self-governing, with the ability to select their own leader and, to an extent, direct their own research. However, with no authority to levy taxes, their funding and supplies were derived exclusively from Manhattan, ensuring that their projects would be of interest to the monarch.

To enable the Philosophers to pursue their research free of the distractions of New York, they were given a large quantity of land near the village of Cambridge, over two hundred miles to the northeast. A vast building was constructed for them at royal expense. This Tower included a great spire, the tallest building in the kingdom, as well as a large annex for the research and fabrication of new devices. An airship hangar was a later addition.

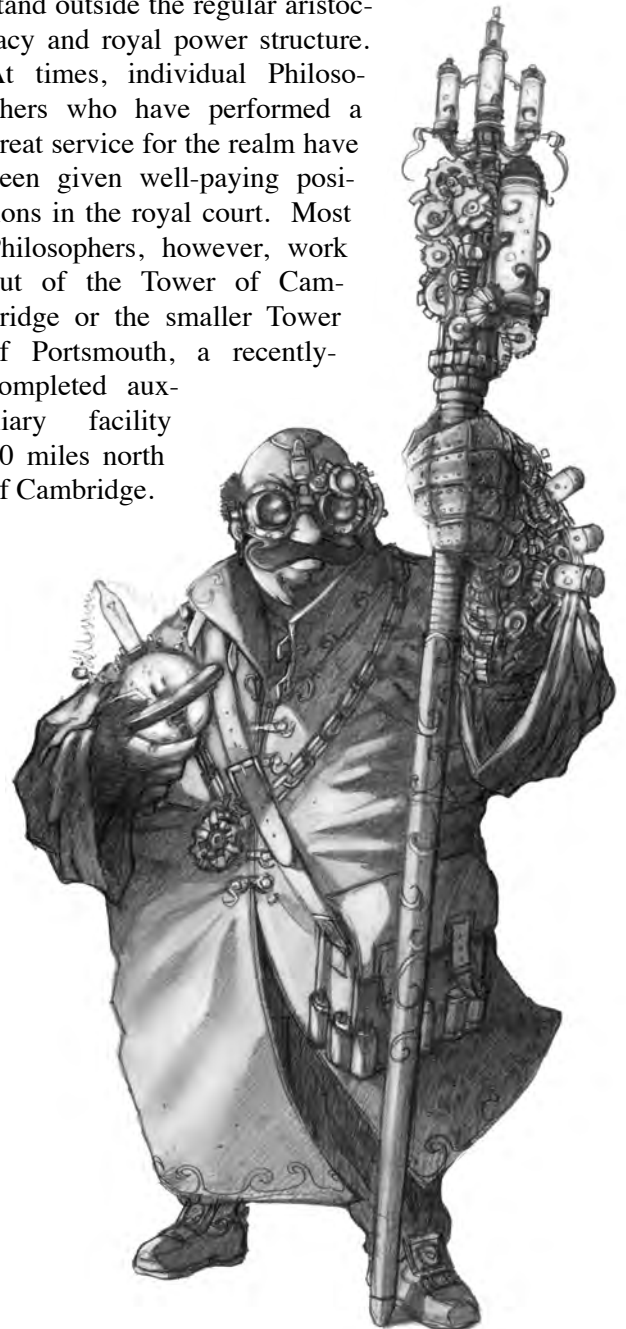
The first Philosophers were America's most respected scholars in the technical and the arcane sciences. The most senior of these formed the Tower Regents, and they voted to elect a Grand Chancellor. The Chancellor traditionally served for life. The Chancellor's responsibilities included guiding the research done within the tower and overseeing the day-to-day operations of the Order.

The Philosophers quickly became a critical part of the kingdom and one of the backbones of America's strength. They developed steam-powered airships and harnessed electricity to power carriages, revolutionizing transportation within the realm. The Tower's alchemical division discovered healthful potions as well as formidable explosives.

Thaumaturgy, the direct study of magic, progressed slowly through the 1700s. However, with the discovery of the ability to store and gradually concentrate magical energy inside specially prepared crystals, the Philosophers found their niche. This innovation enabled the Philosophers to store magical en-

ergy over long periods of time and to integrate thaumaturgy into steam-powered machines that could operate without the physical presence of a spellcaster. These new devices, hybridizing natural philosophy and thaumaturgy, remained rare, as the required crystals were laborious to produce. Nevertheless, they quickly became an indispensable part of America's military and research apparatus.

In 1850, Philosophers hold a position of honor within the Kingdom of America. They are employees of the government, but they stand outside the regular aristocracy and royal power structure. At times, individual Philosophers who have performed a great service for the realm have been given well-paying positions in the royal court. Most Philosophers, however, work out of the Tower of Cambridge or the smaller Tower of Portsmouth, a recently-completed auxiliary facility 60 miles north of Cambridge.



The Queensguard

The existence of the Queensguard is a long and hallowed tradition, dating back to the 1200s. However, the Queensguard remain deeply relevant today for the maintenance of peace and order within the realm as well as the personal safety of the Queen.

The Queensguard perform three principal functions. First, they serve as the bodyguards of the monarch, protecting her from harm and outside influence. They do not serve as food testers; the Queen has a separate staff for this purpose.

Second, the Queensguard has the authority to carry out investigations and enforce the laws of the realm. In this way, they are similar to a royal police force, superseding the local constabulary whenever the Queen has a personal interest in a matter of law or when local officials cannot be trusted to properly investigate and punish a crime (whether due to a conflict of interest or simply a lack of resources).

Finally, the Queensguard will occasionally perform special operations, similar to an elite military unit. When operating in this capacity, the Queensguard is governed only by its own code, not by the laws of the realm. The Queensguard is made up of diverse individuals with a wide range of skills, and sometimes a small number of highly adept individuals can be more effective at a delicate or difficult task than an ordinary military operation. This is particularly true for matters of internal security, as the use of a large number of soldiers is often inappropriate within America's borders.

The Queensguard is broken into two large divisions: the personal guard and the realm guard. The personal guard is stationed near the Queen at all times. They accompany her to meetings, keep watch outside of her chambers (even when she is not within), and secure areas in preparation for the Queen's arrival. The main qualifications to become a member of the personal guard are perceptiveness, combat skill, resistance to boredom, and unswerving loyalty. There are 100 members of the personal guard.

The realm guard is the arm of the Queensguard that carries out the group's investigative, law enforcement, and special operations duties. They make brief stops in Manhattan for instructions, but most of

their time is spent traveling around the kingdom. The main qualifications to become a member of the realm guard are resourcefulness, an ability to solve problems (whether through negotiation, magic, trickery, or combat), and unswerving loyalty. There are 150 members of the realm guard.

Each arm of the Queensguard is led by a field marshal who is answerable only to the Queen. Below each field marshal are five captains. All other members of the Queensguard are of equal station (comparable in honor to that of a knight with lands). Even among members of the Queensguard of the same rank, some individuals are more experienced, famous, or respected than others. These individuals will often mentor younger initiates and lead groups when no captain or field marshal is present.

The Queensguard's highest duty is to serve and protect the Kingdom of America and its people. The Queensguard's other principal duty is to faithfully and truly serve the Queen and the royal line. The duties of the Queensguard have been prioritized in this way since the early 1400s in order to ensure that the Queensguard can never be used as a tool of tyranny and oppression.

Members of the Queensguard have special privileges beyond ordinary citizens:

They can requisition food, lodging, and passage on ships and airships without compensation.

They have the ability to conduct searches without any formal warrant.

They may make arrests and take similar action to enforce the laws of the realm.

They may kill in self-defense or when judged necessary for the safety and security of the realm. Such actions are typically later reviewed by a higher-ranking member of the Queensguard or by the Queen herself.

Members of the Queensguard are not required to reveal their affiliation during an investigation unless taking an action that necessitates it (such as making an arrest).

The Central Asian Empire

The Central Asian Empire, one of the great powers in the world of 1850, was almost destroyed in its infancy.

The ancestor to the Central Asian Empire, the Mongol Empire, was established in the 13th century. Under Genghis Khan, it grew rapidly through conquest and political alliance. By the year 1300, the Khan held sway over the majority of Eurasia. Trade and plunder flowed into the capital of Karakorum, transforming the city into a crowded metropolis of palaces and temples.

However, the Mongol Empire suffered a precipitous decline in the 1300s when the Black Death weakened the political and social fabric of the region. Rebellions sprang up, numerous territories broke away, and the empire was brought to the brink of collapse.

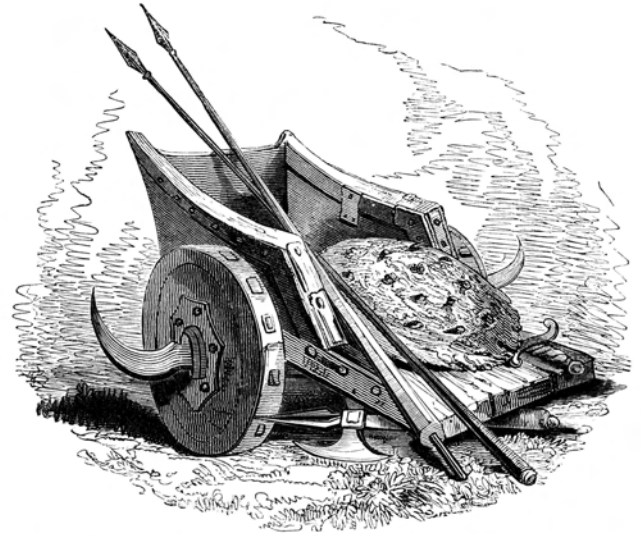
In the ensuing centuries, several Khans narrowly fought off attempts at conquest by Chinese armies from the south. The Mongols gradually expanded westward until reaching the borders of Greater Khorasan.

In the year 1607, a young Mongke Khan managed to forge a tripartite alliance between the Emir of Khorasan, the Emperor of China, and himself. This was a turning point for Asia. A century of stability ensued, and the political and social structures of the three countries became intertwined. In the early 1700s, they were formally united as the Central Asian Empire, ruled by a single Kmir. Karakorum was selected as the capital of the new empire due to its central location and extensive military infrastructure.

In 1850, the Central Asian Empire is among the most advanced civilizations in the world, with a greater population and geographic extent than either the Kingdom of America or the Viking Dominions of western Europe.

Ruling Structure

The Central Asian Empire is essentially a military meritocracy. The Kmir is both the political ruler of the empire and senior general of the empire's mili-



tary forces. When the old Kmir dies or can no longer ably serve in the army, a contest is held to select a replacement. This contest involves tests of personal combat skill, strategy and tactics, as well as the ability to lead and inspire troops. All senior military officers with at least 10 years of service may compete. None are afforded an advantage due to birth or station.

The Kmir is expected to be actively engaged in leading the empire's military forces. A Kmir who rules from Karakorum would be no Kmir at all.

In part due to this leadership selection process, the Central Asian Empire is renowned for its military prowess and tactical aptitude. On the other hand, it is considered weaker than other great powers in some aspects of peacetime governance, such as the efficient running of cities and in matters of foreign trade. In particular, the empire does not possess or rely upon steam technology, which was largely developed by the Philosophers of America over the past 100 years and has not had time to be recognized as valuable and adopted into the empire.

Military Composition

The Central Asian Empire possesses a navy and several armies, the largest of which is usually led by the Kmir. At each level of command, individuals are appointed by their superiors. Traditionally, these appointments are made on the basis of merit, as perceived by the commanding officer. In practice, some commanders do give advantage to personal friends.



Most troops in the empire fight with spears or large scimitars. Chariots pulled by horses are common. Each army also has an engineering corps with expertise in building trebuchets, catapults, and siege towers, useful tools when fighting against a country (such as America) that employs castles and similar fortified defenses.

Two special types of troops exist in the army: blood sorcerers and mind thieves. Blood sorcerers are the primary magic users of the Central Asian Empire, while mind thieves are the empire's elite assassins. More information about the spells and capabilities of blood sorcerers and mind thieves appears later in this chapter.

The War with America

The Central Asian Empire frequently engages in military campaigns to expand its borders, acquire colonies, and grow in power. In 1849, the current Kmir, Baras Kasar, initiated a war of conquest against the Kingdom of America.

A large army was sent to America via a long sea voyage. By November of 1850, when the plot of Queensguard begins, the Kmir has managed to secure a swath of territory that includes all of Virginia and parts of North Carolina, Maryland, and Delaware.

Elsewhere in the World

Several other great civilizations exist in the world of Queensguard. As these peoples do not have a direct bearing on the plot of the campaign, only brief descriptions are provided here. This information may be useful for a player who wishes to create an investigator who hails from a foreign land or for a keeper who is looking for ideas to inspire new adventures to precede or follow the campaign.

The Viking Dominions

Western Europe is ruled by the Vikings, a collection of peoples originally hailing from Scandinavia. Long considered simple raiders and pirates, they were largely ignored by the countries of Western Europe for hundreds of years. As a result, Europe was completely unprepared for the Scandinavian

Conquest of the early 1700s. The Norsemen drove off or conquered the peoples of Europe and established an expansive set of semi-autonomous dominions, each ruled by a powerful chief.

In 1850, Vikings are ethnically and culturally diverse, a result of interbreeding and the integration of conquered European peoples into the Norse culture. The Vikings are the world's greatest maritime power, possessing the ability to field the toughest, fastest, and most numerous fleets of ocean-going vessels.

Viking spellcasters, known as rune-casters, are described at the end of this chapter.

The Manden Kurufa

The greatest empire in Africa, the Manden Kurufa, was born of desperation. By the early 1200s, a large portion of western Africa had been conquered by the sorcerer king Soumaoro Kanté. Kanté was clever, possessed terrifying powers, and was intent on controlling all of west Africa. In response, the Mandinka prince Sundiata Keita secretly organized a federation of smaller states to oppose Kanté. The sorcerer's armies were crushed, and he was forced to flee across the mountains.

Sundiata's federation came to be known as the Manden Kurufa, and it laid claim to Kanté's former territories. It has grown steadily in the centuries since.

In 1850, the Manden Kurufa is a continental power. It is widely known for its arts and culture; clothing, sculpture, and musical instruments are all major exports. The Mandinka are the undisputed masters of the taming and training of wild animals. Their armies include special warriors who command elephants, lions, and rhinoceroses in battle.

Mandinka spellcasters, called djelis, are not normally combatants. They are musicians, historians, and storytellers. For more information on djelis, see the end of this chapter.

The Incan Republic

The Incan Republic began as an empire in the 15th century. The emperor Pachacuti captured vast tracts of territory surrounding the city of Cusco high in the Andean mountains. The empire was expanded by

his son and grandson until nearly all of the west coast of South America came under Incan sway.

In the 1500s, the War of the Two Brothers broke out within the empire. Fatefully, a Spanish invasion force led by Francisco Pizarro arrived in the middle of this civil war. In 1532, Pizarro nearly captured one brother, Atahualpa, with his small group of troops. This narrow escape convinced Atahualpa to make peace with his brother, who insisted that they divide the empire into two allied states in opposition to Spain.

This proved to be a turning point for the Incas. The united forces of the two brothers drove Pizarro from the continent. The brothers' original two territories proved to be the first of twenty, as the new Republic grew to dominate much of South America.

In 1850, the Incan Republic is the only democracy in the world. The government is unicameral; the speaker of the house and the prime minister are the two most powerful individuals. The Incan Republic is renowned for its engineering expertise, including an elaborate network of paved roads, tunnels, fortifications, and underground caverns in the mountains.

The Incan Republic trains shamans, called sumirunas, who make use of elaborate ritual artifacts during spellcasting. More information on sumirunas appears at the end of this chapter.

Steam Technology and Thaumaturgy

The mechanical, electrical, and alchemical creations of the Philosophers are collectively referred to as "steam technology." The magic of the Philosophers, which is typically hybridized into their creations rather than manifested directly, is known as thaumaturgy. This section describes a variety of inventions the Philosophers have created.

An investigator who has a background as a former Philosopher will not begin the game knowing any spells. However, he/she may possess two steam devices or alchemical solutions. No investigator may start the game with a vehicle or a consequence engine.

The list below is not comprehensive of everything the Philosophers have made; you may come up with new devices or augmentations to listed devices. Capabilities of new devices should be roughly comparable to those of listed devices. Thus, a clockwork submarine would be a good addition, while a rocket ship is beyond the means of the Philosophers at this time.

Vehicles

Airship: An airship is a dirigible, typically about 50 yards in length. The main body is composed of a tough fabric reinforced with metal struts. A line of six brass propellers is mounted on either side of the hull to provide forward thrust. Turning is achieved by modulating the relative speeds of the propellers on the starboard and port sides of the airship. The gas inside the airship is helium, which is inert. However, the body fabric itself is flammable, so fire, lightning, or mechanical trauma can cause a serious leak and loss of all lift. Most airships are non-magical. An airship enhanced with thaumaturgy may have "emergency landing propellers," which allow the crew cabin to separate from the main body and make a controlled descent to the ground.

Electric Carriage: An electric carriage is a ground vehicle with large, ornate metal wheels and an ovoid body. It bristles with interlocking gears and brass pipes emitting blasts of steam. Flickering beams of electricity are clearly visible inside cathode ray tubes mounted above each wheel. The driver sits near a dizzying array of levers and valves at the front of the carriage. A typical carriage features an opulent passenger compartment with two upholstered benches facing a single, fold-down table. Hot water for tea is provided via one of the many steam pipes. Electric carriages are built for luxury and reliability, not bursts of speed. When moving straight over flat terrain, they can attain a velocity of 10 miles per hour, one third to one fourth the speed of a galloping horse. However, an electric carriage is tireless, allowing riders to travel significantly farther each day than is possible on horseback. A carriage augmented with thaumaturgy may be able to deploy a hot air balloon from the roof of the vehicle, allowing it to cross rivers or other impassible areas.



Weapons

Amphoteric Staff: Commonly carried by experienced Philosophers, an amphoteric staff is a versatile tool. Each staff is built by the Philosopher who wields it, and no two are alike. An amphoteric staff may include any two of the following features: a ranged weapon that functions like a crossbow, a melee weapon that functions like a halberd, an electric light and steam whistle, or a self-destruct sequence that detonates the staff after a 2-round countdown, generating an explosion with damage code 5d6/3y. Attacks with an amphoteric staff add 15% to the builder's relevant weapon skills (*Crossbow* and/or *Halberd*) but subtract 15% from the weapon skills of anyone else who tries to use it.

Hydraulic Bolt Thrower: The hydraulic bolt thrower was developed as a replacement for the crossbow, though the device's uptake in military ranks has been limited due to its bulkiness and cost. A user wears a heavy bronze backpack, which contains a small steam engine to generate power. An iron barrel is connected to the backpack by thick pressure hoses and is strapped onto the user's forearm. The user activates the device, which slowly pulls back a hydraulic piston inside the barrel and loads a bolt from a hopper attached to the user's belt. The user aims the barrel and pulls the trigger. The piston slams forward, launching the bolt. The steam-powered mechanism automatically reloads and readies the weapon for another shot. A bolt thrower uses the *Operate Heavy Machinery* skill, has a base range of 50 yards, has 8 hit points, has a damage code of 2d6+1, and has a malfunction number of 95. A malfunctioning bolt thrower experiences a jam (CoC core, p. 65). A bolt thrower may be aimed and fired once per round. It is generally best to assume that a bolt thrower has plenty of bolts. A bolt thrower may not be used while wearing heavy (plate) or medium (chain) armor.

Steam Gauntlet: A steam gauntlet is a heavy metal glove with articulated fingers. Gears on the back of the hand power actuators that increase grip strength. A character wearing a steam gauntlet may not cast spells or use the *Martial Arts* skill. The *Fist* attack of a character wearing a steam gauntlet has the damage code 1d4+4+db. Also, that character's STR is increased by 2 for purposes of the *Grapple* skill and

other STR checks involving grip strength. A steam gauntlet may be used to parry weapon attacks (CoC core, p. 59). It has 10 hit points.

Other Devices

Augmented Goggles: Philosophers are widely known for wearing black, academic robes and, as often as not, complex mechanical goggles. Each Philosopher has a personal pair of goggles customized to his/her specifications. Goggles can integrate up to two of the following features: sight enhancement (microscopic detail and telescopic range), low-light vision, voice masking and amplification, one point of armor, or a minor thaumaturgical ward. (A minor thaumaturgical ward adds 1 to your Passive Characteristic on the Resistance Table when a roll is made to determine if you are affected by a spell that calls for a resistance test (CoC core, p. 55).) Heavy armor (plate) includes a helmet and is incompatible with augmented goggles. Augmented goggles serve as a badge of office for Philosophers, so no Philosopher has more than one pair, and no non-Philosopher can acquire one by legitimate means.

Thaumaturgical Ward: A thaumaturgical ward is a golden, gear-shaped medallion with a precious stone in the center. It is often worn on a chain around the neck. A thaumaturgical ward adds 4 to your Passive Characteristic on the Resistance Table when a roll is made to determine if you are affected by a spell that calls for a resistance test (CoC core, p. 55). This effect does not stack with the "minor thaumaturgical ward" option for Augmented Goggles.

Alchemical Solutions

Mending Salve: Mending salve is a non-magical cream, which can be applied to physical injuries. It helps to stanch bleeding, to prevent infection, and it serves as an analgesic. If mending salve is applied when an investigator successfully uses *First Aid* or *Medicine* to immediately heal following an injury (CoC core, p. 68, 71), the injured character regains 3 hit points instead of 1d3. An investigator who chooses to begin the game with mending salve has enough to treat ten injuries.

Alchemical Fire: A milky, white substance, alchemical fire bursts into flame when exposed to air. A character struck with a moderate amount of alchemi-



cal fire (such as from a thrown flask) takes 1d6 damage per round for three rounds. Armor provides no protection. A proportionately larger amount of alchemical fire would deal more damage per round, but it would still be entirely consumed in three rounds. Alchemical fire can be put out before it is fully consumed by denying it oxygen. Due to chemical changes that occur when the substance begins to burn, it will not re-ignite if again exposed to air. An investigator who chooses to begin the game with alchemical fire has a single flask.

Consequence Engine

A relatively recent invention, the full capabilities of the consequence engine are still being determined. A consequence engine is a rectangular construct standing about six feet tall, two feet wide, and two feet deep. It is a fiendishly complex device with over a thousand interlocking brass pieces, including tiny springs, gears, and coils of wire. A collapsible armature sporting an array of electrodes is connected to the machine via a thick cable. The consequence engine is powered via magical energy stored in a reactant crystal. Before operation, a brass claw is extruded from the heart of the machine and a crystal is placed in its grasp. The user then attaches the armature to his/her head.

The consequence engine largely mutes the user's senses, replacing them with its own output. The sensation is of being bodiless, able to float around within 500 yards of the engine. Ordinary matter (walls, rocks) is slightly transparent but cannot be moved through. The user can "see" magic as auras or patterns of color; a skilled Philosopher can determine the composition of magical effects by studying these colors. A scroll printer built into the engine can generate a spectrograph of a magical effect for later analysis.

The engine has the ability to modify ongoing magical effects. Terminating a magical effect requires an amount of energy comparable to that which created the effect, which can be prohibitive when encountering powerful magic. Recently, a workaround was developed: effects may be "phased out" (transferred to another location out of synchronization with the physical world) for substantially less energy. This makes the consequence engine a very efficient tool for disenchanting items, breaking through wards,

removing curses, and stripping magical enhancements from enemy troops.

It has been observed that some human actions, particularly those of great consequence, are observable as colored auras while the action takes place. It is hypothesized that all actions produce such auras, but most are too faint to detect. Research into whether a skilled user can modify these auras is ongoing.

To begin operating a consequence engine, a *Natural Philosophy* roll is required. Each magical effect to be analyzed, phased out, or phased in requires a separate *Thaumaturgy* roll.

Blood Sorcery and Other Magic

In Queensguard, the Cthulhu Mythos represents the true, underlying structure of the universe and is the source of the greatest magical power. However, various magical traditions can approach the truth in a haphazard way, producing real magical effects with Sanity point costs. Traditions whose existence is widely known, such as blood sorcery and runecasting, do not require any explicit Mythos knowledge, and expertise in such a tradition does not raise an investigator's *Cthulhu Mythos* skill. Magical traditions may involve corrupted elements of the Mythos, often discovered through luck, trial and error, or an infusion of incomplete Mythos knowledge in the distant past. However, disentangling any Mythos elements from the other aspects of a magical tradition is a hopeless endeavor.

Even the existence of Mythos magic, creatures, and gods is not widely known in 1850. Knowledge of how to actually cast a Mythos spell is extremely rare and cannot be obtained from any large or publicly-known organization.

This section provides lists of non-Mythos spells that are characteristic of each type of magic user mentioned in this chapter. Each spell has been assigned a point value, which is reflective of its power. An investigator playing a magic user may select four points worth of spells from the appropriate list, or the keeper may suggest particular spells.





Spells are provided in the following format:

- **Spell Name in Queensguard** **X point(s)**
Standard CoC Spell Name [page in CoC core]
 Special notes about the use of this spell in Queensguard, if any.

Blood Sorcerers

Blood sorcerers are the primary magic users of the Central Asian Empire. In the army, sorcerers have their own ranks, which are distinct from the enlisted ranks and the regular officer corps. They are widely respected, though they lack the authority to command other troops.

Blood magic is most effective at enhancing the abilities of the army and protecting it from harm. As such, blood sorcerers are generally given a supporting role and do not directly take part in combat. At least two blood sorcerers are personally assigned to the Kmir and protect him at all times.

Blood sorcerers typically wear robes of black or dark red with leather armor underneath. They carry vials of blood, which are used as components in many of

their spells. Spells that a blood sorcerer may know include:

- **Bloodsight** **1 point**
Cause/Cure Blindness [p. 223]
 This spell has the same effect whether cast on a blind or a sighted target. The target's eyes darken to the color of blood. He loses any existing sight and gains the ability to see the world in a range of blood-tinted hues. Though color cannot be perceived, the target is able to see in the dark.
- **Bloodstone Ward** **1 point**
Warding [p. 247]
 The sorcerer must apply a drop of her blood to each stone to be used in the ward.
- **Let No Blood Be Spilt** **1 point**
Deflect Harm [p. 232]
 Attacks against the caster or against a target whose blood is in the caster's possession may be deflected. A target to be protected must be within line of sight and 200 yards. No invocation to the Outer Gods is necessary.

- **Healing** **2 points**

Healing [p. 237]

The caster must either be touching the target or be holding a vial of the target's blood.

- **Mask of the Ordinary** **1 point**

Pose Mundane (Mask) [p. 240]

The sorcerer must smear his blood upon the object or creature to be masked. The cost for maintaining an ongoing mask is reduced to one magic point per three rounds. This spell breaks if a masked creature attacks or casts a spell.

- **Sense the Living Blood** **1 point**

Sense Life [p. 242]

- **Shield of Will** **2 points**

Bind Enemy [p. 220]

This spell requires a drop of blood from the target. No effigy or other materials are used. Only three rounds of chanting are necessary, and protection lasts only two hours. The caster may choose to protect another person rather than herself.

Mind Thieves

Mind thieves are skilled assassins used by the Central Asian Empire. Like sorcerers, mind thieves are magic users, though they possess but one magical ability.

Mind thieves excel at sneaking through the darkness and killing with blade or poison while remaining unseen. However, the most terrifying power of the mind thieves is the ability to take control of a victim for a brief period of time. This ability is a closely-guarded secret, though it is whispered that mind thieves draw upon dark, dangerous arts to accomplish their purposes.

- **Mind Theft** **4 points**

Compel Flesh [p. 225]

The mind thief must touch the target. There is no need for the target's soul to be bound, but a POW vs. POW resistance test is required for the spell to take effect. The target is conscious and experiences whatever she is forced to do. At the keeper's discretion, the target may lose Sanity points upon completion of this spell, particularly if she was compelled to do something horrific.

Viking Rune-Casters

The Vikings' early runic language, no longer in use for everyday communication, is the foundation of their rune-casters' power. A rune-caster carries a set of silver rune knives. In order to invoke a spell, she uses a knife to trace out one or more runic symbols in the air. Rune-casters' spells often involve nature or the elements and can be very damaging, ranking behind only Mythos magic in destructive potential.

- **Command the Heavens** **1 point**

Alter Weather [p. 217]

- **One with the Beast** **1 point**

Charm Animal [p. 224]

- **Cloak of Fire** **1 point**

Cloak of Fire [p. 224]

- **Mist of the Mountains** **1 point**

Create Mist of Releh [p. 230]

- **Mist of the Fjord** **1 point**

Raise Night Fog [p. 241]

- **Hammer of the Storm** **2 points**

Fist of Yog-Sothoth [p. 236]

- **Silver Shard** **2 points**

Spectral Razor [p. 243]

The blade is not invisible. It has the appearance of one of the caster's silver rune knives.

Mandinka Djelis

Originally a specialized caste of storytellers, musicians, and historians, the djelis gradually learned to enhance their arts with magic. An experienced djeli can recall vast stores of knowledge with precision, separate truth from lies, and enthrall or inspire listeners with words or music. All djelis carry instruments. Some prefer a small set of pipes, while others opt for a collapsable, xylophone-like balafon.

- **Banish Memory** **2 points**

Cloud Memory [p. 224]

- **Enthralling Words** **1 point**

Enthrall Victim [p. 235]

Unless broken sooner, this spell lasts for four hours.

- **Inspire Fear** **1 point**
Implant Fear [p. 238]
The djeli must play a short tune or tell a brief story to the target for this spell to be effective. The target will know the tune or story is unnerving, but will not necessarily realize that any magic has occurred.
- **Speed Recovery** **1 point**
Heal [p. 237]
Effects apply daily instead of weekly, per the changes to healing rate in Queensguard (see the “Rules of the Steam-Powered Age” chapter).
- **Tale of the Mind** **1 point**
Chant of Thoth [p. 224]
Rather than chanting, this spell involves the recounting of a tale of heroism and cleverness from the rich history of the Manden Kurufa.
- **The Greatest Tale Ever Told** **2 points**
Sekhmenkenhep’s Words [p. 241]
The djeli’s speech must be in the form of a story. If the story concerns recent events, listeners are convinced that things happened as described. Each listener receives a single INTx4 roll to disbelieve any particularly implausible details. Even listeners who succeed on this roll believe any plausible portions of the story. Alternately, the djeli may tell an ancient legend of the Manden Kurufa. This tale impresses upon listeners a particular moral worldview. Wherever possible, new morals complement listeners’ existing morals. In the event of an irreconcilable conflict, a listener makes a POWx4 roll. Success indicates the conflict is resolved in favor of her existing morals; failure indicates the story’s morals take precedence.
- **Words of the Flute** **1 point**
Candle Communication [p. 223]
Rather than intone words, each participant must play a particular tune on a flute or similar instrument. Only one participant need know the spell, though both must play the tune and pay the required magic and Sanity points.

Incan Sumirunas

Incan shamans, known as sumirunas, are formidable, ritualistic spellcasters. They channel power through artifacts called huacas, which are often medallions, masks, or statues forged from solid gold. The older and larger a huaca, the broader a channel it provides. Thus, a bracelet may be sufficient for minor spells, major spells may require a statue or disc several feet in length, and the greatest spells may only be executable inside an Incan temple.

In order to cast 2-point spells, the sumiruna must be touching a large and moderately old huaca. 1-point spells require no more than a small, recent huaca. A player creating a sumiruna may start with one of each. Contact with a huaca is only needed at the time of casting, not to maintain a spell’s effects.

- **Darkness of Supay** **1 point**
Dampen Light [p. 231]
No enchanted pipes are required. Instead, the sumiruna must wear a mask depicting the god of death, Supay. The sumiruna performs a ritual dance to maintain the darkness.
- **Dreams from Uku Pacha** **1 point**
Nightmare [p. 239]
- **Gift of the Bat** **2 points**
Bat Form [p. 219]
- **Grasp of Pachacamac** **1 point**
Grasp of Cthulhu [p. 236]
This spell does not reduce the target’s strength.
- **Trickery of Konira Wirakocha** **1 point**
Evil Eye [p. 235]
- **Viracocha’s Command** **2 points**
Dominate [p. 232]
- **Visions of Inti** **1 point**
Conjure Glass of Mortlan [p. 225]
Instead of a crystal ball, a disc depicting the sun god Inti is required. The chance for success is equal to the caster’s *Thaumaturgy* skill, not *Cthulhu Mythos* skill. The 20% chance for the vision to come under the sway of a Great Old One remains unchanged.

ACT 1: VALEN'S TOWER

Summary of the Act

The Queen summons the investigators and explains that the war against the Kmir is going poorly. She sends them to the Tower of Cambridge to instruct the Philosophers to bring their inventions south to help with the war effort.

A terrible storm is in progress, leading to great flooding in Cambridge. The investigators find that the people of the town have erected a tent encampment on some high ground. A strange, iron vehicle with disturbing Mythos imagery forged into its armor rests outside the Tower.

When the investigators visit the tent encampment, townsfolk claim that there are beast men in the forest and complain that the Philosophers scavenge items from the flooded town and refuse to help them. When the investigators examine the iron vehicle, they can break in to discover wards designed to contain some sort of magical creature.

When the investigators approach the Tower, they encounter a thief fleeing from the building: a starving townsfolk who has taken food from the Philosophers. The Philosophers use a Mythos-modified consequence engine to briefly take control of the thief's body and force him to blind himself. He goes temporarily insane and cannot provide useful information for the time being.

Inside the tower, the investigators are asked by the tower warden to wait in the library while Valen is summoned. With a plan to distract the warden, they may recover a tome on "Wardbreaking." Valen arrives and promises that he will be ready to send forces to aid the Queen within a week. Upon questioning Valen, the investigators notice that it is hard to act against his will. The investigators may begin to suspect that there is a psychological ward shielding him from hostile intent.

By the time the investigators leave the Tower, the thief is again sane. He begs the investigators to take him into the forest, where they will meet the Brotherhood of the Wolf. The investigators follow his directions and encounter the Brotherhood, a group of

outlaws who hate the Philosophers and claim to be working to help the townsfolk. Their charismatic leader, Eli White, and the former Philosopher Dmitry provide good evidence that the Philosophers are delving into black and evil arts. Dmitry also tells the investigators to search the Tower library, if they have not yet recovered the Wardbreaking book.

When the investigators return to the Tower, the iron vehicle flees toward Manhattan, belching smoke and crackling with electricity. They find the Tower to be locked. They may sneak inside through one of several methods. Either now or earlier, the investigators use the book to learn a spell to break wards.

The Tower is largely deserted, but eventually the investigators come to a door with chanting behind it. Inside, they find Valen has summoned two horrific creatures and has imprisoned the other Philosophers. He is in the middle of a ritual that will sacrifice all of them in order to summon a Great Old One. The investigators attempt to defeat the two creatures and the tower warden. They use the wardbreaking spell to shatter the psychological ward surrounding Valen, rendering him vulnerable. Then they try to stop Valen. The investigators can plausibly succeed or fail at this battle. Either way involves a dramatic conclusion and leads into Act 2.

If the investigators fail to stop Valen, he summons the Great Old One Cyaegha. As the investigators run out of the Tower, they see it collapse behind them, and the horrific tentacled Old One rises from the wreckage. It floats over to the tent encampment and kills the villagers. It then hovers over the ruins of Cambridge. It will not pay attention to the investigators unless they bother it.

If the investigators stop Valen, they free the other Philosophers. The investigators can recover a Mythos tome and a scroll bearing a "Ritual of Unpossession" from Valen's chambers. The freed Philosophers thank the investigators and offer to let them use their airship. If asked, they explain that the iron vehicle is a 'demon carriage,' a craft designed to safely transport unstable entities across long distances. Eli White, leader of the Brotherhood, accompanies the investigators back to see the Queen.



Introductory Information for Players

Before the game, introduce the core concepts of Queensguard to the players.

Well-educated investigators may know some or all of the information in the “Tour of the World of Queensguard” chapter. Players may also have read the Prologue, though this information is not known to investigators (yet).

At a minimum, every player should be familiar with two subsections of the preceding chapter: “The War with America” and “The Queensguard.” It is most important to mention the privileges and duties associated with being a member of the Queensguard. The privileges are a quick way to get across the essence of what it means to belong to the Queensguard. The duties emphasize that the Queensguard's highest loyalty is to the realm, rather than to the Queen personally. The purpose of laying this foundation now is to ensure that players feel as though they may act against the Queen if the need to do so is sufficiently dire. This may lead to thoughtful, difficult choices in Act 2 (such as whether to cooperate with the Kmir), which might not even receive consideration if players believe they are personal, sworn servants of the Queen.

A Meeting with the Queen

The game begins in early November of 1850 at the castle on Manhattan island. The investigators are currently assigned to the realm guard, the branch of the Queensguard that carries out investigative activities, rather than the personal guard, which remains at Manhattan to protect the Queen. Unless an investigator is not a member of the Queensguard (and is trusted by the Queen for some other reason), the investigators already know each other.

Her Majesty Elaine calls the investigators to her royal conference chamber. Her chamber door is guarded by two members of the personal guard. Elaine has no guards inside, as she trusts all members of the Queensguard.

Elaine is an experienced monarch. She assumed the throne as a teenager, and she is now entering middle age. Despite her advancing years, the Queen re-

mains energetic and fierce. Above all, she is deeply committed to the concept of honor.

At Elaine's side is a small brass automaton about two feet in height. It sees through an emerald optical lens, and a steam whistle is built into its back. This robot is one of the Queen's treasured possessions. It is not fully sapient, but it can understand and obey simple commands. Elaine uses it to fetch items, read documents to her, and so forth.

The Queen provides the players with a copy of the letter from Sigfried Falk, Inspector General of the Queensguard. (This letter is the third item in the Prologue section. It describes Falk's visit to the Tower of Cambridge, including the flooding and Valen's odd behavior.) Elaine explains that it has been almost a month since she received the letter, and Falk is now a week late in returning to Manhattan. The Queen is not yet worried about Falk, since the terrible weather could plausibly have delayed him this long. However, matters of war cannot wait for his return.

The Queen's attention has been directed southward, as the invading army led by the Kmir has pushed north from the Carolinas, occupying Virginia and parts of Maryland and Delaware. The Kmir's forces have displayed an uncanny ability to advance rapidly through difficult terrain. Elaine has come to believe that a major battle, which will decide the future of the realm, is unavoidable.

As such, she asks the players to go to Cambridge. She tells them, “Conduct a brief investigation of your own in order to verify that nothing has changed for the worse since Falk's visit. In addition, you must meet with this Valen Albrecht and instruct him to take his best Philosophers and travel to Manhattan, that we may prepare for battle with the Kmir. I shall have great need of their services, for the fighting will be bitter. However, even in such dire straits, we shall comport ourselves with the honor and chivalry that form the backbone of this Kingdom. For, if we win the battle but lose our honor, the victory shall be Phyrrie indeed.”

Before they depart, the Queen asks the investigators if they have any questions. She is willing to fulfill any reasonable requests for supplies. If the investigators have the foresight to ask for gold (to pay for



passage on a ship or to bribe a Philosopher), the Queen writes a promissory note, which the investigators may take to the royal treasury. They can obtain up to 1,000 gold in this manner, which is the equivalent of \$10,000 US.

Keeper's Scene Notes: Aside from launching the plot, the main goal of this scene is to make the players understand that the Philosophers are desperately needed in the war. You do not want the players to barge into the Tower and try to arrest or kill Valen on the basis of Falk's letter or Valen's creepy behavior. It is not illegal to be creepy. The urgency of the war gives the players incentive to investigate enough to be sure the Philosophers are loyal, but it helps prevent them from jumping to conclusions about Valen and thereby derailing the plot.

The Queen emphasizes the need for honor, even at the risk of her kingdom. Aside from giving the Queen an interesting personality trait, this view is emphasized here so that it will contrast strongly with her behavior at the beginning of Act 2, when she is possessed by the monster. This contrast will help make it clear to players that the Queen has been possessed.

The Storm-Wracked City

The investigators begin by traveling to Cambridge and exploring the area.

The Journey to Cambridge

A map of America appears in the "Tour of the World of Queensguard" chapter. It may be helpful for visualizing travel throughout the campaign. Similarly, the "Travel Times by Mode" section at the end of the first chapter will be useful for determining the time required to make various journeys.

The investigators must travel to Cambridge, which is 215 miles east-northeast of Manhattan. The nor'easter (a powerful storm) mentioned in Falk's letter is ongoing. This prevents the investigators from traveling by airship and makes the use of electric carriages impractical. The investigators are free to use any means at their disposal to make the journey. They may requisition horses from the castle stables, in which case they must move at the rate of

the group's slowest horse in storm conditions (10.5 miles per day, which requires three weeks of travel). The game's plot does not penalize investigators for taking this long to reach Cambridge, though players should feel a sense of urgency at the Kmir's coming attack and likely will seek a faster option.

The other primary means of reaching Cambridge is by ship. The town of New York, across the bridge from Manhattan, has a harbor where merchant vessels are docked. The investigators may learn about which ships are planning to sail where by asking sailors at the docks or in nearby taverns. (The sailors are suspicious sorts and will be more willing to talk if the investigators hide the fact that they are members of the Queensguard.)

Most captains are not willing to risk a journey in the storm. However, one vessel can wait no longer, and the captain plans to depart within the next day. The captain's name is Alma Freestone, and her ship is the Tradewind. Alma is a merchant, and she is transporting a cargo of textiles and dye to Montréal. Cambridge is conveniently on the way. She is disinclined to take passengers. The investigators can use their authority as members of the Queensguard to compel Alma to transport them, or they may buy passage for 10 gold each.

A journey by ship requires two days. Upon arrival at Cambridge, Alma's crew uses a longboat to put the investigators ashore. The crew then returns to the Tradewind, and the ship sails on to Montréal.

Alternatively, the investigators might steal a ship. This should be challenging due to frequent dock patrols. Investigators may pilot a stolen boat to Cambridge, but failure on a difficult *Pilot Boat* check indicates that the ship crashes into an unseen, underwater building and is irreparably damaged upon arrival.

The Lay of the Land

It is nighttime when the investigators arrive at Cambridge. The city's buildings are in a low-lying area, which is now completely flooded. Most single-story buildings are entirely submerged. Some two-story buildings, including the town hall, stick up out of the water.

On a rise about a mile distant, the investigators can see a tent encampment. This is a refugee camp for the people of Cambridge who have fled the city.

Two miles farther inland, the players can see the Tower of Cambridge. The Tower is now on a low island, surrounded by floodwaters.

There is a vast forest, which begins at the coast and stretches many miles inland. The southern edge of the forest is very near to the tent encampment. The Tower is one-half mile south of the forest.

Players may explore the various parts of Cambridge in any order. On the way to the first location, investigators hear wolf howls coming intermittently from the woods. To an investigator with a successful *Listen* roll, it sounds as though the wolf howls are being made by humans.

The Flooded City

The investigators may approach the flooded buildings. This part of the city is entirely uninhabited. The vast majority of buildings are one story in height—these are entirely submerged, or only the roofs stick up from the waves. Two-story buildings in the town include the town hall, the central market, three wealthy residents' homes, and the church.

Investigators not wearing chain or plate armor may swim out to the buildings. An investigator who swims out to the buildings (or from shore, an investigator with a successful *Archaeology* roll) will no-

tice that the iron and metal components of the buildings appear to be missing.

The Forest

At this point in the game, the investigators cannot find anything in the forest. The pounding rain obliterates all tracks almost immediately, and the wolf howls stop by the time the investigators reach the woods. If it is nighttime, the darkness further complicates matters. The investigators will be able to more productively visit the forest later, when they have a guide.

The Tent Encampment

The tent encampment is a cluster of one hundred soaked tents on the edge of the forest. Villagers have also erected small, wooden shelters to shield cooking fires from the rain. In some areas, farm animals (mostly pigs and ducks) are tied to stakes in the ground, as there has been no opportunity to build proper animal pens.

The people of Cambridge are miserable. Some tents are very crowded, as there are not enough tents for every family to have its own. About 600 people live in the camp. This is just a fraction of the former population of Cambridge. Many have died of infectious disease, while others have left the area entirely. Some joined the Brotherhood of the Wolf, but most townsfolk are unaware of that group.

The people of Cambridge are suspicious, and they blame the Queen for not sending them help. They also resent the Philosophers for hiding inside their warm, dry tower and rendering them no aid. If the investigators pose as travelers, a good explanation for their presence and a successful *Fast Talk* roll will entice the townsfolk to commiserate with them. If the investigators reveal themselves as members of the Queensguard, a *Persuade* roll can convince the townsfolk that the investigators are there to help.



The citizens complain about the weather, their lost homes, and the lack of food. They accuse the Philosophers of stealing possessions out of their flooded houses. Lastly, they claim that there are beast-men in the woods, whom they fear. The townsfolk are not able to give precise details regarding any of these things. In particular, evidence for the existence of beast-men is highly circumstantial: howling, missing food, a young man who disappeared after entering the woods, etc.

As the keeper, you should feel free to make up all sorts of additional, minor misfortunes that the townsfolk can blame (wrongly) on the Philosophers. However, it should be reasonably clear that these things are not important to the plot so that the players don't waste too much time chasing red herrings. (For instance, a farmer making a great fuss about his favorite pig becoming ill is a good choice, but a woman agonizing over a vanished necklace may seem too plot-relevant.)

Approach to the Tower

The investigators must walk two miles inland to reach the Tower of Cambridge. The Tower rises 20 stories into the stormy night, making it the tallest building in the Kingdom of America. A pair of huge, iron doors serve as the main entrance. Attached to the Tower is a 5-story factory annex. A short distance away is a large airship hangar.

The buildings are all constructed on a low hill. Water surrounds the hill on all sides, but in most spots it is no deeper than a person's waist, so investigators may wade across without *Swim* checks. Past the water, there are patches of dense shrubbery and small copses of trees scattered about. Areas near to the Tower have been cleared of vegetation.

The Demon Carriage

The investigators notice a large vehicle resting behind the Tower, near the hangar. This is the Demon Carriage, though players will not learn that name until the end of Act 1. The craft has enormous wheels, its hull is covered in iron armor plates, and several large gears are visible on either side. A smokestack emerges near the back. Tell the players,

“You have an uneasy feeling looking at it, even from this great distance.”

Offer the players the opportunity to approach the vehicle or to approach the Tower. Treat them as two distinct locations. (This allows investigators who anticipate sanity point losses to avoid seeing the vehicle up close, and it also prevents the thief from interrupting the investigators when they are examining the vehicle, as noted in the “A Thief in the Night” subsection, below.)

Investigators who approach the vehicle may examine it more closely. Describe the general form of the vehicle for the players, mentioning that there is an access hatch on the top. Then say, “Bas-reliefs are cast into the iron armor plates bolted to the vehicle's body. These take the form of strange, otherworldly creatures. One is depicted sucking a struggling soldier into its gaping maw. Another shows a formless ooze overtaking a fleeing electric carriage. The sight claws at your mind, awakening a deep, hazy sort of dread. You can almost picture such creatures alive, walking the Earth.”

Any investigator who views the bas-reliefs must roll for a 1/1d3 Sanity point loss. Each viewer also gains 1% in the *Cthulu Mythos* skill.

Investigators may learn more about the Demon Carriage. Tell an investigator who succeeds a *Know* roll, “The bas-reliefs do not resemble the work done by the Philosophers in the past. You cannot identify them.” An investigator examining the mechanism or physical structure of the craft should make a *Natural Philosophy* roll. If successful, she learns, “An internal, steam-powered engine drives the gears and enables the vehicle to move. It appears to be capable of very great speeds—much higher than an electric carriage. The vehicle has no obvious weapons and is sealed against intrusion by water.”

The access hatch on the top is locked, and it is too tough to be forced by the investigators. A *Locksmith* roll will grant access to the interior. Inside, investigators see controls to drive the vehicle, a steam engine, and an electric power system. There are also strange symbols cast in iron plates mounted spherically around the cockpit. A *Thaumaturgy* roll reveals that these are magical wards designed to con-



tain some sort of entity inside the vehicle. (No entity is presently inside, other than the investigators.)

The investigators may attempt to drive the vehicle via an *Operate Heavy Machinery* or *Drive Carriage* roll. They learn that the engine has no fuel, so the vehicle cannot move.

Keeper's Scene Notes: It is important that the investigators not destroy the vehicle because it must survive to carry the monster to Manhattan later in Act 1. The investigators are unlikely to make the attempt, as their mission (at present) is to instruct the Philosophers to bring their inventions south to aid in the war. Light to moderate damage can be repaired by the Philosophers while the investigators are visiting the Brotherhood of the Wolf. In the unlikely event the investigators manage to wreck the vehicle beyond conceivable repair, you likely will need to introduce an alternate vehicle later in the Act. A small airship that emerges from the top of the Tower (despite the storm) is a good choice.

The Airship Hangar

The hangar is locked, but a *Locksmith* roll will open a small side door. Inside, the investigators find a partially-deconstructed airship. It appears to lack many pieces that would be essential to its successful operation. There are a few odd tools scattered about, but nothing of interest.

A Thief in the Rain

When the investigators decide to approach the tower, they see a man dimly through the haze (no roll necessary). He is running away from the Tower, attempting to reach a cluster of dense bushes close to the water's edge. His path takes him somewhat near to the investigators, whom he hasn't seen.

This man is Earnhard Gillman, a member of the Brotherhood of the Wolf. An hour ago, he broke into the Tower in search of food and weapons. He is now fleeing from the Tower, having picked a lock on a set of barred windows and lowered himself to the ground. He possesses a shoulder bag, a rope, three days' worth of stolen food, and a rusty kitchen knife.

Earnhard is fleeing in a great hurry because the Philosophers discovered his presence. After repeated

thefts over the past weeks, Valen decided to enhance Tower security with a Philosopher on guard duty at all times. This Philosopher is using a consequence engine (see the description in the "Tour of the World of Queensguard" chapter) that has been upgraded with Mythos principles Valen recently learned.

Mythos-Modified Consequence Engine:

In addition to the functions of a normal consequence engine, a Mythos-modified consequence engine allows its user to cast the spell *Mesmerize* (CoC Core, p. 239) on any target the user can see. The user's incorporeal, floating form is the relevant one for purposes of spellcasting, not the user's physical body, which remains connected to the engine. Casting *Mesmerize* in this way does not require a DEX rank or any *Occult* or *Cthulhu Mythos* skill, and the target need not see the caster. However, as with other uses of a consequence engine, a successful *Thaumaturgy* roll must precede the attempt. Keeping a target mesmerized requires the user's complete attention, and the target receives a POW vs. POW resistance test to break the spell every 3 rounds.

When Earnhard is near to the investigators, he is mesmerized by the Philosopher on guard duty inside the Tower. He falls to the ground as though tripped by an invisible log. He pushes himself to his knees and holds out his empty hands, palms facing up. A look of terror comes over his face. "Dear Queen, NO!" he shrieks just before he plunges his hands into his eyes, tearing at his eyeballs. He is immediately blinded, loses 5 Sanity points (his total is unimportant), and is rendered temporarily insane. Any investigator who witnesses this scene must roll for a 0/1d4 Sanity point loss.

His task accomplished, the Philosopher who mesmerized Earnhard then breaks off the spell.

At this point, the players likely have no idea what just happened. Earnhard himself, however, did have some idea regarding what was going on, as one of the other members of the Brotherhood who tried to steal from the Philosophers was found in the woods, blinded, earlier in the week.

While insane, Earnhard is only able to sit and weep (without tears). He intermittently raves about a dark



tower, wolves in the forest, and a river as warm as blood (a reference to one of the means of access to the Tower). He won't answer questions or talk coherently on any topic. He won't prevent the investigators from moving him away from the Tower, but he will become panicked and resist being brought closer. He won't move on his own.

If the investigators take Earnhard far away from the Tower (for instance, to the tent encampment), then Earnhard has a flash of sanity at the moment when the investigators are leaving him. He grabs the nearest investigator's hand, his eyes brighten, and he begs the investigators to come back and see him. He begins to say why this is critical, but his explanation dissolves into insanity before he can get it out.

Contingency: If the investigators manage to prevent Earnhard from blinding himself (most easily by restraining him when he is mesmerized), this scene plays out differently. Earnhard is grateful to the investigators for saving his sight. He admits that he stole food from the Tower because he and other villagers are starving and explains that he must go to the tent encampment now in order to distribute the food. He asks the group to come see him there the next morning, after they have visited the Tower. Earnhard promises that, at that time, he will have valuable information for the investigators. If pressed, he claims that he cannot provide the information now because he doesn't have it with him.

Keeper's Scene Notes: The purpose of this scene is to introduce Earnhard and to give the investigators a clue regarding how things have gone wrong at the Tower. This is best done before the investigators enter the Tower so they can question Valen about the incident. However, Earnhard must not give the investigators solid information about the Brotherhood of the Wolf right now, because it is important that the investigators visit the Tower first. (If they speak with the Brotherhood first, the investigators are likely to confront Valen about his evil activities upon their first visit to the Tower, making the closing battle for Act 1 disorganized and very difficult for the investigators.) The best way to avoid this problem is to make it impossible to locate the Brotherhood without Earnhard's guidance, and Earnhard can't or won't provide guidance until after the players have visited the Tower.

Contingency: If the players somehow manage to compel a sane Earnhard to lead them to the Brotherhood before visiting the Tower, then the Brotherhood is too suspicious of the investigators to provide helpful information. Eli White, the leader of the Brotherhood, insists that the investigators recover a book on "Wardbreaking" from the Tower library (see below). In return, they will provide critical evidence for the investigators. In this case, most of the events in the "Brotherhood of the Wolf" section below occur during the investigators' second visit.

Into the Domain of the Philosophers

After encountering Earnhard Gillman, the players are most likely to approach the Tower's main entrance. If the investigators instead decide to break in and take a look around, see the "Contingency" at the very end of this section for the relevant considerations.

The main entrance is sealed by a pair of black, iron doors, each three stories high. Bas-reliefs depict scenes of Philosophers and soldiers using steam technology for the glory of America. There is neither handle nor knocker. The investigators may gain the attention of the tower warden by pounding on the doors or yelling.

The Tower Warden

The Tower of Cambridge has a guard force of ten men-at-arms led by a tower warden. These individuals are part of the Philosophers' hierarchy, and they report to the Grand Chancellor for instructions.

The current tower warden is Stonton of Torigni. Stonton only recently became the tower warden, following a promotion by Valen. (The former warden passed away shortly after Valen became Grand Chancellor.) Stonton is an enormous man with exceptional military training. He is dedicated to his work and has essentially no empathy for others, both traits Valen found highly desirable for his purposes. In the months since Stonton's appointment, Valen has utterly corrupted what few moral principles the warden possessed. He now serves Valen unquestioningly.

Several times in the past two weeks, Stonton has had to drive away starving villagers begging for food. Stonton regards this task as a bothersome nuisance. The warden is aware that the Philosophers have recently begun blinding intruders, though he's not clear on exactly how this is accomplished.

When the investigators arrive, Stonton is in the guard chambers off the main entry hall. When he hears the investigators yelling or banging on the door, he assumes they are villagers come to demand something of the Philosophers. He walks into the entry hall and yells through the doors, "What, still more of ye? Begone a'fore ye all be blind as bats!"

If the investigators do not identify themselves as members of the Queensguard, it will be difficult to convince Stonton to let them inside. Stonton's orders essentially amount to, "Keep everyone out unless it would cause more problems to do so than to let them in." Stonton will let the investigators inside only if they convince him that this would be best for everyone, Valen included.

If the investigators identify themselves as members of the Queensguard, Stonton is incredulous. He says, "Ha, that be one I ain't heard before! Still, ye not be gettin' any food." The players may convince Stonton with a *Persuade* roll, good role-playing, or Stonton will recognize one of the investigators' voices with a successful *Fame* roll.

Once the investigators convince Stonton that they are members of the Queensguard, he decides that keeping them out would definitely cause more trouble than letting them in. Complaining loudly about the trouble he goes to, the investigators' awful imposition on the Chancellor, and even the fact that rain will get in, Stonton pulls a lever. The iron doors slowly swing outward, accompanied by the clattering of gears and the hiss of hydraulic pistons.

The Style of the Tower

More than any other location in the game, the Tower of Cambridge provides an opportunity to convey the sense of being in a lavish steampunk environment. Rooms are lit by flickering, electric lights connected by long coils of wire. Brass pipes run along corridor walls, giving the impression of being inside a vast, Victorian submarine.

Doors all are powered by steam pipes and are capable of moving under their own power. In lieu of a traditional key, each door requires a precisely-shaped gear to be fit into a socket in its control mechanism.

A pneumatic tube system runs throughout the building. Ornate capsules, six inches in diameter, carry messages and small objects between offices and workshops. Artwork on the walls is in constant motion—dioramas and sculptures brought to life by gears and springs. Water clocks, pendulums, and other oddities abound.

Depending on your preference, you can choose to paint the environment in dark tones, like a mad scientist's laboratory, or to evoke a sense of wonder at the marvelous accomplishments of the Philosophers.

The Tower Library

Inside the entry hall, the investigators see the tower warden and two guards. Stonton stands six and a half feet tall. He has a sword sheathed at his side and grips a halberd in one hand. He wears a long hauberk of black chain. The warden waits for the investigators to explain what they need.

The investigators most likely ask to see Valen (in order to deliver the message from the Queen) or they ask to look around the Tower (in order to ensure that matters have not worsened since Sigfried Falk wrote his letter). Either way, the warden sends the two guards to find Valen and leads the investigators to a side room where they may wait more comfortably.

The side room is a small library. It contains many shelves of dusty books, several suits of armor with gears and small mechanisms at the joints, a brass telescope connected to several cranks, an orrery which is constantly in motion, and an odd device shining light through a crystal. (This is a machine used to inspect the purity of reactant crystals.)

Stonton ushers the investigators inside, then enters the library himself and closes the door. He stands with his back to the door, watching the investigators to make sure they don't steal or break anything. He does not interfere with attempts to examine the devices or books, as long as they are not touched.



Investigators studying the devices and armor find nothing unexpected. An investigator examining the dusty books should make a *Spot Hidden* or a *Library Use* roll. With a success, the investigator notices a book that is not dusty and was recently moved or added to the library. The title is “Wardbreaking: What Your Summoner Doesn’t Want You to Know.”

In order to acquire the Wardbreaking book, the tower warden must be distracted. It is easiest if one investigator distracts the warden while another swipes the book. Investigators only have a limited amount of time to notice and steal the Wardbreaking book before Valen arrives.

A complete description of the **Wardbreaking book** is available in the “Scrolls and Books” section of the Reference Materials chapter.

Keeper’s Scene Notes: When the investigators have a chance to examine the book in private, you should explain to them all of the information about it that appears in the “Scrolls and Books” section, including the time required to learn the spell. If investigators recover the Wardbreaking book now, each investigator is likely to have at least two (and possibly three) attempts at learning the spell before the battle at the end of Act 1. This is a reward for obtaining the book without help. The investigators will have a chance to recover the book after meeting with the Brotherhood, but if they wait until then, investigators who fail a roll to learn the spell will not get another attempt before the end of the Act.

A Meeting With the Chancellor

After a few minutes, or immediately after investigators recover the Wardbreaking book, there is a soft knock on the door. Stonton opens the door, and Valen Albrecht enters the room, followed by six guards.

Valen is extremely thin, like a skeleton clad in skin and ropey muscle. His eyes are sunken, but bright. He looks like a man who is ill or is pushing his body to its limits. His black, professorial robe features a design of interlocking gears embroidered in gold thread. He wears an elaborate set of goggles pushed back on his skull-like head. One lens is flipped down over his right eye.



In contrast to Stonton, Valen is extremely polite and gentlemanly. His smile is warm, and he gladly (if tiredly) answers any questions the investigators manage to ask him (see “Valen’s Ward,” below). In this encounter, he should do nothing to arouse the investigators’ suspicions or give them cause to arrest or attack him. Answers to some likely questions for Valen follow:

- At some point, the investigators should ask Valen to travel south with his best Philosophers and steam creations in order to help the Queen in the upcoming battle against the Kmir. Valen regrets the interruption but understands that this is the solemn duty of the Philosophers and one of the reasons for the order’s existence. He requests a week to prepare for departure, but he can be bargained down to three days. He insists a minimum of three days are necessary to pack up equipment and prepare for the journey. In order to enable this great hurry, Valen politely requests the investigators attempt to keep out of the way, so as not to interfere with the preparations for travel.
- Valen is happy to provide information on the Tower’s current projects. These include a steam-powered battering ram, a more powerful chemical explosive, and shielding to allow an airship to operate in storm conditions. None of these projects are functional at present.
- If asked about the vehicle outside, Valen explains that its purpose is to horrify and demoralize enemy troops. “Isn’t it remarkably disturbing?” he asks. If the investigators admit they broke into it and ask about the warding inside, Valen claims it is to protect the driver of the vehicle. “Who knows what horrors the Kmir and his followers might unleash?”
- The investigators may ask about the blinding of intruders like Earnhard Gillman. Valen acknowledges that they have recently begun using this tactic as a means of guarding their property from thieves and vandals. He says, “While it is unfortunate that such methods are necessary, blinding is a completely non-lethal means of ensuring that no thief will twice jeopardize the Queen’s important work being done here, and it also serves as an effective deterrent to others. However, you are the

Valen’s Ward:

Valen is protected by a psychological ward, a Mythos-based magical effect that shields him from hostile intent and influences the way others treat him. This ward’s effects are subconscious and cannot be perceived by the investigators.

Any time an investigator wishes to ask a question that Valen would prefer not to answer, call for the player to make a POWx4 roll. If the player fails the roll, his investigator feels that such a question would be too rude, too private, would impose on Valen too greatly, or whatever other hang-up is appropriate to the situation. The investigator may never willingly ask Valen that question or any similar question. He feels that this is his own decision and has no clue that any magic influenced his choice.

If an investigator succeeds at the POWx4 roll, he perceives nothing unusual and may proceed to ask his question without hinderance.

In the unlikely event that an investigator declares that she wants to arrest or attack Valen, she must pass a POWx1 roll. If the player fails, the investigator feels there has not been sufficient cause to warrant such action. This effect lasts until she receives new information about Valen from the Brotherhood of the Wolf.

Once the investigators have immediate, manifest cause to attack Valen (during the battle at the end of Act 1), the ward can no longer operate subtly or instill lasting convictions in the investigators. However, it does force a POWx1 roll before any hostile action may be taken against Valen. See the section on the battle, at the end of this chapter, for complete details.

experts at guarding, and if you so advise, I am willing to put a stop the practice.”

- If they have visited the tent encampment, the investigators might ask whether the Philosophers have been scavenging items from the flooded city. Valen explains that the supply caravans, which the Queen regularly sent to the Tower in the past, have been diverted due to the war effort. As a result, the Tower has run perilously low on iron. In order to



continue their work, the Philosophers have been extracting metal from the ruined buildings and melting it down in the Tower's forges.

- If asked about Sigfried Falk, Valen truthfully explains that Falk visited the Tower, found nothing objectionable, and left. Falk was provided with great hospitality during his stay. Valen claims to know nothing of what happened to Falk after he left the Tower.

After Valen is done answering questions, he politely informs the investigators that they may return to the Queen and inform her to expect the Philosophers three days after their own arrival. Valen hopes the investigators will depart and not return.

If an investigator passes a POWx4 roll to ignore Valen's ward, he may ask for the group to stay in the Tower during the preparation period and to travel back to Manhattan with the Philosophers. Valen will grant this request. He issues them a gear key to a suite of guest rooms and instructs the guards to allow the group free passage to and from the Tower.

Also with a POWx4 roll, the investigators may ask for a tour of the Tower. In this case, Valen begs off but lets the warden and guards conduct the tour. The tour shows the airship hangar, the forges (where a stream of cooling water can be seen plunging through an iron grate), several laboratories for working with chemicals, and a room where the assembly of an enormous, mechanical battering ram is underway. The tour route passes an odd staircase which winds up into the darkness. If the investigators ask about it, they will be shown a "security room" containing a Mythos-modified consequence engine and a Philosopher operator. You may wish to make up other labs and facilities to include on the tour. No area in the Tower contains any illegal equipment or projects. Except for Valen, no Philosopher whom the group meets is disloyal to Manhattan.

Secretly, Valen is suspicious of the investigators' motives. He (falsely) believes that the Queen suspects him of delving into the black arts and her stories of the coming battle with the Kmir are an excuse to separate him from his work at the Tower.

Keeper's Scene Notes: Aside from introducing Valen to the players and furthering their investigation, this scene serves two purposes. First, it alerts Valen to the presence of the Queensguard and leads him to believe that the Queen has caught on to his plotting. This causes him to dangerously accelerate his projects to dispatch the Demon Carriage to Manhattan and to summon a Great Old One. This is necessary setup for the battle at the end of Act 1. The second purpose of the scene is to lead the players to suspect that Valen might be protected by some sort of magic, so they will know to seek a way to defeat this obstacle before rushing into battle.

Contingency: The meeting with Valen should not give the investigators sufficient evidence to arrest or attack him. In the event one player makes the attempt and succeeds on a POWx1 roll, the others are unlikely to be able to assist. The warden and Valen's guards will be able to stop a lone investigator and, unless the situation is defused by conciliatory words, they will kick the group out of the Tower.

Contingency: Instead of announcing themselves to the tower warden, the group may choose to break into the Tower and sneak around. In order to get in, the investigators must navigate the obstacles detailed in the "Return to the Tower" section below. Once they are inside, you will need to improvise the exploration of the vast, fully-occupied structure. The investigators may encounter many of the same rooms they would have seen if given a tour of the Tower, as noted above.

Unless the players have firm plans to meet with Valen after sneaking about, you should try to arrange for them to be caught. (Steampunk security systems may be very helpful in this regard.) If the investigators are caught, they might announce their affiliation with the Queensguard. Otherwise, they are searched and this fact is discovered. The Philosophers realize these are no ordinary intruders, and a meeting with Valen occurs. This meeting with Valen may proceed roughly as described above. If you cannot arrange for the investigators to be caught, at least they should be sighted, so Valen has a reason to accelerate his Demon Carriage and summoning projects.

The Brotherhood of the Wolf

When the investigators leave the Tower, Earnhard Gillman is no longer insane. If he was left sitting near the Tower, he has been unable to navigate anywhere in his blinded state. He hears the investigators emerge and calls out for help. If the investigators brought Earnhard elsewhere, they should remember his sane exhortation to return and see him. If they spared him from being blinded, the investigators should remember Earnhard's promise of valuable information.

When the investigators meet up with Earnhard, he asks them to take him into the forest, where they will encounter the "Brotherhood of the Wolf." Earnhard explains that the Brotherhood is a group of non-violent outlaws who are working for the good of the people of Cambridge. He promises that, from the Brotherhood, the investigators will "hear the true history of what has been going on in Cambridge."

When the investigators head into the forest, Earnhard provides guidance for them. If blind, he describes landmarks and paths the investigators should seek. A successful *Track* roll will enable them to easily follow Earnhard's directions. Otherwise, the investigators may wander for quite some time before being found by the Brotherhood.

The Brotherhood realizes the investigators are nearing their encampment, and they set up an ambush. They see the group is being guided by a (likely blind) Earnhard, and they fear that the investigators are compelling Earnhard to lead them to the group's hideout. The investigators will need to defuse this tense situation.

The investigators may notice movement in the trees around them with a *Spot Hidden* roll. If they fail, an ambusher suddenly steps out onto the forest track ahead of the

group and demands they drop their weapons. Earnhard will protest that these people are here to help, but the Brotherhood fears that Earnhard may be forced to say this in order to save his own life, so they do not immediately believe him. The investigators may explain the situation to the Brotherhood's satisfaction without too much difficulty, particularly if they dropped their weapons when so ordered.

The ambushers are all ragged, scarred men and women. They lead the investigators to their encampment and introduce them to the leader of the Brotherhood, Eli White.

The Story of Eli White

Eli White is a charismatic and attractive man, toughened by life in the forest, yet retaining a veneer of gentility from his days as a politician. He thanks the investigators for safely returning Earnhard Gillman and offers to describe the events which have befallen Cambridge and the creation of the Brotherhood.

Eli explains that he was a member of the Cambridge village council, a group of elected citizens who governed the town along with the appointed mayor. He says, "Several months ago, conditions in Cambridge began to rapidly deteriorate. A terrible storm—a nor'easter of unprecedented duration and power, began to ravage the area.

"The storm caused terrible flooding. Illness swept through the town, killing many of the young and



elderly. Houses were ruined, and many collapsed. Order was breaking down. The town council sent messages to Manhattan, begging the Queen to send aid, but no one came. We next appealed to the Philosophers, but they refused to help, sealing themselves inside their monstrous tower. When the Philosophers' supply carriages couldn't get through, they took advantage of the collapsed houses, stealing the iron parts to melt down in their furnaces. As the disease got worse and starvation set in, we realized that it was all up to us. Nobody would be coming to help."

Eli pauses to give the investigators a chance to comment or ask questions. If they ask about the Brotherhood, or if they ask nothing, he proceeds:

"We formed the Brotherhood of the Wolf as a secret society, to shield it from hostility and interference. The Brotherhood exists to serve the people, not cold academics in their stone tower, nor a far-off Queen. We desire authority: the authority to tax the Philosophers, who have always taken from the people of Cambridge and given nothing in return. We desire the authority to govern ourselves and to divert taxes from the Queen's bottomless coffers to a local establishment that will hire and train both guards and aid workers. In short, we demand a measure of autonomy, and if the Queen will not give it to us, we must consider secession."

At this point, the players are likely to object. To request increased autonomy from the Queen is acceptable, but to talk of outright secession is treason. However, Eli's treason is mitigated by the fact that he has gone through a terrible experience at Cambridge, his goals are fundamentally good, and his grievances against the Queen are genuine; she really has been neglecting Cambridge (because she has been entirely occupied by the war in the south). Eli attempts to diplomatically deflect the investigators' complaints by assuring them that these are long-term plans, he wishes to first consult with the Queen on the matter, and there are much more dire concerns to address right now.

He says, "In the short term, we desire to stop the Philosophers. You should, too, for they have been as treacherous to the Crown as they have been to the people."

He begins by explaining that the Philosophers have begun to blind Brotherhood members. "Poor Earnhard is the second person who has been blinded in this way. They never used to be able to control others' bodies; the Philosophers' abilities have grown darker and far more dangerous in recent months. However, our best information on the treachery of the Philosophers comes from one of our newer members. He is a former Philosopher himself. His name is Dmitry Sorenkov."

Keeper's Scene Notes: This scene includes a tremendous amount of information to help players understand what has happened at Cambridge. Of equal importance, it serves to introduce Eli White, a character who will bridge Acts 1 and 2. Eli exists to create tension between the duties and the moral inclinations of the investigators and to add a political dimension to their calculations. In addition, there is a dramatic blinding scene near the beginning of Act 2. That scene has greater impact if the investigators have come to know that Eli is fundamentally a good man with the interests of the people at heart.

Testimony of a Former Philosopher

Eli leads the investigators to a shabby tent under a tree at the edge of the encampment. Dmitry Sorenkov emerges from the tent. He is thin and wears torn, dirty robes.

When questioned, Dmitry describes his experience exploring a cave along the shoreline with Valen. These events are described in the second section of the Prologue. However, Dmitry extends the story past the point where the Prologue leaves off.

Valen continued to choke for ten or twenty seconds as the boulder was pushed away from the mouth of the grotto. Dmitry was unsure how to render aid. Before Dmitry could figure out what to do, Valen suddenly lashed out at Dmitry with unearthly strength. Dmitry was knocked senseless.

He awoke in the Tower. Valen entered Dmitry's chamber and deeply apologized for striking him. Valen explained that he had accidentally activated an ancient, magical defense mechanism and lost control of his body. However, Valen was able to recover and to bring Dmitry back to the Tower. According to Valen, nothing of interest was in the cave.

One week passed. The Grand Chancellor of the Tower, Martin Rochelle, contracted a strange wasting disease, which was immune to the Philosophers' best healing mechanisms. First he went blind; then, he died. Accordingly, the senior Philosophers elected a new Grand Chancellor. Valen's candidacy speech was eerily compelling. He easily won the vote.

Dmitry claims, "Since then, Valen has redirected all of the Tower's important projects. Military applications for the war are secondary; some projects are continued only for the sake of appearances. Instead, great energy has been devoted to the creation of summoning and binding rituals, wards, and other thaumaturgical contrivances. Valen's creations work. They seem to be driven by some new source of energy, something related to the old sorcery we witnessed in Egypt.

"Even as the other Philosophers became ever more devoted to Valen, I gradually became wary of him and his strange, disturbing work. Remembering the fate of Rochelle, I was too scared to confront Valen directly. Instead, I fled the Tower, taking only a few possessions and this case I found in Valen's study."

Dmitry withdraws a scroll case from a pocket in his robe. He offers it to the investigators. The case contains a scroll and a whistle. The scroll is written in English. It appears to be some sort of invocation to a being called "Hastur the Unspeakable." This name likely means nothing to the investigators, though a successful *Occult* roll might reveal some vague, half-true details (i.e. "You think Hastur might have been a god or spirit invented by some primitive society.") Further examination reveals that the scroll contains a spell entitled "Draw Forth Winged Servant." For a complete description of the **Draw Forth Winged Servant scroll and whistle**, see the "Scrolls and Books" section of the Reference Materials chapter.

Once the investigators have had a chance to briefly examine the scroll, Dmitry informs them that it is written in Valen's hand. He explains, "I believe Valen is delving into thaumaturgy far too dangerous to be controlled, and he has abandoned his veneration of our Queen for the worship of strange, imaginary beings like this 'Hastur.' He is insane and extraordinarily dangerous to the realm. You must arrest him,

search the Tower for evidence, and bring him back to Manhattan for trial."

If the players have not yet recovered the Wardbreaking book, Dmitry tells the investigators that the Tower has a library where they may find useful books. He does not mention the Wardbreaking book specifically. If the investigators enter the library in the future, they may discover it in the same manner as if they had found it while waiting for Valen (see "The Tower Library" subsection above).

At this point, the investigators may be convinced of Valen's treachery, or they may wish to return to the Tower to question Valen about these new developments. As long as they don't seem to be on Valen's side, Eli offers to accompany the investigators to the Tower and show them a secret way to get inside. Even if the players do not plan on breaking in right away, they might accept Eli's offer simply to learn about the secret entrance.

If the investigators accept Eli's offer, he picks up a rope and a stack of large wooden buckets before leading them out of the forest.

Contingency: In this scene, the investigators first learn about the cave that was opened by Valen and Dmitry. It is possible that some of them may wish to personally visit this cave. This would slow the pace of the game and, worse, might cause a fraction of the group to encounter the battle that ends the Act. It is critical that the entire party be present for this difficult battle and pivotal scene. The easiest solution is to head off any attempt to visit the cave. Dmitry indicates that it is several days' ride away, and Valen was the navigator on his earlier trip. Dmitry cannot remember or describe the location of the cave with enough specificity to enable the investigators to find it.

Contingency: Similarly, it is possible that some or all of the investigators may wish to visit the Philosophers' smaller facility in Portsmouth. Again, the best option is to prevent the trip. Since Portsmouth is 60 miles to the north, a round-trip journey in the storm would require a minimum of 12 days, an unacceptable length of time (as war in the south is imminent, and Valen has promised that the Philosophers will be ready to travel in a week at most). If the players do not recognize the significance of this



delay, you may need to remind them that they were never instructed to seek out Sigfried Falk, and it would be an abrogation of their duty to the Queen to travel north of their own volition at a time when she so desperately needs their services in the south.

Return to the Tower

The investigators return to the Tower, most likely led by Eli White. If Eli is not leading the group, he follows stealthily behind at a very great distance (too far to be noticed via a *Spot Hidden* roll) and will not interfere with the investigators.

Flight of the Demon Carriage

When the investigators have approached to within about a quarter mile of the Tower, they see that the large vehicle is now active. It is crackling with lines of electric energy, and the horrific faces molded into the iron armor seem to weep trails of sparks. The vehicle's massive gears lurch into motion, and a strange green smoke begins to billow from the smokestack.

The Demon Carriage plunges into the water surrounding the tower, driving it aside. The vehicle continues to accelerate, moving southward with unearthly speed.

The investigators should not be able to catch or stop this vehicle. It moves as fast as an airship and has a quarter-mile head start. Even if the investigators find a way to affect the Demon Carriage (for instance, via the spell "Draw Forth Winged Servant"), these efforts are insufficient to stop the machine.

The Demon Carriage is conveying the monster to Manhattan. The sight of it fleeing to the south gives the investigators a reason to rush back to Manhattan after dealing with Valen, leading into Act 2.

Breaking Into the Tower

There are three means of access to the Tower.

- **Front Entry:** The iron doors in the front of the Tower are three stories high and very thick. They are effectively immune to regular weapons and small explosions. They have no handles or exter-

nal controls. They can only be opened via the mechanism inside.

- **Cooling Stream:** A stream of very warm water flows out of the factory annex. This is water that is drawn from a spring inside and is used to cool the furnaces and machinery before leaving through an unlocked metal grate. The river can be navigated with a successful *Swim* roll, but an unaided swimmer finds that the stream flows beneath the stone of the Tower for so long that the path cannot be traversed without air. With a device that holds even a little air (such as an inverted bucket), an investigator with a successful *Swim* roll may reach the end and push the grate aside. A more complex plan (for instance, securing a line to something in the tower and rapidly pulling people through the stream) may eliminate the need for an air supply, a *Swim* roll, or both.
- **Barred Windows:** The Tower has numerous windows large enough for a person to fit through, but they all are at least three stories off the ground and are blocked with iron bars. The bars are removable and are secured via a lock. Scaling the smooth Tower wall requires some way to secure a rope to the bars. With a rope in place, *Climb* and *Locksmith* rolls should grant access.

The airship hangar is not connected to the rest of the Tower.

If Eli is leading the group, he will explain the layout of the cooling stream and offer the buckets and rope to the investigators. However, he does not accompany the investigators inside.

When the investigators return to the Tower, no amount of knocking or calling will summon anyone to open the front doors. If even one investigator successfully enters the Tower, he may easily make his way to the entry hall and open the large doors for the rest of the investigators. This is because the Tower now appears to be empty.

The Empty Tower

Upon their return to the Tower, the investigators see neither Philosophers nor guards. This is because Valen has begun his final summoning ritual, and all of the Philosophers and guards are either helping

with the ritual or are imprisoned beneath the summoning chamber.

The investigators likely begin to wander around the empty tower. They may encounter any rooms which would have been included in a tour of the Tower (see the “Meeting with the Chancellor” subsection above), as well as the following two rooms:

The Library: If the investigators have not yet recovered the Wardbreaking book, then Dmitry has mentioned the library to them, and they are likely to seek out this room. It appears as described in “The Tower Library” subsection above, except there is no tower warden watching the investigators. If they find the Wardbreaking book now and give it even the most cursory examination, it is important to mention that the “Break Ward” spell is short and looks quick to learn (i.e. requires 10 minutes of study). Otherwise, players may assume they have no time to attempt to learn the spell before fully exploring the Tower. This would lead them to have great difficulty in the upcoming battle.

Valen's Chambers: High up in the Tower, the investigators encounter the Chancellor's quarters. This is a suite of rooms that is sealed by an enormous door of an iridescent gold metal. It is locked with a fiendishly complex gear mechanism, which seems to be augmented by thaumaturgy. The lock cannot be picked, and the door resists a large amount of damage. The stone walls are thick and are warded against magical intrusion. If the investigators do manage to get in before fighting Valen and recovering his key, they may locate the items listed in the “Rewards” section below, but these items will not be of use until Act 2.

Halting the Ritual

There is a large ritual chamber in the basement of the Tower. Valen has imprisoned all but one of the other Philosophers and the ten tower guards in a large room beneath the ritual chamber. Protected by his loyal warden Stonton, Valen has already summoned two foul creatures to watch over him as he performs his great summoning ritual.

After exploring most of the Tower, the investigators will locate the underground ritual chamber. They

can hear chanting coming from behind a sealed door. The investigators may choose to enter through this door, or if they scout around, they will locate another door onto a small balcony overlooking the ritual chamber. As soon as they enter the room, the battle begins.

Overview of the Room

The ritual chamber is circular and very large. A great many people are trapped beneath this room, where they will be sacrificed to power Valen's summoning spell. They are visible through small slits at various places in the floor. A *Spot Hidden* roll will enable an investigator to identify them as people. Otherwise, they look like shifting, shadowy shapes.

Valen stands in the center of the chamber before a complex device, which grips several crystals and seems to be focusing light coming from a wide shaft in the wall onto a large platform. He is chanting loudly.

Stonton of Torigni, the tower warden, stands with his back to the balcony. He wears his heavy chain armor, and he grips a halberd in both hands. He has a sword in a scabbard at his side.

To one side of Valen, the investigators see “a huge, hideous hybrid of an insect, a gorilla, and a giant whose head sways drunkenly from side to side. It has enormous claws, one on either hand.” This is a Dimensional Shambler (CoC Core, p. 156).

On the other side of the chamber, investigators see “a hunched creature with enormous eyes and a swollen, distorted head atop an emaciated body. It is covered in mud, slime, and a few strands of brown seaweed.” This is a Muck-Dweller, which has the same profile as a Sand-Dweller (CoC core, p. 170).

Upon entering the room, each investigator should make a *Spot Hidden* roll. With a success, an investigator also notices a slit in one of the walls opposite the main door. A Philosopher wearing an armature on his head (i.e. connected to a Mythos-modified consequence engine) can just barely be seen through the slit.

Statistics

There are five non-player combatants in this battle: Valen, Stonton, the Dimensional Shambler, the Muck-Dweller, and the operator of the consequence engine. All combat-relevant statistics for these characters have been streamlined and included in the "Reference Materials" chapter. You will need to use these collected statistics in order to run this battle. Be aware that the Mythos creatures' statistics differ from those in the CoC core.

Also, remember that in Queensguard, spells are resisted with a POW vs. POW check on the resistance table. (See the "Rules of the Steam-Powered Age" chapter for details.)

Insanity

At the start of the battle, all of the investigators are likely to see both Mythos creatures. The Dimensional Shambler has a Sanity Loss of 0/1d10, while the Muck-Dweller's Sanity Loss is 0/1d6. Therefore, if there are investigators in the group with low Sanity points, they are likely to go insane at the start of the battle.

Queensguard uses altered insanity rules to prevent this from becoming a crippling problem (see the "Rules of the Steam-Powered Age" chapter for complete details). Note that as long as an investigator possesses at least one Sanity point, only short temporary insanity (caused by losing 5 points due to a single roll) can interfere with an investigator's ability to fight, and then only for 1d3+1 rounds. Long temporary and indefinite insanity may occur, but these conditions exist to present role-playing opportunities, not to prevent an investigator from participating in the battle.

Even a two-to-four round delay at the start of this battle can be harsh if too many investigators go insane. In this case, it is best to specify that the insane investigators run from the room screaming and hide nearby. This prevents Valen and his supporters from harming or killing them while they cannot resist.

Strategy and Tactics

Reasonably effective and plausible baseline strategies for each participant in this battle are outlined

here. These strategies generally assume roughly five competent, sane, and effective investigators are fighting. Modifications to the baseline strategies are provided in the "How to Modify the Battle's Difficulty" subsection below. If the investigators are doing especially well or especially poorly, you may wish to employ some of these alterations to help make it a closer fight.

Stonton: The tower warden's strategy is straightforward. He moves to engage nearby investigators in melee combat. In general, Stonton will attempt to engage an investigator who is already fighting the Dimensional Shambler or the Muck Dweller so as to exhaust the investigator's ability to parry (CoC core, p. 59). Stonton selects a target to parry each round.

Muck-Dweller: The Muck-Dweller has the same strategy as Stonton. It cannot parry.

Dimensional Shambler: The Dimensional Shambler knows the spell *Levitate* (CoC core, p. 238). It will fight in melee for one or two rounds, then it will pick an investigator to levitate. The Dimensional Shambler will choose an investigator who has been fighting with a melee weapon and who could be levitated while leaving the Shambler with at least six magic points (to enable it to fade away while holding a large investigator, should it so choose). A levitated investigator is treated as though in a zero-gravity environment and may be able to use reaction mass (e.g. throw items) in order to drift in a desired direction. This enables a clever investigator to participate in the battle, albeit at reduced effectiveness. If the Shambler fades out or is killed, the *Levitate* effect ends.

The Dimensional Shambler will fight in melee until it becomes worried that it may be killed within the next two rounds. At this point, it attempts to *Grapple* an investigator and fade into another dimension. (On a failed *Grapple*, it simply fades out alone.) You should clearly describe the sensation of what is happening to a grappled investigator (i.e., "You feel yourself becoming lighter, the ritual chamber is starting to dissolve into a green mist, and nausea is rapidly building in the pit of your stomach.") This will warn the players that they only have a short time to intervene before the Shambler takes that investigator away for good. If you feel it helpful to increase the drama or to save an investigator, you may

extend the Shambler's fade out time from one to two rounds.

Engine Operator: The Philosopher who is operating the Mythos-modified consequence engine waits one round to study the battle. He then attempts to use the engine to *Mesmerize* one of the investigators. (See the description of a Mythos-modified consequence engine in the "Approach to the Tower" section above for details on how this is done.) He makes an attempt every round until successful, not necessarily against the same investigator. The Philosopher orders a mesmerized investigator to fight her friends, help Valen, and so forth. If an investigator breaks free, the operator immediately resumes attempts to cast mesmerize. The operator is essentially defenseless and can easily be harmed or killed if attacked through the slit. Note that the engine operator can be a major force in this battle if players fail to see him or if they see him but fail to recognize his significance.

Valen: The corrupted chancellor has the most detailed and adaptable combat strategy. This is because Valen has the potential to be the most powerful combatant in this battle, and it is best to hold back with him until you see how the investigators are faring against the other four characters.

Valen has learned a formidable array of Mythos spells from the monster. Sanity point costs are irrelevant to him, as he is already completely insane and is only capable of fulfilling the monster's will. He is limited by his magic points, but he has several spells that regenerate lost magic points. Valen is driven by the monster's will and cannot be knocked unconscious. Most importantly, Valen still possesses his psychological ward, which shields him from hostile actions.

When the investigators enter the room, Valen is confident that Stonton, the monsters, and the engine operator will be able to handle them. He does not interrupt his chanting, though he turns to watch the progression of the battle.

Valen breaks off his chant and joins the battle only when (1) he becomes worried that his side might lose, (2) the investigators use the Break Ward spell to shatter Valen's ward, or (3) an investigator suc-

ceeds on a POWx1 roll to ignore the ward and hurts him.

Valen begins by throwing a flask of Alchemical Fire at an investigator, particularly one who directly threatens him or is wearing heavy armor. Alchemical Fire is excellent at getting damage past armor and will likely force that investigator to spend a round or two attempting to put it out. Valen then proceeds to cast damaging spells at wounded investigators, hoping to finish them off. When his magic points are low, he uses spells to refill them. Valen may need to refill his magic points every two or three rounds.

Valen's Ward

Valen's ward is a Mythos-based magical effect. During this battle, the ward helps to protect Valen from harm. Any time a player declares that she will attempt an action directly hostile to Valen (attacking him, grappling him, casting a spell on him, and so forth) you should tell the player, "You feel a strong psychological aversion to that action. Do you attempt to overcome it?"

If the player chooses to make the attempt, she receives a POWx1 roll. Upon a failure, the investigator is wracked with tension and indecision. She loses her action for the round. Upon a success, with a great effort of will, the investigator manages to complete the declared action. This only allows her that one action. She must attempt to overcome the ward separately for each hostile action she wishes to perform.

Casting the "Break Ward" spell at Valen's psychological ward does not require a POWx1 roll to overcome the ward's effects. This is because the ward cannot protect itself; it only protects things inside it (Valen and his possessions).

Generally, attacking Valen while his ward is still active is an extremely inefficient use of time. A wise group will only do this once or twice at the beginning of the battle (until they recognize the problem) or as part of a very desperate strategy to try to snatch victory from the jaws of defeat.

If the investigators attempt to attack Valen and know the Break Ward spell, but the players still can't fig-



ure out what is going on, you may choose to give them an *Idea* roll to recognize that Valen is using a ward.

Contingency: If the investigators received a tour of the Tower upon their first visit, they may have been shown the “security room,” which contains a Mythos-modified consequence engine. It remains there, unguarded, while Valen conducts his ritual. If the investigators retrieve this engine, it can be used to “phase out” Valen’s ward, which is a viable alternative to breaking it. See the subsection on consequence engines in the “Tour of the World of Queensguard” chapter for the necessary rolls. Either Stonton or the engine operator can be *Mesmerized*, but Valen and the Mythos creatures are immune.

How to Modify the Battle's Difficulty

In order to make this battle easier, you may consider the following changes:

- If only one (surviving) investigator knows the Break Ward spell, and Valen’s ward is still active, nobody should attack or mesmerize that investigator.
- Eli White secretly followed the investigators into the Tower. At a critical moment, he rushes through the doorway and joins the battle. He has combat stats similar to an investigator, leather armor, and a sword. He should not be targeted with any attack that may kill him, as he is needed in Act 2. Simply rule that he has enough hit points to absorb a blow or two, and he is not subsequently targeted by any opponents. Eli is a very good person for the Dimensional Shambler to *Levitate*.
- The engine operator waits several rounds before attempting to mesmerize anyone. He may become distracted and lose control of the spell if anyone attacks him, even if they miss.
- Valen does not possess any flasks of Alchemical Fire. He may wait longer before entering the battle.
- The Dimensional Shambler does not know the *Levitate* spell. When low on hit points, it attempts to fade out without grappling an investigator.
- The melee combatants focus on different investigators rather than ganging up on one.

Alternately, here are some changes you may consider if you wish to increase the battle’s difficulty:

- There are one or two Nightgaunts (CoC core, p. 156) hiding up in the shaft of light. Valen may call out for them to descend the shaft and join the battle. This does not consume Valen’s action for the round. You may describe them as “black, faceless entities with huge, demonic wings which shift and shimmer maddeningly. They are vaguely humanoid, with large articulated hands and tails covered in barbs and spines.”
- Valen notices when anyone makes an attempt to break his ward, even if unsuccessful. He joins the battle at that time. If his ward survives, he and the other combatants may focus on the investigator who attempted to break Valen’s ward, hoping to kill her before she can bring down the ward.
- Valen possesses three Alchemical Fire flasks. His *Shriveling* spell requires only one round to cast.
- Valen may regain magic points by draining the crystals in the machine near the central platform. This is quick and reliable, and the crystals contain as many magic points as you see fit.
- The Dimensional Shambler can make multiple trips to and from the battle, carrying an investigator into another dimension with each departure.

Outcome of the Battle

In the end, it is acceptable for the players to win or lose this battle. Either way results in a dramatic conclusion and leads into Act 2. Therefore, it is best not to bias the final outcome, only modifying the difficulty in order to keep things exciting.

The Investigators Overwhelmed

This battle is difficult, and it is possible that the investigators will fare poorly. However, the investigators should not fight to the death. If it becomes clear that the investigators are losing and will all be



killed, it is time for Valen to complete his summoning ritual.

In this case, the shaft of light that is being focused onto the central platform by the crystal device turns a deep red. Noticing this, Valen moves back to the platform, chants a final horrible word, and pulls a lever on the device. The crystals all go dark, a howling wind fills the room, and the ground begins to shake. A chorus of blood-curdling screams emerge from the chamber below as all of the trapped Philosophers and guards die in agony. Valen regards the investigators, triumph burning in his eyes, as a massive shape slowly begins to coalesce behind him.

If an investigator is mesmerized or levitated, the spell immediately ends as the powerful magic coursing through the room overwhelms these minor effects. Any remotely reasonable group of investigators will break off the battle and run.

As the investigators fly through the Tower, the shaking grows worse. Brass pipes fracture, and the hiss of steam fills the corridors. Pieces of masonry begin to fall. The investigators escape just in time to see the entire Tower collapse behind them. Out of the

wreckage rises the enormous, tentacled bulk of the Great Old One Cyaegha (CoC core, p. 187). Cyaegha is an enormous, roughly spherical mass of tentacles surrounding a single, green eye. It hovers about six stories above the ground. Any investigator who sees it must roll for a 1d10/1d100 Sanity point loss.

Cyaegha does not pay attention to the investigators unless they bother it. It floats over to the tent encampment and reaches down with its tentacles, killing all of the villagers. Thereafter, it hovers above the flooded city, lord of the ruins of Cambridge.

Unless Eli White joined the battle (and fled alongside the investigators), he is standing outside. He succeeded on his Sanity roll to see Cyaegha and sustained only a minor Sanity point loss.

Eli White and the investigators (some of whom are surely insane) likely flee the area. Act 2 begins when the group comes to its senses. Any dead or permanently insane investigators will be replaced after the group reaches Manhattan. Surviving investigators may make experience rolls (CoC core, p. 53). Proceed to the next chapter.



Contingency: If the investigators flee the battle on their own, Valen completes the summoning ritual shortly after they leave the ritual chamber. Events proceed as described above. If you wish, you may have Valen complete the ritual in time to be seen by the last investigator leaving the room, so you get a chance to describe the summoning for the players.

Valen's End

If the investigators kill Valen, it is important that they win the battle, because the only way a loss can smoothly progress into Act 2 is via the summoning of the Great Old One.

If there are no Mythos creatures left alive when Valen dies, Stonton and the engine operator attempt to flee. They surrender if this is not possible.

If there are Mythos creatures still standing after Valen's death, you are faced with a choice. If the investigators have not yet fought very hard and are still healthy and capable, it may be best to continue the fight. The Mythos creatures fight to the death, though they should not win. Stonton and the engine operator fight until both Mythos creatures fall.

If the investigators are bloody and haggard when they kill Valen and Mythos creatures remain standing, it is best to end the battle immediately. The Dimensional Shambler begins to fade out (without grappling anyone), and the Muck-Dweller melts into a pile of mud and goo. If any Nightgaunts are pre-

sent, they vanish in clouds of black smoke. Stonton and the engine operator attempt to flee or surrender.

If in doubt, end the battle upon Valen's death.

Upon the successful conclusion of the battle, the storm outside stops. The investigators may free the Philosophers and guards imprisoned beneath the summoning chamber. They are all deeply grateful and express amazement that Valen was capable of tricking them all.

The Philosophers offer the investigators any supplies they may require as well as the use of their airship to hurry back to Manhattan (in pursuit of the Demon Carriage). The Philosophers require one day to prepare the airship for departure, and they can provide a pilot if necessary. Eli will request to accompany the investigators back to Manhattan. See the next chapter for details.

On Valen's body, the investigators find an elaborate brass gear, which fits into the door to Valen's chambers. Inside, they find a great many books and mechanical contrivances. Two items are of particular interest: the **Scroll of Unpossession** and a tome, the **Liber Ivonis**. These items are described in the "Scrolls and Books" section of the "Reference Materials" chapter.

Each surviving investigator may make experience rolls (CoC core, p. 53) and is awarded six Sanity points.



ACT 2: THE QUEEN AND THE KMR

Summary of the Act

The investigators and Eli return to Manhattan in pursuit of Valen's Demon Carriage. Upon arrival in Manhattan, they find the Demon Carriage broken apart outside the castle walls.

Upon meeting the Queen, the investigators realize that she is no longer herself: she has abandoned all notions of honor and plans to personally use thaumaturgy to destroy the Kmir and his army. She orders Eli blinded and cast out of the castle.

The investigators speak with the Philosopher-in-Residence at Manhattan and are directed to an elderly blood sorcerer in New York. They convince her to translate the unreadable Scroll of Unpossession (or to give them a copy, if they do not have one).

The scroll stipulates that a possessing entity can be banished if the possessed person (1) wears a drop of his/her mortal enemy's blood, (2) the spellcasters chant for thirty minutes under the open sky within one-quarter mile of the possessed, and (3) upon completion of the chant, they smash an object that is precious to the possessed.

The investigators set out to recover a drop of the Kmir's blood. They travel south until they reach the Kmir's army. The Kmir is very tough and well-protected; it is not feasible to assassinate him. However, the investigators can recover some of his blood via a variety of tactics. For instance, he can be stealthily wounded, he can be bargained with, or the investigators can discover that his blood sorcerers keep a vial of the Kmir's blood.

The investigators return to Manhattan. They must recover an item precious to the Queen. There are only three such items: the royal electric carriage, a small brass automaton, and an elaborate music box. Obtaining each one presents a different challenge. The investigators must also plant a drop of blood on the Queen or on a garment she will be wearing when they perform the Ritual of Unpossession.

Finally, the investigators are ready to perform the ritual. They go outside the palace, under the open

sky, with the precious object. They chant for 25 out of 30 minutes unmolested. Before they are done, the Kmir emerges from the forest at the head of his army. He has overwhelming force. The Queen appears at the top of the castle wall. The Kmir roars that he has won, and if the Queen will surrender her castle and her lands, her people shall be spared.

The Queen (and the creature possessing her) are furious because the Kmir is thwarting their plans. The Queen undergoes a horrible transformation, bursting out of her skin as a hideous monster. The monstrous Queen leaps down from the castle wall. The ritual (which requires the Queen to be wearing a drop of her enemy's blood) falters moments before the investigators can smash the precious object.

The Kmir's army flees before the horrific sight, but the Kmir grimly draws his dual scimitars and begins to battle the monster. The Kmir realizes that he is overmatched, sees the investigators, and calls out for them to help him slay the monster. The investigators choose how they want this to end.

If they assist the Kmir, they can jointly slay the Queen. The Kmir thanks them for their aid. He is an honorable man and will be a benevolent ruler of America. He offers the investigators rewards, such as money and positions in the new government.

The investigators may instead opt not to help the Kmir. In this case, the Queen drives a massive talon through the Kmir's chest and is covered in his blood. The magic of the unpossession ritual again surrounds the investigators, and they can resume from where they left off. They immediately complete the ritual and smash the precious object. The Queen shudders and reverts to human form.

The Kmir is obviously dying. The Queen thanks the Kmir for his part in saving her from a horrible fate and rewards him by promising to let his people keep the territory they hold. The Kmir dies. The Queen has gained new status in the Central Asian Empire by defeating a Kmir in hand-to-hand combat, and the new Kmir from Karakorum accepts a peace treaty. The investigators are richly rewarded by the Queen for saving her and the kingdom.



In Pursuit of the Demon Carriage

This act begins differently depending on whether or not the investigators succeeded in stopping Valen's ritual in Act 1.

From the Ruins of Cambridge

If the investigators failed in Act 1, the Great Old One Cyaegha holds dominion over what remains of Cambridge. The investigators and Eli White have fled into the forest. Begin the Act when all investigators are free of long term temporary insanity (at most, 40 hours after the battle, per the revised insanity durations listed in the "Rules of the Steam-Powered Age" chapter).

Due to the appearance of a Great Old One, some of the investigators may be suffering from permanent insanity. Any investigators who have zero remaining Sanity points accompany the rest of the group wherever they go but take no productive actions.

If the group visits the encampment of the Brotherhood of the Wolf, they find it deserted. The members of the Brotherhood saw the collapse of the Tower and the rise of the Great Old One. Most fled the area; a few who went to the tent encampment were killed by the creature. It is not possible to track or locate any of them.

If the sane investigators are not in a hurry to pursue the Demon Carriage to Manhattan, Eli will remind them of the carriage and express fear for the people of New York. (If he did not accompany the investigators back to the Tower, he instead asks whether the vehicle was destroyed in the Tower's collapse.)

The investigators may walk all the way back to Manhattan, 215 miles west-southwest, or they may requisition horses at the first town they reach. Alternatively, if they walk along the coast, they will eventually come to a small village where they can requisition passage on a slow fishing trawler.

The storm stops when the investigators are approximately two days from Manhattan.

Eli accompanies the group back to Manhattan. He still desires a meeting with the Queen. He no longer seeks autonomy for Cambridge, but he does hope

that the Queen will change her policies to benefit other towns in dire straits in the future.

Contingency: In the unlikely event that all of the investigators were killed or rendered permanently insane, Eli makes his way to Manhattan alone. Act 2 begins when he tells the harrowing story of what happened at Cambridge to a suitable group of people he meets (the new investigators). In this case, there is no need for the new investigators to be members of the Queensguard, as long as they have access to the castle at Manhattan and they desire to help the Queen and the realm. The new investigators should accompany Eli to his meeting with Queen, where he tells his story. Act 2 proceeds roughly unchanged from that point.

Aboard the Heroes' Airship

If the investigators succeeded in Act 1, the freed Philosophers are glad to aid them in any way possible. They grant any reasonable requests for supplies. If asked, they may be able to provide one or two pieces of minor steam technology, such as a steam gauntlet.

However, the most important gift the Philosophers provide is their airship, *Queen's Venture*. It is a large dirigible with brass propellers for propulsion. The cabin is spacious and is equipped with emergency landing propellers (see the *Airship* description in the "Tour of the World of Queensguard" chapter for details). The airship is unarmed.

Myra Rajamani, a Philosopher who is an expert airship pilot, offers to fly the airship for the investigators. This may be useful even if one investigator has a high *Pilot Airship* skill, because having two pilots allows the airship to fly for 24 hours per day.

The freed Philosophers will also answer questions for the investigators. They refer to the vehicle as the "Demon Carriage" and can describe their work building it, but they do not know precisely to what purpose Valen intended to put it. They can also describe efforts researching unusual rituals that draw upon strange, new sources of power, but only Valen himself knew the key parts of these rituals. They explain that Valen was aided by a book he recovered from the cave (the *Liber Ivonis*, found in his chambers) and also possessed an uncanny insight into what needed to be done.

Preparing the airship for departure requires one day. Unless Eli joined the investigators to aid in the battle, he comes into the Tower soon after the Philosophers are freed. He asks the investigators if he might accompany them back to Manhattan aboard the airship so that he might seek an audience with the Queen. He wishes to explain what happened at Cambridge and to humbly request a degree of political autonomy for the town. He makes it clear that he doesn't wish to antagonize the Queen; he merely wants what is best for the realm. The investigators are likely to allow him to come along.

If the investigators ask the Philosophers about bringing their inventions to aid in the war effort, the Philosophers explain that Valen overstated the extent to which they have been working on tools of war. However, they will gather together what they can and follow by land.

The trip to Manhattan by airship requires four days if the investigators are completely reliant on Myra to fly the craft. (She anchors it to a treetop at night.) If one of the investigators takes turns flying the airship, the journey can be made in two days. This provides enough time to attempt to learn two to four spells from the Liber Ivonis. Two investigators might be

able to read the same spell from the book at once, or if the investigators tear the pages out of the binding, they each could study a different spell simultaneously. Note that investigators likely regain a substantial number of hit points en route due to the improved healing rate in Queensguard.

In addition, the flight provides ample time for investigators to familiarize themselves with the Ritual of Unpossession.

Contingency: In the event the investigators deny Eli permission to accompany them back to Manhattan, he stows away in the cargo area of the airship. Unless the investigators specifically search the cargo area, there is no need to give them a roll to notice Eli. If they find him and kick him off the airship, he will not appear in the rest of the act.

Arrival at Manhattan

By one method or another, the investigators reach the castle at Manhattan island. The airship may be landed in the open field that surrounds the castle's outer wall. If the investigators are aboard a fishing trawler, it docks at New York, and they may walk or ride across the bridge to the castle.



The castle consists of a central building (with many sprawling wings and annexes) surrounded by a courtyard filled with trees and shrubs. A high outer wall rises just beyond the courtyard. The outer wall was constructed with military defense in mind. It is quite thick, containing internal staircases and integrated guardhouses along its length. Each corner of the wall features a large platform supporting a ballista. The castle has neither moat nor drawbridge.

If the investigators failed in Act 1, a small messenger airship now floats above the castle, anchored to a stone mooring in the courtyard. This airship was not present when the investigators left for Cambridge; the pilot took advantage of the good weather in Manhattan to fly to the castle in the past couple of days.

Upon approaching the castle, the investigators see the Demon Carriage lying broken just outside the outer wall. It is faintly smoking, the top part of the vehicle is shattered, and a broken ballista bolt lies next to the ruin.

If the investigators examine the vehicle, an *Alchemy* or *Mechanical Repair* roll will reveal that the vehicle was destroyed from within by detonated chemical charges. It was not significantly harmed by the ballista bolt that struck it. A successful *Thaumaturgy* roll will reveal the wards designed to contain some sort of entity inside the vehicle. When the investigators had the opportunity to examine the vehicle in Act 1, they had essentially no *Cthulhu Mythos* knowledge. Now, however, they may make a *Cthulhu Mythos* roll to realize that the wards are not designed to keep an entity in, like a prison. Rather, they are intended to magically stabilize a non-corporeal entity that normally cannot long exist on Earth outside of a host body.

After examining the vehicle, the investigators and Eli go inside to speak with the Queen.

The Fury of the Queen

When the investigators seek her, the Queen is in her main audience chamber, seated on her throne. There are many nobles present as well as eight members of the personal guard (the other branch of the Queensguard). The Queen appears agitated, often rising to

pace back and forth. Her small, brass automaton is with her, hurriedly getting out of her way every minute or two.

The Queen's demeanor is completely changed from what it was during her meeting with the investigators in Act 1. She used to be patient, contemplative, and honorable. Now she is agitated, sarcastic, and vindictive. This change in her personality, along with an examination of the Demon Carriage, likely will lead the investigators to believe that she has been possessed by the monster who corrupted Valen.

When the investigators and Eli enter the hall, the Queen notices them and motions for them to come up to the throne and report to her immediately. She listens impatiently to the story, frequently telling the investigators to skip past large portions and get to the key details. She doesn't care about how the investigators found out what they know, nor does she care about the Brotherhood. She just wants the essentials of what the investigators did.

If the investigators succeeded in Act 1, she offers them perfunctory congratulations for slaying Valen, whom she calls a treacherous, slimy wretch. The Queen indicates that she will inflict a suitable punishment on the other Philosophers who aided in Valen's treachery as soon as she has time. However, she must first resolve the matter of the Kmir and his army. Read the speech about the Kmir two paragraphs below.

If the investigators failed in Act 1, the Queen is furious. She yells at the investigators, accusing them of cowardice. The Queen insists that she does not care about the collapse of the Tower killing everyone inside; Valen and all those who participated in his treachery got what they deserved. Rather, she is upset because there is some sort of fearsome creature on the loose, and her "brave" Queensguard ran away rather than fight it. If the investigators try to apologize, to argue with her, or to plead about insanity, she cuts them off. She doesn't want to hear any excuses. She demands results, especially now, when the Kmir poses a dire threat to the kingdom. She then launches into her speech about the Kmir.

The Queen says, "My scouts bring me word that the Kmir is moving north at the head of his army. He thinks to capture Manhattan and steal my kingdom

away from me! He is formidable, but arrogant. He believes he shall break the walls of Manhattan and bring the first dark age since the Interregnum! My army may be in tatters, and now it seems that even my Philosophers have failed me. Ha! The Kmir shall soon learn his error, for I shall call upon mighty thaumaturgy to cleave him asunder. He shall watch as the soldiers of his army drop like flies and all that he holds dear is fed to the flames! There shall be nothing left but bones, ash, and misery.”

By the conclusion of her short speech, the brass automaton is cowering behind the throne. The court is silent. Even her personal guards, normally imperturbable, seem slightly taken aback. The Queen is untroubled and lets a moment of silence pass.

Replacing Lost Investigators

If any investigators are permanently insane, the Queen suddenly notices this fact. She points to them and asks, “What is wrong with them?” If any investigators were killed (or if insane ones were left outside), she asks, “And weren’t there more of you? Where are the others?”

Upon hearing of the death or insanity of the investigators, the Queen’s reaction is one of annoyance. She says, “Very well. Go to the barracks and speak to the field marshal about obtaining some replacements. Take these... things... away.” (The Queen indicates the permanently insane investigators.)

You should allow any investigator who is in very bad shape, even if not yet permanently insane, to be replaced at this time. Ask the players if any of them would like to switch characters. This will be done as soon as the meeting with the Queen is over. (See the “Visit to the Barracks” subsection below.)

Eli’s Appeal

By this time, Eli has concluded that this is not the wisest time to present the Queen with a request for political autonomy. Unfortunately for him, the Queen has noticed him. She points at him and asks, “Who are you, and why are you in my audience chamber?” Unable to think of any convincing excuses on the spot, Eli decides to forge ahead with the truth.

It is easiest not to attempt to speak for Eli word-for-word here. It is better simply to specify that Eli speaks nervously and haltingly, first describing the troubles in Cambridge (prior to the arrival of the investigators) and how a lack of food and help from Manhattan caused a breakdown of order. He then attempts to gently suggest that by diverting some tax revenue in a town fund, a local council for the people of Cambridge (or similar towns, if Cambridge was destroyed) could more ably direct the money to meet unforeseen needs.

Throughout Eli’s request, the Queen’s face grows redder and redder. Finally, she interrupts Eli, expressing outrage that he dare speak treason to her face in her own audience chamber. The Queen then orders Eli to be blinded and thrown out of the castle.

Eli freezes and emits a horrified little squeak. The Queen’s guards hesitate for a moment, then move forward to seize Eli. The investigators might intervene (for instance, by pretending to blind Eli themselves). If not, two of the Queen’s guards grab Eli and drag him out of the audience chamber.

Finally, the Queen motions dismissively at the investigators and waits for them to exit the chamber.

Keeper’s Scene Notes: Following this scene, players may be somewhat surprised that the Queen gives them no new tasks to complete. In Act 2, the players must be self-directed and take the initiative in finding a way to help the Queen.

Contingency: While in the audience chamber, if the investigators attack the Queen, or if they directly accuse her of being possessed by an evil creature, they convince the monster possessing the Queen that the investigators need to die. However, the Queen would rather not order her own Queensguard killed in the middle of her crowded audience chamber.

She orders her guards to arrest the investigators. Countless guards swarm into the room, and the investigators are overpowered. (Don’t try to run this as a combat. It would take too long and serve no beneficial purpose.) The Queen whispers instructions to the guard captain on the way out (secretly ordering the investigators to be killed).



The investigators are disarmed, chained, and taken toward the dungeon. On the way, the captain stops the group and brings everyone into a musty side-chamber. He explains that he listened to the investigators' story, and he too thinks that the Queen is possessed. Therefore, he believes that her order to have the investigators arrested and secretly killed is invalid. However, he hopes that some method may be found to free the Queen from the clutches of whatever creature is possessing her. This will have to be done quietly, he admonishes, for the Queen remains powerful and wary.

The guard captain frees the investigators, returns their weapons, and tells them to be cautious when moving around the castle. Henceforth, if the investigators are seen by the Queen, she will order them re-arrested and executed. Anyone else in the castle who sees them either never heard about their arrest in the first place or assumes that the investigators' dispute with the Queen was resolved to her satisfaction.

A variation on this contingency may be used if the investigators do not confront the Queen in the audience chamber but instead try to attack and kill the Queen secretly. She sees through whatever they are plotting, she exhibits horrific resilience (if necessary to survive a trap), and she has the investigators arrested. Subsequent events play out as above.

A Visit to the Barracks

If the group lost one or more investigators, the others should proceed to the barracks to meet with the field marshal. The Queensguard barracks is attached to the castle. It is built to accommodate the 100 members of the personal guard as well as up to 50 visitors and trainees.

The field marshal, Niles Jarvis, is one of the two highest-ranking members of the Queensguard. He commands the personal guard. (The field marshal in command of the realm guard is not at Manhattan.) Niles suggests replacements for each dead or permanently insane member of the party. These replacements are transferred from the personal guard to the realm guard and will accompany the investigators henceforth on their activities.

Exploration of the Castle

At this point, it is up to the players to decide what to do next. They may have the Scroll of Unpossession (which requires translation), or they may simply be looking for a way to help the Queen.

There are numerous places in the castle for the investigators to examine. Any place that does not have a specific encounter listed below (i.e., the kitchen, the stables, etc.) should contain someone or something that guides the investigators toward one of the useful parts of the castle. For instance, a cook might have noticed the Queen frequently ordering her meals be brought to the diplomatic reception hall, or the stableboy might have spotted the Philosopher-in-Residence speaking with a guard upon the battlements.

Eli, Outside the Castle

If the investigators leave the castle walls (and not too long has passed since the audience with the Queen), they find Eli outside. He has been blinded per the Queen's order and is trying to make his way to New York.

He is bitter and unapologetic. He has concluded that the Queen is unfit to rule. He suggests that the investigators go speak with the Kmir and help facilitate his conquest of the kingdom. The players are unlikely to agree to this plan (which utterly contradicts their vows), but Eli mentioning it makes the players aware of the possibility of having a peaceful conversation with the Kmir, which is one potential method of obtaining his blood later in the act.

Eli is not willing to accompany the group any longer, but he will accept aid in reaching an inn in New York.

Contingency: If the investigators saved Eli from being blinded, he is grateful. However, he is nonetheless convinced that the Queen is unfit to rule and makes the same suggestion. When the players decline, he takes his leave, walking to New York on his own.

A Guard Upon the Battlements

The castle walls are patrolled by guards. (These are soldiers, not members of the Queensguard.)

If the investigators go to speak with the guards on the castle wall about the Demon Carriage, they are directed to Yvonne Lefevre. Yvonne was the guard on duty on the section of the wall approached by the carriage. She was the one who shot it with the ballista.

Yvonne explains that the carriage came from the direction of the bridge to New York. It approached the castle very rapidly, but she managed to hit it before it reached the wall. It exploded shortly after being struck by the ballista bolt.

If the investigators ask if she saw anything exit the vehicle, Yvonne admits that she thought she saw some sort of wavy disturbance in the air above the craft in the moments after the explosion. However, she is unsure what it was. She suggests it could have been some gas escaping from the carriage, or it might have been the heat of the explosion distorting and blurring the air.

Finally, she tells the investigators that they aren't the first people to ask her about these events. Earlier, the Philosopher-in-Residence questioned her intently about what transpired that day.

The Diplomatic Reception Hall

The diplomatic reception hall is a large banquet chamber where the Queen sometimes entertains foreign dignitaries. Recently, she has been spending a great deal of time in this room, alone.

The room is locked. The lock has recently been upgraded with some sort of thaumaturgy and resists attempts to be picked with the *Locksmith* skill. The door itself is plain wood and could be broken down by the investigators without difficulty, though this will leave obvious signs of intrusion that the Queen can detect.

Another option is to obtain a key. The Queen has one key. The castle steward, Franz Gustaaf Salisbury, has another.

Franz is a low-ranking employee with an inflated sense of self-importance. He can be found in a catering kitchen, where he is helping to prepare a stuffed mushroom appetizer for an upcoming meeting of the blacksmiths' guild. He is mildly indignant that the investigators should interrupt him in the middle of this critical task. He proudly explains that the Queen has entrusted him with the keys to the palace, thereby demonstrating his great importance.

You should have fun playing this character (who is similar to Malvolio from Shakespeare's *Twelfth Night*). He is utterly convinced that he is more important than the Queensguard, and if he doesn't finish preparing these mushrooms on time, heaven knows what will happen! The investigators should have a hard time convincing him to unlock the door by telling him about the importance of their task (because Franz feels this is an attempt to denigrate his own importance). He can be coerced into helping, or the investigators can steal his key. However, the most effective way to elicit Franz's cooperation is flattery.

Inside the diplomatic reception hall, the investigators find that the Queen has removed all of the furniture. An enormous design is partially inscribed in the floor. A successful *Occult* or *Cthulhu Mythos* roll identifies it as a summoning circle that is still far from completion. It likely would take a single person two weeks to finish inscribing the design. The portion that has already been drawn does not specify which entity will be summoned.

Keeper's Scene Notes: The investigators may break down the door or deface the Queen's design without significantly affecting the rest of the plot. These actions will make the Queen angry, and she may launch an internal security investigation. However, the plot of Act 2 will likely run its course before the investigators are implicated and confronted.

The Philosopher-in-Residence

A Philosopher who performs a great service for the Queen is sometimes offered a position as a Philosopher-in-Residence in the royal court. This position comes with a great deal of honor and a very large salary, so most Philosophers find it desirable.

There is only one Philosopher-in-Residence at this time, an old man named Alexander Whittemore. He is tall and possesses a long white beard and bushy eyebrows. Alexander was originally appointed to his present position for developing many of the core thaumaturgical principles that are now used daily in the construction and enhancement of steam technology. He is a respected authority on thaumaturgy.

Alexander can be found in his chambers. He receives the investigators cordially and offers them hot tea. He explains that he has been deeply troubled ever since the iron vehicle arrived. He has studied the bas-reliefs on it, and they remind him of a statue he recovered from the ocean as a young man. The statue depicted an otherworldly being, and he believes it was used in dark rituals hundreds of years ago. (Alexander still has this statue in a locked chest. He will show it to the investigators if they ask to see it, mandating a roll for a 0/1d2 Sanity point loss.)

Alexander asks the investigators about the history of the iron vehicle and listens intently as they explain what they know of the Demon Carriage. (He also asks about Valen, if the investigators don't include him in the story.) Alexander confirms the investigators' fears that the Queen has likely been possessed by a Mythos creature.

The aged Philosopher strokes his long beard and proposes two theories about the nature of the creature. "Perhaps this being gradually corrupts those it possesses, twisting their minds and eroding their souls. Once it has utterly dominated its victim, it may be free to move on, leaving a willing servant behind. This may be what happened to Valen. Or, perhaps the creature never left Valen. Instead, it managed to duplicate itself, and it is a copy that has reached Manhattan." Neither theory is likely to be comforting to the investigators.

If the investigators show Alexander the Scroll of Unpossession (acquired from Valen's chambers in Act 1), he studies the document carefully. He indicates that it is written in ancient Mongolian, a language that few today can read, even within the Central Asian Empire. Skip the next paragraph and go to the one below, about Saranmaa Kurultai.

If the investigators do not possess the Scroll of Unpossession, Alexander admits that he personally knows no thaumaturgy capable of banishing such a creature. This magic is far from the area of expertise of the Philosophers.

However, Alexander mentions that he has an old acquaintance, Saranmaa Kurultai, who might be able to assist. She is an émigré from Karakorum who took up residence in New York almost forty years ago. Alexander provides the investigators with directions to her home, which is located in one of New York's poorer neighborhoods.

The Blood Sorcerer in New York

The investigators cross the bridge to the mainland and enter New York. New York is a city of 1.2 million people, quite large for the year 1850. It is a gloomy, dirty place with narrow, twisted streets shadowed by three- and four-story tenement buildings. Numerous beggars play makeshift instruments, shine shoes, and huddle in back alleys. On the main streets, children sell newspapers filled with stories of the war while suspicious characters hawk trinkets and tonics. One elderly man in a battered top hat and dirty coat offers to sell the investigators lemonade from a bubbling vessel.

As the investigators navigate to Saranmaa's house, they pass a line of collapsed buildings spanning several city blocks. If they question the residents, the investigators learn that this is the route the Demon Carriage took as it passed through New York on the way to the castle. The vehicle avoided following the circuitous city streets by smashing through the first floors of many buildings, causing the rickety structures to collapse.

A Visit to the Old Sorcerer

Saranmaa's house is an unassuming apartment on the first floor of a three-story building. The door is ajar. (Saranmaa keeps her door ajar when she is at home and awake so that poor people who need her healing or counsel will feel welcome.) If the investigators knock, a thin voice asks, "Who is there?"

The investigators introduce themselves, either in their official capacity as members of the Queens-

guard or in disguise. Saranmaa is a small, frail woman with spectacles and a cane. She appears to be around eighty years old. Her home is sparsely furnished, with just a few Asian decorations on the walls. These include several scrolls with pictograms and a tapestry depicting rolling plains with the magnificent spires of Karakorum just barely visible in the distance.

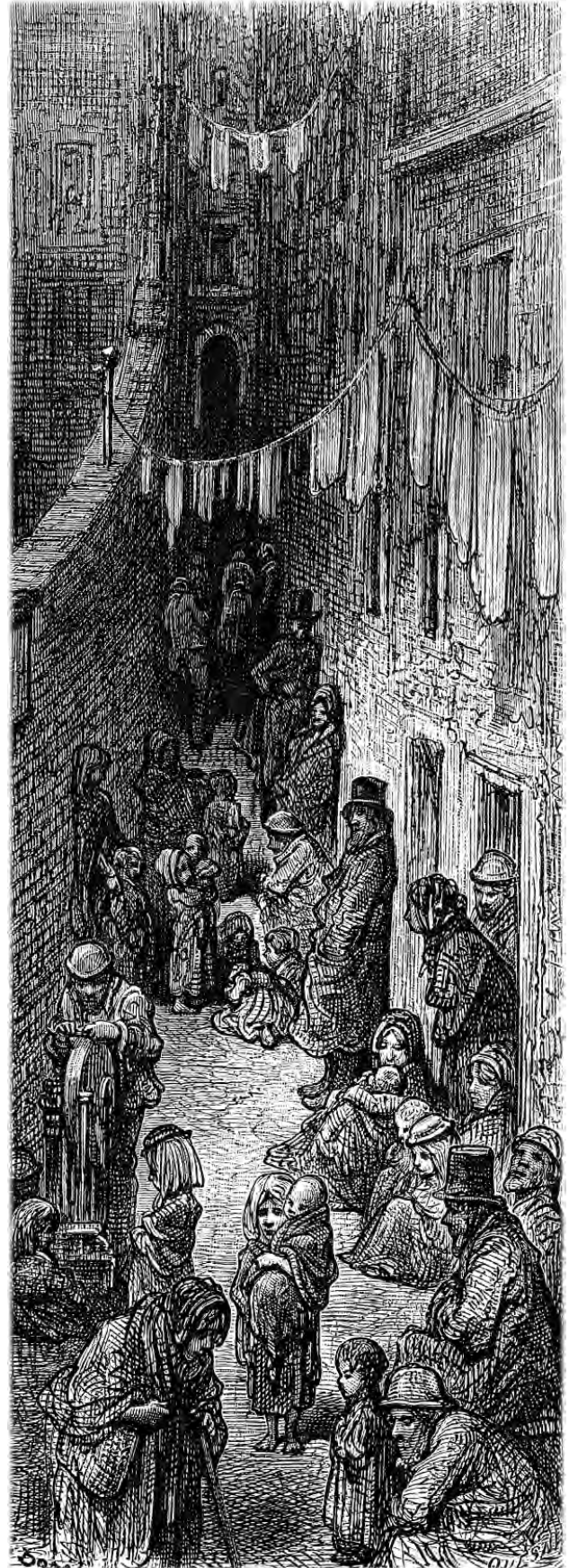
Saranmaa waits for the investigators to explain what they need. The investigators ask for Saranmaa's assistance— either in translating the Scroll of Unpossession or in finding a way to help the possessed Queen.

Saranmaa inquires about the Queen's condition and asks for news of the Kmir and his army. If the investigators have the Scroll of Unpossession, she studies it intently. Then she gives a deep sigh and begins to tell the investigators her history.

Saranmaa's life has been long and difficult. Fifty years ago, she was a mighty blood sorcerer in the Central Asian Empire. Saranmaa served in the army under a past Kmir during a major campaign against the Vikings. They had many glorious victories. Finally, however, her company was captured, and many soldiers she knew were killed. Saranmaa was held by the Vikings for years in the vicinity of Gaul. Eventually, she executed a dramatic escape and evaded her pursuers by stowing away on a ship bound for America. Upon arriving in New York, Saranmaa was hungry and destitute. However, she found her skills as a healer to be in high demand, and thus she was able to earn a living through her blood magic. For the past four decades, she has devoted herself to serving the poor and downtrodden— people who, like herself, have suffered great misfortune in their lives.

"I have two homelands," she explains, "and to see them now in the midst of war opens a wide gulf in my heart.

"I do believe I can help you save your Queen. However... I have lived here in New York longer than she has reigned, longer than some of you have been alive. America is surely a place of opportunity and discovery, but it is a cold and pitiless land. There is no mercy for those who cannot stand upon their own two legs and perform a hard day's work. The ill and



infirm are ignored. When the aged grow feeble or confused, they are cast aside, not honored for a life well lived.

“Truly, the Central Asian Empire has its flaws. It is a land of blood and honor where life is charged with energy, and kingdoms turn on the blade of a sword. Time is faster, fire hotter, blood thicker. Warriors pursue the exultation of heroism and dread the heartbreak of defeat. But there is a deep wellspring of compassion in that land. The ancestors are honored, and care is offered to all those who need it.

“Life in the empire might sound strange to you who have always known the incessant march of progress, the clanking of gears and the blast of the steam whistle. But if things with the Queen are as you say, I wonder if her time has come. Perhaps the spirits have passed judgment upon our two kingdoms. Perhaps America must now fade away, and the empire must rise upon these shores. Who are we, truly, to tug at the threads of destiny when we cannot see the whole pattern?”

The investigators now must convince Saranmaa to help them. Ideally, this will be done through a role-played dialogue tackling issues such as destiny, politics, and the nature of what people should want from their societies. This is not intended to be a puzzle with a single solution—you should allow the investigators to prevail in the end if they use any reasonable and thoughtful line of argument.

By way of example, some compelling points might include:

- An explanation of the scope and evil of the Mythos sufficient to convince Saranmaa that destiny itself is likely averse to human interests
- An argument that the coldness of America is a phase from which the kingdom will emerge once sufficient steam technology has been developed

Investigators may lie about materially relevant facts—for instance, claiming the Queen is in the process of negotiating a peace treaty with the Kmir—with a successful *Fast Talk* roll.

Upon convincing Saranmaa:

If the investigators have the Scroll of Unpossession, Saranmaa translates it for them. She does this largely from memory, referring to an old tome only once or twice to help with difficult words. This process takes two hours.

If the investigators do not have a Scroll of Unpossession, Saranmaa lifts up a floorboard and slides a box out of the hole beneath. Inside are three crumpled old scrolls. One is a Scroll of Unpossession, written in ancient Mongolian. She translates it as described above and presents it to the investigators.

Keeper’s Scene Notes: In addition to presenting an opportunity for interesting role-playing, this scene serves three purposes. First, it provides a sympathetic look at the Central Asian Empire, which helps make it more of a real place and less of a flat, stand-in “villainous empire.” It also helps develop the cultural mentality of people in the empire, which is useful for the investigators to hear immediately before attempting to infiltrate the Kmir’s army. Third, Saranmaa’s personal perspective on the empire helps make the investigators’ choice at the end of the act more ambiguous, as they can better envision a non-disastrous result from rendering aid to the Kmir.

Deciding What to Do Next

You should now tell players all of the details about the Scroll of Unpossession included in the “Scrolls and Books” section of the Reference Materials chapter.

From the Queen’s behavior (even before becoming possessed), it should be obvious that the mortal enemy of the Queen is the Kmir. With a successful *Know* roll, an investigator can recall three items that are precious to the Queen: the brass automaton that follows her around, the royal electric carriage (which has been in her family for generations), and an ornate music box featuring a golden swan. For more details on these items, see the section later in this chapter entitled “The Theft.”

The investigators may choose to first recover a drop of the Kmir’s blood or a precious item. Recovering the blood first is more practical, since this leaves less time for the theft of an item to be discovered by the Queen.

Infiltrating the Army of the Kmir

In order to recover a drop of the Kmir's blood, the investigators will need to reach his army. It is located roughly 50 miles to the south. This trip requires about three days on foot, just over two days on horseback, or about half a day by airship. Requisitioning passage on a boat is not possible, as the vast majority of boats waiting in New York set sail as soon as the weather improved, and the remaining few are unprepared to sail.

If the players successfully stopped Valen in Act 1, the airship *Queen's Venture* is available to them, likely along with the pilot Myra Rajamani. She will be glad to fly the investigators down to the Kmir's army. If the investigators failed in Act 1, they may requisition use of the small messenger airship now anchored in the castle courtyard.

Approaching the Army

The investigators come upon the army of the Kmir as dusk is turning to twilight. The troops are stopping for the night. The Kmir commands a vast army spread across a large tract of heavily forested land. There are intermittent clearings where an airship may land.

If the investigators are aboard an airship and are incautious about bringing it into plain view of the army, it is sighted and attacked by blood sorcerers. Lines of angry red energy rapidly eat through the fabric of the gas bag, and the airship begins to fall. Fortunately, this airship is equipped with emergency landing propellers. The pilot detaches the cabin from the metal framework that supported the gas bag, and the powerful propellers whirl to life, guiding the cabin to a gentle landing in the dense forest over a mile from the army. (If an investigator is the pilot, a blinking light on the console directs her attention to the emergency landing propeller controls.)

If the investigators land the airship at a safe distance, or if they approach on foot or horseback, they reach the army undisturbed.

The investigators may devise any number of tactics to find the Kmir within the army and acquire a drop of his blood. You will need to improvise the results.

To facilitate this, numerous details about the army and the Kmir are provided below.

Army Layout and Composition

The soldiers in the army all speak Mongolian amongst themselves. About one in twenty soldiers knows English.

Soldiers are erecting tents and preparing small fires. Some tents are only one or two yards apart, while others are separated by as much as fifteen yards. Several five-yard aisles free of tents and obstructions run the length and width of the army.

The Kmir is located in a rather unassuming tent near the center of the army. It can be distinguished from other tents by a small banner featuring a curved sword design on a pole in the ground beside the tent. It is difficult to see this banner from a distance.

Three tents surround the Kmir's tent in a triangular arrangement. These are the tents of the Kmir's personal blood sorcerers. Each one possesses a vial of the Kmir's blood, which enables them to cast beneficial spells on him at any time. They carry these vials inside their robes.

Protection of the Kmir

The Kmir has three bodyguards who stand outside of his tent. These are skilled soldiers without any magical ability. They accompany him if he leaves his tent.

The Kmir also possesses two personal mind thieves. These are highly trained assassins who shadow the Kmir at all times. They often hide out of sight, or if in the middle of a crowd, they may instead blend in with the other soldiers. When near the investigators, a difficult *Spot Hidden* roll may reveal each of them.

The Kmir's three blood sorcerers know immediately if the Kmir is wounded and begin to cast various healing spells upon him. Working together, they can heal the Kmir back to full health every round. They also can detect magical effects being used near the Kmir, and they can counter any spell that otherwise would kill the Kmir outright. They may cast other non-Mythos spells as you see fit.

Penetrating the Army Lines

With a set of Central Asian armor, the investigators may use a *Disguise* roll to make one person appear to be a soldier. Armor can be obtained from any soldier, including a number of scouts that the Kmir has sent out into the forest around the army. A group of investigators with great foresight might have inquired about obtaining sets of Central Asian armor at Manhattan castle before their departure. Plenty of sets are available from soldiers captured in previous battles.

Any robe ranging from black to blood red in color would enable an investigator to impersonate a blood sorcerer. This is inferior to being disguised as a soldier because blood sorcerers attract more attention in the army, but it can be effective nonetheless.



A stealthy investigator may be able to penetrate into the outer layers of the army without a costume, but she likely will have trouble approaching the Kmir's tent in the center. It is not difficult to steal the armor pieces necessary to progress deeper into the army, as many soldiers are removing their armor for the night.

Locating the Kmir

All soldiers in the army know where the Kmir's tent is located. If an investigator knows Mongolian and makes a successful *Fast Talk* roll, she can persuade a soldier to reveal it.

The Kmir personally emerges from his tent to investigate all disturbances that occur in the army. He is a towering man in elaborate armor with two huge scimitars in his belt. He is unmistakable in a crowd.

A patient observer inside the army may notice messengers moving from tent to tent. Gradually, it may become clear that the messengers from most tents repeatedly visit six particular tents. Messengers from these six tents repeatedly visit one tent in the center of the army. The central tent is the Kmir's tent, and the six tents belong to his commanders. An impatient observer may mistake the closest commander's tent for the Kmir's tent, as each commander receives more messengers than the Kmir. Only the most critical messages are passed on to the Kmir.

A byakhee summoned via the *Draw Forth Winged Servant* spell can use its otherworldly

senses to locate the Kmir. If it tries to attack the Kmir, it manages to wound him before it is killed. If it tries to carry off the Kmir, it only transports him a short way before it is killed. In either case, the Kmir fells the creature with his dual scimitars.

Obtaining the Kmir's Blood

The Kmir's three personal blood sorcerers have no guards of their own. It is possible to kill or knock one of them unconscious and find a vial of the Kmir's blood on the sorcerer's body.

The Kmir is not hard to reach, particularly if he exits his tent to investigate a disturbance. He mingles with the army and will not notice if a disguised investigator comes close to him. The Kmir can be readily wounded with blade or magic. Investigators may encounter more difficulty in retrieving the resulting blood and getting away from the army alive. The Kmir's troops, blood sorcerers, and potentially his mind thieves will pursue any investigator who wounds the Kmir. It may be best for one investigator to wound the Kmir, ideally at a distance, and run for his life. Another investigator may retrieve the fallen blood.

Speaking With the Kmir

It is also possible to peacefully speak with the Kmir. The investigators may surrender themselves to the army, and they will promptly be disarmed and brought before the Kmir. If the investigators tell the Kmir about what has happened to the Queen and how they propose to help her, the Kmir will cut his arm and provide them with a small quantity of his blood. He is willing to do this because he is genuinely worried about the Queen using some sort of dark magic upon his army, and he prefers to fight a fully human foe upon his arrival in Manhattan.

If the investigators are captured while sneaking around the army, a similar meeting with the Kmir may occur.

The Survival of the Kmir

This encounter is designed to make the Kmir easy to wound but extremely difficult to kill. This is important for the scene at the end of the act which depends on the Kmir's presence.

Normally, the Kmir's armor, his toughness, and the healing from his blood sorcerers are more than sufficient to keep him alive. You should only use the Kmir's mind thieves to resolve unusual problems or to add flavor. You can run this entire encounter without ever mentioning them. They may show up if the investigators are doing something that you judge needs to be disrupted or if their presence would add drama and interest to a scene.

Note that assassination plots may be disrupted in all sorts of ways, some less obvious than others. For instance, a trap or explosive planted for the Kmir may accidentally be triggered by the wrong person.

Contingency: If you judge that preventing the Kmir's death would be too heavy-handed or too difficult to accomplish plausibly in a given situation, you may let the investigators kill him. In this case, you will need to use a different character in the last scene of the act. One of his six commanders, a fast, thin man who fights with numerous knives, becomes the acting Kmir and fills in for the rest of the act.

Loss of the Airship

If the investigators arrived via airship, and if the airship was not destroyed by the army's blood sorcerers, then it has most likely landed in a clearing. It is spotted by a pair of the Kmir's scouts. These scouts launch fire arrows at the airship from deep within the forest.

The scouts are too far away to detect before they shoot fire arrows. Afterward, they may be found and killed by any investigators guarding the airship.

The gas bag of the airship burns, rendering it unusable for the trip back. This is important so that the investigators do not return to Manhattan and complete the plot so rapidly that the Kmir and his army could never plausibly catch up in time for the last scene.

If the airship has a non-investigator pilot, she stays with the investigators after the airship burns. If there are no investigators around, she flees into the forest and tries to meet up with them for the return journey.



The Journey Back to Manhattan

Even if the investigators were detected by the Kmir's army, they should be able to evade any pursuers in the deep forest.

They may travel the 50 miles back to Manhattan on foot, taking three days. If the investigators have horses, they reach the castle in two and a half days. If investigators search the coast, they find a small fishing village where they can requisition passage on a slow fishing trawler. It gets blown somewhat off course and reaches Manhattan in just under three days.

During this time, the Kmir and his army are rapidly marching toward Manhattan. Their progress should not be noticed by the investigators so that the last scene is a surprise.

The Theft

In addition to a drop of the Kmir's blood, the investigators must recover an item precious to the Queen that they can smash at the conclusion of the unpossession ritual. With a successful *Know* roll, an investigator may recall the three precious items from past experience. Alternatively, investigators may question the castle staff to learn of these three items.

The Three Precious Items

The first precious item is the small brass automaton that often accompanies the Queen. This robot was a parting gift to the Queen from the Philosopher who served as her tutor when she was a girl. It is almost always in the Queen's presence, though occasionally she gives it simple tasks to complete, such as fetching items and running small errands. It is not particularly intelligent, but it can remember and follow orders with excruciating detail. You can think of its mental capacity as a hybrid between that of a computer and that of a four-year-old child.

The second precious item is the royal electric carriage. The carriage was constructed at the order of Queen Olivia in 1755 and is now almost a century old. While it is no longer the fastest or most reliable electric carriage in existence, it is undoubtedly the most magnificent. The seats are upholstered in the

finest fabrics and are lined with fur. Intricate gold and silver filigree is inlaid into the wood-paneled interior. All exposed metal surfaces are plated with gold. The carriage eschews the raw mechanical design of most steam technology, artfully concealing its mechanisms within the vehicle's base. The carriage is kept inside a special chamber in the castle stables, separate from the animals.

The last item precious to the Queen is an ornate music box. Years ago, when she was a princess, Elaine fell in love with a diplomat visiting from a distant land. They often spent time together for the length of a year before the diplomat was recalled to his homeland. Before he left, he gave Elaine this music box. It is one foot long, and it is crafted of solid silver. The top is inlaid with rubies and sapphires. When the lid is opened, a delicate gear mechanism moves a tiny golden swan across a lake of polished metal. The swan flaps its wings and turns its head from side to side as the music plays. The music box never needs to be wound. Due to its fragility and its use of precious stones, the Queen keeps it in the royal treasury. Before she became possessed, the Queen used to order that it be brought to her regularly, but she no longer asks for it. Evidently, the monster does not think that listening to a music box is a productive use of its time.

Stealing the Automaton

If the investigators attempt to steal the automaton, they will need to find a way to get it away from the Queen for an extended period (at least 30 minutes), preferably without arousing suspicion. Most of the errands the Queen asks the robot to perform require no more than five minutes, so she will become concerned if it does not return to her promptly.

The investigators will not be able to loiter near the Queen. Nobody except the robot is allowed into the diplomatic reception hall with Elaine. When she is in her audience chamber, the investigators may enter, but the Queen will ask them what they want and will dismiss them after attending to any matters they raise.

In order to give themselves time to complete the ritual before the Queen misses the robot, the investigators might attempt to set up a situation that would lead the Queen to ask the robot to perform an ex-

tended task (e.g., locating and retrieving ten particular books from the castle library). Alternatively, they might steal the robot when the Queen is asleep. She sleeps for seven or eight hours per night, just as she did when she was not possessed. See the section on “Placing the Drop of Blood” below for considerations regarding breaking into the Queen’s chambers.

The robot has a loud steam whistle built into its back. The whistle is obvious when looking at the robot; the investigators have likely seen it. If the robot realizes that it is being stolen, it will blast the whistle repeatedly. It is not particularly difficult to trick the robot so that it does not realize that it is being stolen until it is too late. The investigators may destroy the steam whistle without wrecking the rest of the automaton.

The robot will attempt to run away if not restrained. It may easily be smashed with a sword or halberd.

Stealing the Electric Carriage

The electric carriage is kept inside a secure room in the castle stables. The room is sealed with a thick wooden door and chained shut. The heavy iron lock on the door may be picked with a successful *Locksmith* roll, but this takes a few minutes.

The stable master, a young man named George Seckford, rests at a table near the front of the stables. A hallway to George’s right leads to the carriage room.

George has a deck of cards, which he absent-mindedly shuffles repeatedly. He is a bit lonely and is happy to speak to the investigators at great length on any topic. If asked to play cards, he gladly begins a game with as many investigators as wish to play. In either case, he is likely to glance to his right at least once every few minutes, making it difficult to pick the lock. If the investigators suggest a game with partners (like Bridge or Euchre), they may be able to get George to switch places at the table so that his back is positioned to the carriage room. The investigators may devise some other means of keeping George entirely occupied.

Alternatively, George may be drugged or knocked unconscious. He has a key to the lock on a ring at his belt.

The electric carriage may be started with a successful *Drive Carriage* roll. It hums and purrs, but it does not make the loud clanking and buzzing sounds characteristic of most electric carriages. (If the investigators cannot start it, they may slowly push it.) The carriage may only be driven straight ahead, out of the stables through a tunnel that leads to a dedicated gate in the castle’s exterior wall. This gate is unguarded and may be opened from the inside. The carriage emerges just beyond the defensive wall, skipping the castle courtyard entirely.

The investigators may encounter some difficulty in smashing the carriage at the conclusion of the ritual. It is large and has a metal frame, so striking it with swords or halberds is not effective. The best method may be to drive the carriage at top speed into the outer wall. Another reasonable method is to tie a rope to a heavy object on the outer wall and to pull it down onto the carriage. (The only suitable objects already on the wall are the four ballistas at the corners.)

Alternatively, the vehicle may be “smashed” via an explosion. An investigator may already possess a suitable device, such as an Amphoteric Staff with a self-destruct mechanism. Otherwise, explosives may be obtained from Alexander Whittimore.

Stealing the Music Box

The music box is stored in the royal treasury, an underground chamber beneath the castle. The walls, floor, and ceiling of the treasury are thick stone, and its main door is solid iron with a formidable locking mechanism featuring massive wheels and gears.

A team of five soldiers and a finance minister are stationed in front of the treasury. In order to open the door, two soldiers must simultaneously turn their keys in slots on opposite sides of the door, and the finance minister must speak a password quietly into a brass trumpet head on the wall.

Normally, the treasury door is only opened when the finance minister is presented with a written order from the Queen that instructs her to give an item or a quantity of gold to a particular individual. Such orders must bear the royal seal and be in the Queen’s handwriting. The finance minister alone will enter

the treasury, withdraw the required items and gold, and give them to the person entitled to them.

The treasury guards and finance minister are chosen for this post specifically because of their resistance to corruption. None of them can be bribed or intimidated, though they may be coerced.

One way for the investigators to acquire the music box is to forge an order from the Queen. They may successfully forge a request that passes the finance minister's examination if they steal both a copy of the royal seal (a metal stamp for use on hot wax) and a letter written by the Queen to study as a handwriting model. Many individuals in the castle possess a letter written by the Queen, including Alexander Whittemore, Niles Jarvis, Franz Gustaaf Salisbury, the head cook, and so forth. Royal seals are available in the Queen's meeting rooms and in her audience chamber. If the investigators have a letter with a broken wax seal, they might be able to carve a fake seal with sufficient accuracy to fool the minister, particularly if any investigator can make a relevant *Craft* or *Art* roll.

Another tactic is to break through one of the stone walls or the ceiling. Above the treasury are the kitchens. To the north of the treasury is the upper level of the dungeons, where a few petty criminals are housed for short periods of time. Earth surrounds the treasury in all other directions. The investigators could break through a wall with an explosion, but this would be heard and cause a panic in the castle. The investigators can hurriedly swipe the music box and then blend into the confusion, or they might devise a quieter means of penetrating the stone walls.

The treasury is a vast room filled with heaps of gold coins, necklaces, goblets, and other valuables. The music box sits prominently on a jade table near the door. The music box is trivial to carry and to smash.

Placing the Drop of Blood

Before the investigators may conduct the ritual, the Queen must be "wearing" a drop of the Kmir's blood. It may be absorbed by a garment the Queen is wearing or placed on the Queen's hair or skin.

The investigators may attempt to place it on the Queen directly. She spends some time each day in her audience chamber addressing the concerns of various citizens, but she remains near her throne. The investigators would need to come up with a clever excuse to enable them to touch the Queen or something she is wearing. If the Queen notices that a spot of blood is on her or her clothes, she will wash it off or change.

The Queen also moves through the hallways, where it may be easier to get close to her. She goes to the diplomatic reception hall twice each day to work the preparations for her summoning ritual. She goes to her chambers each night to sleep. She always has at least two members of the personal guard with her when in transit, one ahead and one behind her.

A drop of blood can be left on something the investigators expect the Queen to touch or brush against, but if she doesn't touch it within about 15 minutes, the blood is dry and doesn't come off onto the Queen.

The other main method of placing the drop of blood is to infiltrate the Queen's chambers and plant it on a garment she will wear. The investigators very likely possess enough blood to provide a reasonable number of drops, so they may be able to mark many garments. Nightgowns are a particularly good choice, as the Queen only owns about a dozen of them, and she uses one every night.

The Queen's chambers are guarded by two members of the personal guard at all times. They stand outside the door. One way into the Queen's chambers involves scaling the outside of the castle and accessing her room via the balcony. The Queen's balcony is on the fifth floor.

Alternatively, it is possible for the investigators to take advantage of the fact that they are members of the Queensguard in order to replace the door guards. The guards rotate every six hours. The old pair does not leave its post until the new pair arrives. If the scheduled replacement guards do not arrive, the investigators might be able to claim that they have been instructed to stand in for the missing guards.

The Fate of Kingdoms

Once the investigators have acquired one of the three precious objects and are confident that the Queen is currently wearing a drop of the Kmir's blood, they are ready to begin the ritual. The investigators must form a circle under the open sky within one quarter mile of the Queen. The only reasonable place to do this is in the large, open field that surrounds the castle's outer wall. (The castle courtyard is heavily used, and trees obscure the view of the sky. The castle lacks flat roofs and balconies of sufficient size.)

As noted in the ritual's description, investigators do not need to learn it as if they were learning a spell. Chanting by reading the lines from the scroll is sufficient. Individual investigators may pause to take a break from chanting, but at least one investigator must be chanting at all times. Investigators participating in the ritual may move around a bit, but they must remain part of the circle.

It is a quiet night (or day), and the investigators are able to chant for 25 minutes without interruption. During this time, they sense magical energy gradually building around them. It feels like an accumulation of static electricity combined with a certain misty quality to the world outside the circle, as though seeing it through a thin layer of reddish fog. These sensations build up gradually over the course of the chant and never become strong enough to be distracting.

Keeper's Scene Notes: The restrictions on where the ritual may be performed and on where the investigators may stand are designed to ensure that all of the investigators get a good view of the Kmir and his army when they approach the castle and to ensure they are physically positioned to intervene in the duel if they so choose.

Arrival of the Kmir

The next sequence of events happens quickly and cinematically. Just as the investigators pass the 25-minute mark, the distinctive ululation of a Mongolian war horn splits the air. Some distance away, the Kmir emerges from the forest at the head of his army. Ranks upon ranks of soldiers are visible at the edge of the grassy field, and three large siege towers

are pushed into view, rising from amongst the trees. With incredible volume, the Kmir roars at the castle, demanding the Queen come down to speak with him.

Soon, the Queen appears at the top of the outer wall at the point closest to the Kmir. She looks disheveled, her face is red, and her eyes burn with murderous fury. The Kmir yells out to her, "Queen Elaine, your troops fought well, but I defeated them. My army now stands before your castle. I have won!"

"Surrender, O Queen! Open these gates and lay your crown at my feet. I swear upon the blood of my ancestors, if you do this, you and your people will be spared."

In a cracked, inhuman voice, the Queen screams, "No! My ritual! Who are you to do this, you sniveling little creature? You..."

The investigators never hear what other insults the Queen would have hurled at the Kmir, as she is cut off by a horrible transformation. Her skin takes on a disgusting green and purple tone, and her body begins to bulge. She lets out one last shriek of anger before she bursts out of her skin, transformed into a horrendous monster. The Queen now stands nine feet tall, has three pairs of long talons, a powerful spiked tail, and a multitude of sinuous tentacles projecting from her back. At this time, the investigators must roll for a 1d4/1d20 Sanity point loss.

Because the Queen has shed both her flesh and her clothing, she is no longer wearing the blood of her mortal enemy. Just an instant before the investigators can chant the final word and smash the precious object, the ritual falters. The feeling of static electricity and the misty appearance of the world are instantly stripped away. It is clear that whatever crescendo the ritual was building toward cannot occur now.

The Queen lets out a roar and leaps from the wall. She lands on the grass below with a great smash, absorbing the shock with her immense legs. The entire army of the Kmir begins to scream and flee into the forest, as some go insane and incite panic in the troops who manage to avoid insanity.

Only the Kmir stands firm. Grimly, he draws his dual scimitars from his belt and strides forward to meet the Queen.

Contingency: If the investigators destroyed the bridge to New York, the Kmir has no siege towers, but he managed to ferry a large number of troops across the river using all of the boats left in New York.

The Duel

The two combatants meet in the center of the plain with the castle looming overhead. They begin to duel. It is clear that the Kmir is enormously skilled, as he ducks and weaves, striking powerful blows with his two swords at unpredictable angles.

Unfortunately for the Kmir, the Queen has six talons and is always able to get at least one of them in the way of each blow. She begins to harass the Kmir with her other talons and spiked tail, forcing the Kmir to adopt a defensive posture. Soon, the Kmir realizes that he is overmatched and has little hope of defeating the Queen. (This occurs as soon as any investigator begins to run toward the combatants, or when all of the investigators have recovered from short temporary insanity.)

The Kmir notices the investigators. He calls out to them, “You, Queensguard! Your Queen is no more! Help me slay this beast or we shall all perish!”

The investigators may decide whether or not to help the Kmir.

In the Service of the Empire

If the investigators choose to help the Kmir, they may approach the combatants and attempt to slay the Queen. If you believe that your players would enjoy a combat encounter at this point, you may resolve this fight as a regular combat. See the “Optional Combat Statistics” section in the Reference Materials chapter for details on how to do this.

Otherwise, you can smoothly role-play this encounter without die rolls. The Queen directs the majority of her attacks at the Kmir, who barely manages to fend them off while giving ground. The investigators join the battle and fight bravely. If any investi-

gators are fighting in melee range, they may be hurt. Eventually, the investigators manage to wound the Queen. This gives the Kmir the opening he needs. He hacks off one of the Queen’s talons, then he drives a scimitar deep into the monster’s chest.

The Queen utters one mournful, surprisingly human cry before collapsing. The Kmir backs away from the monstrous body. He is streaming with sweat and panting hard. He bows deeply to the investigators and says, “Thank you for your aid. I owe my life to all of you. I honor you, for your bravery and valor are nearly as great as my own! I would reward you for your service to the empire. If you seek riches, a position helping to govern this new province, or some other reward that is in my power, you need but ask.”

The Kmir’s army begins to emerge from the forest. The Kmir’s personal blood sorcerers sheepishly enter the clearing. They heal any wounds the Kmir has suffered. At his instruction, the blood sorcerers heal the investigators.

The Kmir is true to his word and grants any reasonable requests the investigators make. The Kmir will not give up any imperial territory, including his new conquest, the Province of America. Similarly, he will not step down from his position as Kmir, nor elevate an investigator to a higher post than provincial governor. He is willing to grant the investigators vast quantities of wealth, ships, palaces, and so forth.

The Kmir is a fair and honorable ruler. Though news of the conquest is initially met with disbelief and horror by the citizens of America, they soon acclimate themselves to life in the empire. The Province of America retains its distinctive culture, and if the investigators succeeded in Act 1, the Order of Philosophers is preserved.

No one can say for certain what happened to the monster. It might have died or been banished when the Queen was killed. On the other hand, it might have escaped and corrupted an imperial soldier or a villager in New York. Even now, it may be biding its time and making plans.

Defenders of the Queen

The investigators may choose to ignore the Kmir's appeal for help. In this case, they likely watch as the Queen inevitably wears down the Kmir. After a couple of rounds, the Queen catches one of the Kmir's scimitars in her talons and rips it from his hand.

The Kmir tries to fight with one scimitar, but this is a hopeless cause. The Queen deflects the sword and drives a massive talon into the Kmir's chest, punching through his armor as though it were fabric. She lifts him off the ground, impaled on her talon. The Kmir's blood streams all over the Queen's arm.

The investigators immediately notice the magic of the ritual snap back into being. The feeling like static electricity and the misty appearance of the world are just as they were at the very end of the ritual. All that remains is for an investigator to say the final word and smash the precious object. (It is clear to any investigator who feels the magic return that they may resume the ritual from where they left off.)

At least one investigator speaks the final word and destroys the precious object. Just as the Queen prepares to drive a talon through the Kmir's head, she gives a great shudder and shrinks down to human form. The Queen cannot support the weight of the armored Kmir and collapses under his bulk.

The investigators likely rush to the scene, hoping to protect the Queen or possibly finish off the Kmir. By the time they arrive, the Queen has dragged herself out from under the Kmir and, for modesty, she has wrapped herself in his long cloak.

The Kmir is obviously dying. The Queen is no longer possessed and is again her honorable self. She does not permit the investigators to attack the Kmir. She says to the dying man, "Baras Kmir, I know it was not your intent, but I wish to thank you for the part you have played in saving me from a terrible fate. You would have spared my people, and in return, I shall spare yours. You may keep all of the territory you now hold on the American continent, and this war between us shall be at an end."

The Kmir manages to choke out, "Thus through my blood have my people been saved." He dies. The Kmir's army flees across the river and moves south of New York to await instructions from Karakorum.

The Queen is extremely grateful to the investigators. Nonetheless, the material rewards she offers them are somewhat modest. The Queensguard is not composed of mercenaries, but honorable men and women dedicated to the service of the kingdom. The Queen believes that they serve because of their ideals and their commitment to America. To provide a large financial reward would disparage the investigators' honor and would send the wrong message to future recruits considering service in the Queensguard. She will, however, promote the investigators in rank. Any who seem to have a tenuous grip on sanity are offered the opportunity to transfer from the realm guard to the personal guard. Any investigator may choose to retire.

A new Kmir is selected in Karakorum and journeys to America. In the imperial army, the tale of the Queen defeating the Kmir in single combat has grown with each retelling. When the new Kmir arrives, he is informed that Queen Elaine is a master of dark magic of incredible power and an unparalleled melee combatant. Accordingly, he decides to accept the peace treaty proposed by the Queen. The Queen's terms are those which she outlined to the dying Kmir. An era of peace and cooperation between the Kingdom of America and the Central Asian Empire is begun.

Contingency: When the monstrous Queen is dueling the Kmir, the investigators may attempt to kill the Kmir themselves. In this case, they may injure or distract the Kmir, providing an opening for the Queen to stab him through the chest, as detailed above. The Queen is covered in the Kmir's blood, and the investigators must scramble to complete the ritual. The Queen may chase the investigators, with the Kmir still hanging from her talon, until they say the final word and smash the precious object.



REFERENCE MATERIALS

List of Characters

Below you will find a list of all named, non-player characters appearing in Queensguard. Characters are alphabetized by first name. For uniformity, all names are listed with given name preceding surname, even though the opposite is customary in Mongolia. Each character's current title and any former title(s) are provided below.

Alexander Whittemore

Philosopher-in-Residence at Manhattan

Alma Freestone

Merchant Captain of the *Tradewind*

Baras Kasar

Kmir of the Central Asian Empire

Dmitry Sorenkov

Member of the Brotherhood of the Wolf
Former Philosopher of the Tower

Earnhard Gillman

Member of the Brotherhood of the Wolf

Elaine of the House of Hanover

Her Majesty the Queen
Lord of Manhattan, High Queen of America

Eli White

Leader of the Brotherhood of the Wolf
Former Member of the Cambridge Town Council

Franz Gustaaf Salisbury

Steward of Manhattan Castle

George Seckford

Stable Master of Manhattan Castle

Niles Jarvis

Field Marshal of the Queensguard
Commander of the Personal Guard

Myra Rajamani

Philosopher of the Tower
Pilot of the Airship *Queen's Venture*

Saranmaa Kurultai

Citizen of New York
Former Blood Sorcerer of the Central Asian Empire

Sigfried Falk

Inspector General
Second Captain of the Queensguard

Stonton of Torigni

Warden of the Tower

Valen Albrecht

Grand Chancellor of the Tower

Yvonne Lefevre

Guard of Manhattan Castle

Combat-Relevant NPC Statistics

This section provides only those statistics for each character that are useful during the battle at the end of Act 1. This is not a comprehensive listing of any character's skills, spells, etc.

Dimensional Shambler

HP 18, MP 17

STR 19, CON 17, POW 17, DEX 15

Weapons: Claw 30% x2, 1d8+1d6

May attack with both each turn.

Armor: 3-point hide

Sanity Loss: 0/1d10

Skills: Dodge 50%, Grapple 80%

Spells:

Fade Out [p. 156] (4 mp + 1 per 10 SIZ of carried target)

Levitate [p. 238] (1 mp per SIZ of target, lasts several minutes, needs POW vs. POW resistance test)

Muck-Dweller

HP 15

STR 11, CON 13, POW 8, DEX 13

Weapons: Claw 30%, 1d6+1d4

Armor: 3-point hide

Sanity Loss: 0/1d6

Skills: Dodge 30%

Nightgaunt

HP 13

STR 11, CON 10, POW 10, DEX 14

Weapons: Tickle 30% (immobilize 1d6+1 rnds), drop grappled target (1d6 per 10 ft)

Armor: 2-point skin

Sanity Loss: 0/1d6

Skills: Grapple 30%, Dodge 70%

Stonton, the Tower Warden

HP 12

STR 18, CON 12, POW 10, DEX 11

Weapons: Sword 80%, 1d6+2+1d4

Halberd 80%, 1d6+3+1d4

Armor: 2-point chain

Skills: Dodge 50%, Parry at weapon skill (80%)

Consequence Engine Operator

HP 7

STR 8, CON 7, POW 14, DEX 8

Weapons: none

Armor: none

Skills: Dodge 16%, Thaumaturgy 90%

Spells:

Mesmerize [p. 239] (0 mp, POW vs. POW test every 3 rounds to maintain, victim's physical skills are halved)

Valen Albrecht

HP 12, MP 18

STR 14, CON 13, POW 18, DEX 12

Weapons: Alchemical fire flask 80%, 1d6/round, burns for 3 rounds unless put out, limited number of flasks (1)

Armor: 2 (leather and augmented goggles)

Skills: Dodge 70%

Abilities: Cannot be knocked unconscious,

Valen's ward (POWx1 test to oppose)

Spells:

Power Drain [p. 240] (steal 2d6 mp)

Power of Nyambe [p. 240] (lose 1 POW, gain 2d6 mp)

Shriveling [p. 242] (1 mp per damage, requires 2 rounds to cast)

Stop Heart [p. 243] (14 mp, 4d6 damage)

Song of Hastur [p. 243] (each round, 1d4 mp for 1d6 damage, song test replaces resistance test)

Spell Notes: All of Valen's spells except *Power of Nyambe* and *Song of Hastur* require a POW vs. POW resistance test. Valen's *Power of Nyambe* requires no physical components. Valen's *Power Drain* steals twice as many mp as normal if successful.

STR scores are used in grappling.

DEX scores are used for initiative.

POW scores are used for spell resistance.

CON scores are used rarely for spell resistance.



Optional Combat Statistics

This section provides the information you need in order to run the last duel (between the Kmir and the transformed Queen) as a combat encounter for the investigators. This information is useful only in the event the investigators choose to help the Kmir defeat the Queen.

The Queen has the following combat profile.

The Queen, Transformed

HP 14

STR 19, CON 17, POW 11, DEX 15

Weapons: Talon 80% x6, 1d6+1d6

Tail 60%, 1d4+1d6

May attack with all seven each turn.

Armor: 2-point hide

Sanity Loss: 1d4/1d20

Skills: Dodge 50%

Initially, the Queen always directs four talon attacks at the Kmir. She directs her remaining two talon attacks and her tail attack at the investigators (preferably at different investigators). The Kmir does not attack; he is entirely occupied defending himself.

During the first two rounds, the Kmir is able to block the four attacks directed at him. After two rounds, he begins to tire and starts to let attacks through his guard, suffering minor wounds. When the Kmir is wounded, any investigators who remained back at the spot where they conducted the ritual may notice the magic of the ritual return (as described in the “Defenders of the Queen” subsection in Act 2), but any investigators who have moved to engage the Queen do not notice. If the investigators notice the magic, break off the fight, and complete the ritual, matters play out as in the “Defenders of the Queen” subsection. (The Queen impales the Kmir shortly before the investigators can smash the precious object.)

Otherwise, the investigators fight alongside the Kmir until the Queen falls. See the subsection “In the Service of the Empire” near the end of Act 2 for the result.

How to Modify the Fight’s Difficulty

If the investigators are losing the battle, the Queen should focus more of her attacks on the Kmir each turn. Alternatively, if the investigators get a solid hit in, you can indicate that this distracts the Queen long enough for the Kmir to hack off one of her talons, costing her 5 HP and one talon attack per turn.

If the investigators are winning the fight too easily, the Queen directs more of her seven attacks at the investigators. Note that with all seven attacks, the Queen is extremely likely to kill one or two investigators each turn, so you should be very careful when increasing the number of attacks the Queen may make against investigators.

If the investigators all fight at range (with spells and crossbows), the Queen may disengage from the Kmir and spend a turn or two chasing them around. Investigators can (and should) keep out of her range by running away. An investigator who doesn’t run away is caught by the Queen and likely dies to her seven attacks.

Contingency: If the Queen is killed and then the investigators turn on the Kmir, he calls out for his blood sorcerers to aid him. The next round, they emerge from the woods at the head of the army and heal the Kmir. The Kmir is both grateful for the investigators’ help and angry at their treachery. After some deliberation, he decides to give them a ship loaded with gold. He orders them to sail away and never return to the Central Asian Empire. The investigators may have further adventures elsewhere in the world. Matters in the Province of America play out as they would if the players had not turned on the Kmir. (See the “In the Service of the Empire” subsection in Act 2 for details.)

Scrolls and Books

This section includes descriptions of all the magical scrolls and books which appear in Queensguard. It focuses on the physical description and game mechanics of these items, not how each item is acquired (which is covered in the two campaign plot chapters).

Wardbreaking (book)

Location: The Cambridge Tower Library (Act 1)

Physical Description: This is a thin book bound in red leather. The title, “Wardbreaking: What Your Summoner Doesn’t Want You to Know” appears on the cover in black lettering. The book is in good physical condition.

Upon Brief Examination: This book explains that wards can be either physical or psychological barriers generated using mystical symbols and thaumaturgy. Most wards can be broken by defacing them, but this is not always convenient, particularly if you are on the wrong side of the ward. This book is capable of teaching investigators the **Break Ward** spell, which is designed to shatter wards magically.

Break Ward (spell):

Learning: This is a non-Mythos spell that requires a successful *Thaumaturgy* or INTx3 roll to learn. The spell is short and clearly written, requiring only 10 minutes of study. A failed attempt may not be re-tried for 24 hours. Reading this book costs no Sanity points and confers no *Cthulhu Mythos* ranks.

Casting: You must be in the presence of the ward you wish to break. Expend 3 magic points and no Sanity points. Match your POW vs. the POW of the ward’s creator on the resistance table. A win indicates the ward is dispelled.

Draw Forth Winged Servant (scroll, whistle)

Location: Possessed by Dmitry, in the encampment of the Brotherhood (Act 1)

Physical Description: Inside an unassuming black, leather scroll case is a freshly inked scroll and a small metal whistle. The scroll is entitled, “Draw Forth Winged Servant.” Dmitry claimed that it is written in Valen’s hand. The whistle is cylindrical and is formed of a dull gray metal.

Upon Brief Examination: The scroll is an invocation to a being called “Hastur the Unspeakable.” It appears to be capable of compelling some sort of creature to come to the caster and fulfill a single command. Along one edge of the scroll, the author has scribbled, “Must fix roof. In future, cast outside.”

Draw Forth Winged Servant (spell):

Learning: This is a Mythos spell that requires a successful *Thaumaturgy* or INTx3 roll to learn. The spell requires one day of study (8 hours), and a failed attempt may not be re-tried for 5 days. Upon a success, an investigator learns the spell, gains 5% *Cthulhu Mythos* skill, and must roll for a 1d2/1d4 Sanity point loss.

Casting: This spell is equivalent to *Summon/Bind Byakhee* (CoC core, p. 244), including the requirement that the spell be cast at night. During the entire campaign plot of Queensguard, Aldebaran is above the horizon from dusk until dawn. The Byakhee arrives bound. A summoned Byakhee’s command, once stated, may neither be rescinded nor modified.

Whistle: The whistle has been enchanted with 3 points of POW, adding 30% to the chance for a successful summoning.



The Liber Ivonis (book)

Location: Valen's Chambers (Act 1)

Physical Description: This is an old, water-stained book with strange symbols embossed on the cover. It is entitled, "The Liber Ivonis." With a successful *Occult* roll, an investigator may know that this is the spellbook of Eibon, a semi-legendary wizard who lived more than a thousand years ago. This book, dated 1476, is an English translation of the original.

Upon Brief Examination: This book contains a vast wealth of Mythos information as well as a large selection of spells. Reading this book in its entirety would require many months. However, there are several isolated spells that can be studied and learned without reading the rest of the book. (There are many other spells in the Liber Ivonis, but they rely on a strong knowledge of Mythos magical theory, which is developed in the portions of the book that the investigators will not have time to read.)

Liber Ivonis:

Learning: Each spell in the Liber Ivonis requires a separate, successful *Thaumaturgy* or INTx3 roll to learn. Each spell requires one day of study (8 hours), and a failed attempt may not be re-tried for 5 days. Upon a success, an investigator learns the spell, gains 5% *Cthulhu Mythos* skill and must roll for a 1d2/1d4 Sanity point loss.

The available spells are:

Break the Earth's Grip

Levitate [p. 238]

Call Forth the Unspeakable

Call/Dismiss Hastur [p. 222]

Cause the Dead to Rise

Resurrection [p. 241]

Reshape the Flesh

Body Warping of Gorgoroth [p. 221]

Song of Illusion

Soul Singing [p. 243]

A non-magical set of pipes is sufficient to cast this spell.

The Scroll of Unpossession

Location: Valen's Chambers (Act 1)

Physical Description: This scroll is old and yellowed. It is written in an ancient language that is based on pictograms. Valen has penned in a translation of the scroll's title: "Ritual of Unpossession."

Upon Brief Examination: Nothing beyond the title can be gleaned from the scroll until it is translated. Once translated, the scroll indicates that the ritual it describes is capable of banishing a creature that is possessing a human. The ritual is not a spell in the traditional sense and does not need to be "learned." Any group that carefully follows the ritual's directions will achieve the listed effects.

Ritual of Unpossession:

Requirements: The scroll stipulates that the possessed person must wear a drop of the blood of his mortal enemy. He need not be aware of this. Then, the spellbreakers may begin the ritual. They must be under the open sky within 1/4 mile of the possessed. They must stand in a circle and chant for 30 minutes. (The text of the chant appears on the scroll.) At least one person must be chanting at all times. As the chant ends, one spellbreaker must smash an object precious to the possessed.

Effect: The possessing creature is banished back to the void and the possessed is freed.

Players should be left to interpret what it means for one to "wear" a drop of blood— i.e. on the skin, soaked into a garment, etc. You should allow any reasonable interpretation to be effective.

"His mortal enemy" refers to the enemy of the possessed person, not the enemy of the possessing entity. The possessing entity cannot itself be the mortal enemy of the person being possessed. The word "mortal" here is a double entendre; the enemy must indeed be a mortal. The translated scroll makes this clear to readers.

Behind-the-Scenes Plot Elements

This section explains some details of the Queensguard plot that occur entirely outside of the investigators' view. The players should not learn any of this material during the course of play. The purpose of this section is threefold: to illustrate how the plot fits into a broader narrative, to respond to questions players might ask after the campaign is over, and to assist a keeper who wishes to extend the adventure past the end of the included plot.

What Was the Monster?

The monster was the shade of the legendary wizard Eibon, summoned back into the physical world.

How Did Eibon End Up in That Cave?

Three hundred years before the start of Queensguard, a sorcerer from Europe managed to acquire a translated copy of the *Liber Ivonis*, spellbook of the mighty wizard Eibon. Walking in Eibon's footsteps, the sorcerer became skilled in Mythos magic, learning to summon horrific creatures and shift himself through space and time.

In order to practice his magic without arousing suspicion, the sorcerer created a Gate linking his workshop with a seaside cave on an unexplored continent across the ocean. This was the New World. At that time, America had almost no contact with Europe.

The sorcerer increasingly spent his time in America. He kept his copy of the *Liber Ivonis* in the cave, and he erected a large stone monument atop the cliff as an aid to help him cast certain spells.

One night, the sorcerer attempted to summon the spirit of the wizard Eibon, from whom he hoped to learn further secrets of the Mythos. He succeeded in conjuring up the great wizard. Unfortunately for the sorcerer, Eibon's shade was utterly evil, hungry for a physical body, and in command of a portion of the wizard's former power. Eibon broke through the sorcerer's defenses and began to take over his mind. Realizing that he had seconds left to live under his own volition, the sorcerer sacrificed himself to generate a powerful ward, sealing the cave and trapping the spirit of Eibon inside. The spirit of the corrupted wizard passed three centuries in this watery tomb.

How did Eibon See Events in Queensguard?

In 1850, Valen and Dmitry used a consequence engine to phase out the ward, as detailed in the Prologue. Eibon's shade noticed the ward's absence and took over Valen's mind. Eibon gained access to Valen's memories, granting him extensive knowledge of the Kingdom of America and enabling him to impersonate Valen.

Eibon returned to the Tower and used his magic to elevate himself to a position of leadership. He began to direct the Philosophers' efforts toward the summoning of Great Old Ones. He believed this would lead to a breakdown of the current world order, sowing chaos and giving him the opening he needed to take over the world. Eibon also prepared a vehicle in which he could escape, in case Valen was unexpectedly killed.

Each day Valen spent possessed, he lost a little more sanity. Eventually, his will was broken and he became Eibon's thrall. Shortly thereafter, the investigators arrived from Manhattan. Eibon realized that his current position was in jeopardy, and he needed to move on to a position of greater authority and security.

Leaving his thrall with the instructions to summon a Great Old One or die in the attempt, Eibon's shade entered the Demon Carriage and drove it to Manhattan. Upon arrival, he possessed the Queen. As before, Eibon gained access to his host's memories and began to erode her sanity.

The investigators returned from Cambridge before Eibon could complete his subjugation of the Queen's will. Eibon paid them little heed, instead focusing on a plan to summon a Great Old One to smash the Kmir's army. The Kmir arrived before Eibon was ready. Facing failure at the hands of the Kmir, Eibon called upon dangerous Mythos magic to transform the body of his host into that of a hideous, formidable beast.

The investigators either used a ritual to banish Eibon's shade (which ended his transformation spell), or they killed the Queen, forcing Eibon out. In the latter case, the keeper must decide whether Eibon's spirit found a new body or if he was pulled back into the netherworld.



What Are the Abilities of Eibon's Shade?

When Eibon is not possessing a person, he has only one ability. He may attempt to possess a person. This action is not governed by defined mechanics, because it should be used by the keeper to drive the plot.

As long as Eibon is not possessing a person, he is at risk of being sucked back into the netherworld. Assume he can remain on Earth without a body for thirty to sixty seconds. However, Eibon is immune to being dragged back into the netherworld as long as he remains inside a warded area (such as the Demon Carriage or the cave where he passed three centuries).

While Eibon is possessing a person, he is capable of spellcasting. He knows a vast repertoire of Mythos and non-Mythos spells, as the keeper sees fit. He has access to all of the memories of those whom he possesses and is reasonably skillful at imitating them. He can read, write, and speak any language known by anyone he has ever possessed.

A person possessed by Eibon perceives events in a hazy way, as though half asleep. For every day a person is possessed by Eibon, she loses one Sanity point. This represents Eibon gradually coming to dominate her mind. When she loses her last Sanity point, her will is broken and she becomes Eibon's thrall. At that point, and not before, Eibon may voluntarily leave her body and possess another person. A thrall serves Eibon, even when she is no longer possessed.

What Happened to Sigfried Falk?

After concluding his investigation of Cambridge, Falk continued north to Portsmouth. The Philosophers in Portsmouth were not under Valen's sway, so Valen was worried that they might reveal to Falk the extent to which Valen had redirected the Queen's projects toward his own ends. He sent word ahead by bird that Falk was a dangerous impostor. At Valen's orders, the Philosophers of Portsmouth detained Falk and held him pending further instructions. After Act 1, word reached them that Valen turned out to be a corrupted maniac, so they let Falk go with many apologies.

Who Are Featured in the Prologue, Part 1?

The speaker is an old, suspicious sailor from Cambridge. He is aware of growing discontent in the town, since the Queen has been focusing all of her attention on the war in the south, and she has been neglecting Cambridge.

The listener is a young man who grew up in Cambridge and admires the Philosophers.

The person the sailor would like the young man to meet is Eli White, who was already quietly discussing the formation of a rebellious political faction even before the disastrous freeing of Eibon and the ensuing destruction of the town.

Why Are Several People Blinded?

Blinding is among the shade of Eibon's favorite pastimes. In every instance when a blinding occurs during the game, it is because the person currently possessed by Eibon has ordered it. Blinding, thus, serves as a clue to the monster's presence.

If you wish to continue the story of Eibon's shade, this fact may be useful for building continuity between your story and the included plot.



QUEENSGUARD

Character Sheet

Basic Info

Name: _____

Rank / Title: _____

Sex: _____

Age: _____

Mental Disorders: _____

Attributes

STR _____ POW _____ SAN _____

CON _____ Luck _____

SIZ _____ INT _____ Idea _____

DEX _____ EDU _____ Know _____

APP _____

Max San. Points = (99 - Cthulhu Mythos)

Skills

Arcane

- Alchemy (01%) _____
- Cthulhu Mythos (00%) _____
- Natural Philosophy (01%) _____
- *Occult (05%) _____
- Thaumaturgy (01%) _____

Academic

- *Anthropology (01%) _____
- Archaeology (01%) _____

Art

- _____ (05%) _____
- _____ (05%) _____
- Astronomy (05%) _____
- *History (20%) _____
- *Law (05%) _____
- *Library Use (25%) _____
- Natural History (10%) _____
- *Other Lang.
 - _____ (01%) _____
- *Own Lang (EDU x5) _____
- *Psychology (05%) _____

Social

- Bargain (05%) _____
- *Disguise (01%) _____
- Fame (01%) _____
- *Fast Talk (05%) _____
- *Persuade (15%) _____

Physical

- *Climb (40%) _____
 - *Conceal (15%) _____
- #### Craft
- _____ (05%) _____
 - _____ (05%) _____
 - *Dodge (DEX x2) _____
 - *Hide (10%) _____
 - *Jump (25%) _____
 - *Listen (25%) _____
 - *Sneak (10%) _____
 - *Spot Hidden (25%) _____
 - *Swim (25%) _____
 - *Throw (25%) _____

Practical

- *First Aid (30%) _____
- Locksmith (01%) _____
- Mech. Repair (20%) _____
- Medicine (05%) _____
- Oper. Hvy. Mch. (01%) _____
- *Track (10%) _____

Piloting

- Drive Carriage (05%) _____
- Pilot Airship (01%) _____
- Pilot Boat (01%) _____
- *Ride (20%) _____

Combat

- *Crossbow (10%) _____
- *Fist (50%) _____
- *Grapple (25%) _____
- *Halberd (10%) _____
- *Kick (25%) _____
- Martial Arts (01%) _____
- *Sword (15%) _____

Sanity Points

00 01 02 03 04 05 06 07 08 09
10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19
20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29
30 31 32 33 34 35 36 37 38 39
40 41 42 43 44 45 46 47 48 49
50 51 52 53 54 55 56 57 58 59
60 61 62 63 64 65 66 67 68 69
70 71 72 73 74 75 76 77 78 79
80 81 82 83 84 85 86 87 88 89
90 91 92 93 94 95 96 97 98 99

Magic Points

00 01 02 03 04 05 06 07 08 09
10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19
20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29

Hit Points

Dead -02 -01
00 01 02 03 04 05 06 07 08 09
10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19
20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29

* Indicates an occupation skill for a member of the Queensguard.

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QUEENSGUARD

Character Sheet

Damage Bonus (db)

If STR + SIZ is:	Then your db is:	Your db: _____
12 or less	-1d6	
13 - 16	-1d4	
17 - 24	0	
25 - 32	+1d4	
33 - 40	+1d6	

Attack	Skill %	Range	Hands Req.	Damage
Fist		touch	1	1d3+db
Grapple		touch	2	special
Kick		touch	0	1d6+db
Crossbow		30 yd	2	1d6+2
Halberd		2 yd	2	1d6+3+db
Sword		touch	1	1d6+2+db

Armor (check one, your choice)

- Hard Leather (-1 HP lost per hit)
- Chain (-2 HP lost per hit, halve Climb, Jump, Sneak, Martial Arts; may not Swim or spellcast)
- Full Plate (-3 HP lost per hit, halve Dodge and Throw; may not Climb, Jump, Sneak, use Martial Arts, Swim, or spellcast)

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