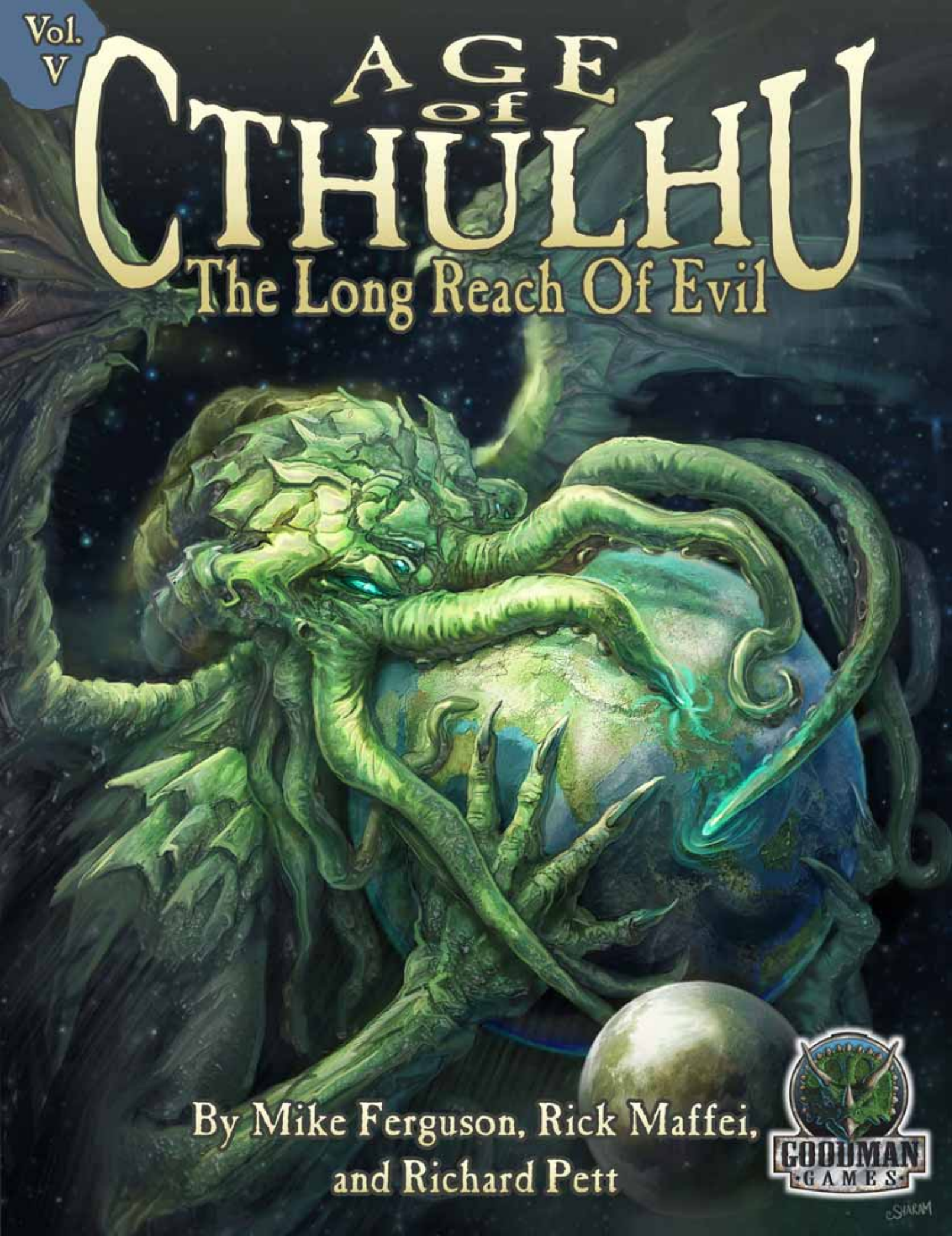


Vol.
V

AGE of CTHULHU

The Long Reach Of Evil



By Mike Ferguson, Rick Maffei,
and Richard Pett



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AGE of CTHULHU

The Long Reach of Evil

Volume V

A 1920's

Call of Cthulhu®

Adventure Anthology

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The Long Reach Of Evil

It is the Age of Cthulhu, and the cold tentacles of primeval madness reach across the globe. In this compilation of three adventure modules, the investigators journey to Peru, Sumatra, and Tibet in a desperate quest to uncover mysteries that imperil the world. Incan ruins, erupting volcanoes, and madness at the top of the world await those brave enough to unravel the long reach of evil!

The three adventures contained herein are designed to be played independently. After all, how many investigators actually survive to face another day? But, should the Keeper decide to string the adventures together, they do contain a few common elements that can be further expanded at the Keeper's discretion.

A series of dream sequences has been placed in each of the adventures in this book. These dream sequences, which the investigators may have at given points during each adventure, provide a loose theme that runs through each adventure. If the adventures are to be used individually, the Keeper should certainly feel free to disregard each of the dream sequences. But if used together, the dream sequences should provide a linking thread between the three adventures that makes them more cohesive as an ongoing saga. The Keeper should also feel free to embellish the details behind the dreams, and use them to emphasize parts of the adventures or incorporate other original campaign elements.

Some Keepers might wish to integrate some – if not necessarily all – of the adventures herein with their own homebrewed adventures. Because the adventures take place in some of the more far-flung corners of the world, though, getting the investigators from the more mundane confines of Miskatonic University can often be a challenge.

As for why investigators from sleepy villages in New England would journey halfway around the world in search of ancient artifacts and madness-inducing tomes, one possibility is that they are part of the *International Historical & Archaeological Society*. Loosely affiliated with Miskatonic University, the Society is a secretive academic organization with an interest in the occult that desires to collect unspeakable knowledge and relics for its own purposes. Many rich and brilliant individuals belong to the Society, and they have no qualms about using their considerable resources to acquire what they have read about in dusty, obscure texts.

The pre-generated investigators found at the end of this adventure compilation are all either members of the Society, or in the employ of the Society. At the Keeper's discretion, investigators in an ongoing campaign might be asked to join the Society, or be hired by the Society for a specific task, whether as a hired gun or for their academic expertise.



BKM 2011



The Fires Of Sumatra

By: Richard Pett

Introduction

The insidious claws of the *Broers van Geheimen* (Dutch for *Brothers of Secrets*) have long reached into the soil of the East with a history of diabolic research that continues to this day. Their latest emissary to the Dutch East Indies is Kapitein Klaas De Groot. Appointed the Governor of Padang in the province of West Sumatra, he has rediscovered a secret that should have been lost in the explosion of Krakatoa in 1883. This secret is enhanced by De Groot, who taps into a way to draw magical power from unwilling victims by means of a terrible spell – the *unmaking lesions of dark dimensions*. As governor of a small province it is easy for De Groot to perfect this monstrous act and prepare for the summoning of the dark god known as Cthugha.

Keeper's Information

The Dutch exploitation of its colonies has long since gone beyond mere wealth, and darker secrets have been unearthed by her scholars and scientists over the centuries. The *Broers van Geheimen's* infiltration of the Dutch East India Company opened up vast new areas of land and innumerable new sites for occult exploration, and it was not long before the Brotherhood discovered the secrets of the Cthulhu Mythos.

Kapitein De Boor, the most senior ranking Brother in the mid eighteenth century, ransacked most of Sumatra and personally led a dozen expeditions into the heartland of the island where he made contact with the Minangkabau people and first heard of their curious link with creatures from the sea, and with fire and shadows. During these explorations De Boor learnt of the mysterious Cult of Fthagghua, the Great Fire Serpent, and became obsessed with what he discovered, an obsession that led him to whisper words with impossible things. De Boor's thirst for knowledge became a compulsive madness, a craving for deeper secrets and power gained from ever more powerful forgotten creatures. In time, these creatures revealed to De Boor the secret to summoning Cthugha – whom De Boor had learnt was the Great Serpent Fthagghua. In his insanity, De Boor vowed to speak with the Great Old One and see what dark secrets it could teach him.

During 1882 and 1883 De Boor attempted to summon Cthugha six times, taking ever greater risks to call the Great Old One into the world at the heart of its element - the fiery soul of a burning volcano. With each failure, De Boor

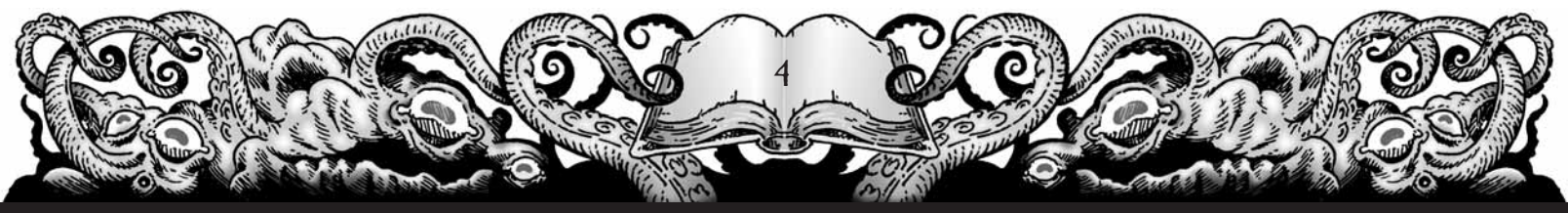
sought out more violent eruptions and drew himself deeper into the throat of the volcano. His fanatical work reached its zenith on August 27th, 1883, when, on the exploding island of Krakatoa, he and a group of Brothers attempted to summon Cthugha. His efforts ended when a cataclysmic explosion vaporized the cultists and destroyed vast tracts of the region.


De Boor, however, had kept extensive notes of his discoveries, as well as a huge collection of artifacts and macabre objects, and these crated objects were rediscovered by Kapitein Klaas De Groot when he became Governor of Padang. When De Groot reported his discoveries to his secret masters, the *Broers van Geheimen* were amazed. They had thought De Boor's great works had been lost in the fires of Krakatoa and so quickly sent agents to re-establish control of the records. Amongst the secrets was a cipher which, when translated, told the Brothers how to cast a spell called the *unmaking lesions of dark dimensions* – a spell that allowed the caster to draw upon the power of victims of the spell over the period of a lunar month. The Brothers chose to ignore the warnings that accompanied the spell, warnings that stated that those who cast it risked drawing the attention of things that slip through shadows. With such power at their call they believed that Cthugha was certain to answer their summons.

The rise of Anak Krakatau (Indonesian for “Child of Krakatoa”) during 1927 was seen by the Brothers as a sign that the culmination of their work was near. When volcanoes near the Governor's Residence at Padang, and in particular Mount Marapi, showed signs of activity, they began to cast the *unmaking lesions of dark dimensions* with impunity.

Now the Brothers await the rise of Formalhaut to cast the spell, unaware that other plans have already been set in motion. The Thra'yrdh, *The Turmoil That Feasts Upon Itself*, an obscene horde of dimensional shamblers, has become aware of the power released by the Brother's use of the *unmaking lesions of dark dimensions* spell and decided to put it to better use. The horde plans to draw the region around Marapi into its own dimension to enable it to commence experiments of its own.

Only one man stands in the way of these plans, Father Hrost. He is an old ally of the investigators who is also a member of the *International Historical & Archaeological Society*. Hrost has however, been captured by the Brothers, but not before he managed to send out a message begging for help. Unfortunately for that help, when it arrives, it is expected.





Can the investigators overcome horrendous odds and survive being hunted across the island of Sumatra by powerful enemies, and will they end up making an alliance with those very enemies to overcome the terrible alien plan of the Thra'yrdh?

Timeline of Events

- 1350** Minangakabau Kingdom established in Sumatra. The kingdom flourishes through trade and mysterious sources of gold. The kingdom's fortunes are enhanced by the uncovering of the secrets of the Cthulhu Mythos and calling dark things to its aid in conquering the jungle regions nearby.
- 1628** The *Broers van Geheimen* formed at the University of Groningen.
- 1859** Kapitein De Boor rises to the rank of most senior Brother.
- 1882** De Boor learns the spell *Call Cthugha*.
- 1883, May** The island of Krakatoa begins erupting. De Boor and a small dedicated group of Brothers arrive by ship and prepare to summon Cthugha, but are frustrated when eruptions suddenly cease in June.
- 1883, August** The attempts to summon Cthugha continue, with De Boor's followers now having to be forced to take part at gunpoint.
- 1883, August 27** The final abortive attempts by the *Broers van Geheimen* during the night to summon Cthugha on Krakatoa ends when they are vaporized in the first of a series of four massive explosions.
- 1926** Kapitein Klaas De Groot appointed the Governor of Padang.
- 1927** De Groot discovers De Boor's papers. Despite the lack of evidence about the final attempts, De Groot successfully understands that De Boor underestimated the power required to summon Cthugha, mistaking the power of the eruption for magical power. In November, he unpicks the cipher and learns the *unmaking lesions of dark dimensions* spell.

Last Month

Father Hrost learns that De Groot intends to summon Cthugha in an erupting volcano.

Last Week

De Groot and some of his followers decamp to Marapi and prepare for the summoning. Father Hrost is captured by the Brothers and under the effects of torture reveals that more agents are on their way.

Yesterday

The Brothers meet the investigators, and events detail in the section **Yesterday** take place.

Principal NPCs

Kapitein Klaas De Groot

The racist puritan

De Groot is a very tall, broad man in his early fifties. His skin is deeply tanned and his hair has been shaved. De Groot wears his emotions openly, and is quick to anger. He treats all non-Europeans with disdain. De Groot is Governor of Padang, a position he has risen to through brutality.

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

Damage Bonus: +1D4

Weapons: Colt New Army .38 revolver 55%, 1D10
Kick 65%, 1D6+1D4

Spells: Call Cthugha, Cloak of Fire, *Unmaking Lesions of Dark Dimensions*

Skills: Anthropology 45%, Archaeology 76%, Chemistry 35%, Cthulhu Mythos 38%, Dodge 40%, Natural History 55%

Gerard Evertson

The spineless bully

Evertson, Assistant Governor of Padang, is physically frail, but masks his weakness with vile cruelty. There is not a single native local person who would be sad to see him dead. Evertson is nervous, and quick to try to escape, but when the odds are on his side, he is capable of astonishing acts of cruelty.

STR	CON	SIZ	INT	POW
8	10	9	16	10
HP	DEX	APP	EDU	SAN
10	13	11	12	43

Damage Bonus: –

Weapons: Model PO8 Luger 50%, 1D10
Bullwhip 40%, 1D3 or grapple

Skills: Accounting 25%, Conceal 50%, Dodge 60%, Drive Auto 65%, Hide 35%, Psychology 67%, Sneak 45%

Feldwebel Lukas Fuerst

The German sergeant who glimpsed madness in the trenches.

A slender, tall man, Fuerst has a nervousness about him. When he lights a cigarette (he is a chain-smoker) his hands shake. When he sleeps, he invariably wakes up screaming. Fuerst has a strange accent, brought about by his frequent travels.

Fuerst is a character on the edge. Recruited by the Brothers as muscle, the unhinged Fuerst might even aid the investigators as the adventure draws to a close. He first came into contact with the Mythos when in the trenches on the Western Front, where he saw things unleashed on British troops that his mind could not comprehend.

STR	CON	SIZ	INT	POW
17	12	10	14	12
HP	DEX	APP	EDU	SAN
11	10	8	9	31

Damage Bonus: +1D4

Weapons: Model PO8 Luger 60%, 1D10
M1903 Springfield .30-06 Bolt-Action Rifle
55%, 2D6+4
Kick 65% 1D6+1D4

Skills: Chemistry 60%, Climb 53%, Cthulhu Mythos 6%, Drive Auto 35%, First Aid 56%, Jump 34%, Listen 65%, Navigate 32%, Occult 26%, Other Language (Dutch) 45%, Other Language (English) 35%, Other Language (French) 10%, Other Language (Spanish) 60%, Swim 62%

Insanity: Claustrophobia

Professor Jan Engel

The jaded scholar

Brought up with a privileged background, Engel moved through, and was expelled from, various universities before coming into contact with the Brothers, who saw his innate

power and encouraged it to flower. Engel is very independent minded and takes orders from no one; he tolerates De Groot, but regards him as inferior stock.

Engel prefers to be a loner, and happily abandons any allies if trouble arrives. He has keys to **Area 3-18**.

STR	CON	SIZ	INT	POW
15	16	14	15	17
HP	DEX	APP	EDU	SAN
15	12	17	17	21

Damage Bonus: +1D4

Weapons: Model PO8 Luger 40%, 1D10

Spells: Call Cthugha, Cloak of Fire, Curse of the Stone, *Unmaking lesions of Dark Dimensions*

Skills: Anthropology 65%, Archaeology 53%, Chemistry 25%, Cthulhu Mythos 27%, Electrical Repair 31%, History 76%, Mechanical Repair 22%, Occult 73%, Spot Hidden 37%

Asmoro Sosrodihardjo

The West Sumatran rebel

Able to trace his ancestry back to the Minangkabau Kingdom (the indigenous tribes of West Sumatra), the handsome Sosrodihardjo is a young idealist who wants to see the overthrow of Dutch rule. This idealism makes him the focus of local hatred for the colonists. The wayang kulit (shadow puppet theater) puppeteer has firsthand experience of the results of the *unmaking lesions of dark dimensions* spell, as well as Evertson's cruelty, and is determined to bring down de Groot and his vile accomplices.

STR	CON	SIZ	INT	POW
12	14	13	15	14
HP	DEX	APP	EDU	SAN
14	16	16	7	54

Damage Bonus: +1D4

Weapons: .45 Martini-Henry rifle 35%, 1D8+1D6+3

Skills: Archaeology 32%, Art (Shadow Puppetry) 78%, Climb 46%, Cthulhu Mythos 3%, History 36%, Navigate 63%, Sneak 40%, Swim 67%, Track 32%

Yesterday

Having fallen foul of the Brothers, Father Hrost has revealed to them under questioning the details of the telegram that he sent to his accomplices, and that help would be on its way. With Evertson keen to capture the investigators and extract what secrets they had, De Groot instructs Evertson and Engel to catch them all and then cast the *unmaking le-*



sions spell on each prisoner. This would enable their power to be used in the summoning and also weaken them ahead of any interrogation.

It is therefore just Engel and Evertson, accompanied by a trio of heavies that initially deals with the investigators. By this time De Groot, Fuerst and four of the Brothers are already at Marapi preparing to summon Cthugha.

The player characters arrive at Padang late in the evening by boat, and are directed to the town's only hotel that can cater for tourists – the New Muntplein. It being so late in the evening, the investigators have very little time to take any other course of action and as the only foreign visitors for weeks, they stick out like a sore thumb. The city is quiet, the last train has already gone, and only offers of outrageous amounts of cash will buy them the means to leave the city. However, even if they do leave, they find the trap detailed below waiting for them if they return.

If the investigators decide to follow the directions that they have been given and go to the hotel, they will be cordially received by its owner, Mr. Indah. Unfortunately, Mr. Indah is in league with the cultists. De Groot ensured some years ago that the New Muntplein is equipped with a means of removing potential adversaries. Engel prepares a solution of chloral hydrate (POT 17), which is used to spike the water in the investigators' rooms. Furthermore, every drink ordered from room service is similarly tampered with. Each has a Potency 17, and is practically impossible to detect. Unless they state otherwise, assume that any character takes at least two drinks. Those who fail the resistance rolls fall unconscious for an hour.

Should the hydrate fail, Engel, using ventilation grills from a secret room adjoining the suites (**Area 2-6**), releases a solution of experimental gas left over from the Great War (POT 22). The gas has degraded to a degree and now causes unconsciousness (for 2-4 hours) and severe nausea. A **Listen** check (-50% if the investigators are asleep) is required to hear the gas flowing through the grills. Each canister has enough gas in it for ten rounds' exposure (make a save each round); Engel uses three rounds' worth for each investigator. Whilst administering this gas and lifting bodies, the cultists use the gas masks kept in **Area 2-6**.

If any investigator survives the encounter conscious, Evertson orders the thugs to enter the investigator's room and subdue him. The thugs will attempt to overpower the investigator and knock him out. The investigators are taken bound, gagged, and blindfolded in the back of the Kleiber truck to the cave in **Scene 1**. Engel continues to administer chloral hydrate to keep the characters under during the journey. On arrival, two hours after leaving Padang, he orders

the Brothers to carry the investigators into the cave and put them in manacles. Eager to get on with the task at hand, Engel begins to cast the spell *unmaking lesions of dark dimensions* on each of the new prisoners. Unfortunately, Engel's impatience is his undoing, as the casting of the spells draws a dimensional shambler to the cave and such is the terror that it inspires in the five Brothers that they flee. The adventure proper begins at this point.

Running This Adventure

This adventure presupposes that the investigators have already fallen foul of the *Brothers of Secrets* and that the adventure commences with their awakening after being subject of the *unmaking lesions of dark dimensions* spell. This opening *in media res* adds an element of immediate personal danger to events. The Keeper may however decide that such an approach is not suitable, in which case he might wish to run the adventure beginning with the investigators' arrival at Padang, but have the authorities alerted to their presence as described above.

Investigation Summary

This adventure is organized into a series of scenes, so that the Keeper can easily move from one part of the adventure to the next.

Player Beginning: In which the investigators prepare for a visit to West Sumatra, but as soon as they step off the ship, the scene immediately shifts to:


Scene 1 – The Terror Approaching the Cave: The adventure begins as the investigators awaken bound and weaponless, having been victims of the terrible spell, the *unmaking lesions of dark dimensions*. Whilst their captors are seen fleeing in automobile truck, another threat is approaching, a dimensional shambler. The investigators quickly have to escape their bonds and improvise weapons to deal with the insect-anthropoid horror.

Scene 2 – Padang: In this scene, the investigators learn more of the Brothers, are harassed by Gerard Evertson, and search Padang. They might find allies amongst the locals here, or make these potential friends into enemies.

Scene 3 – The Big House and Rubber Plantation: Where the investigators learn about De Groot and his predecessor's obsession with Cthugha.

Scene 4 – Mount Marapi: The adventure reaches its climax in the fiery caldera of the volcano, with the heroes desperately dodging lava bombs and flows to stop the cultists. However, even as they arrive, the cultists' plans are about to be thwarted by the Thra'yrdh, which have a dif-





ferent objective. Do the investigators and cultists work together to stop it before it is too late?

Unmaking Lesions Of Dark Dimensions

*This spell allows a caster to make use of the **POW** of his victim at any time within a given month. Casting unmaking lesions requires 2 **POW** and costs 1D3 **Sanity** points per casting. The caster is able to harness the **POW** of the victim, providing that the caster and the victim share the same dimension, that the spell has not expired, and that the victim still lives. The caster can take the **POW** at any time that he wishes.*

Once the spell is cast, the victim's body begins to be drawn by the unmaking lesions. His mind is wracked with terrible vision of impossible angled creatures and his memories become dulled. Memories of things that happened both recently (within the past 24 hours), and during the casting are taken by the casting of the spell and lost.

Each day that passes, the victim must make a resistance check as detailed below.

The caster's ability to draw power expires at the next full moon; the effects do not. If the caster is killed, the lesions fade over a period of minutes.

The Unmaking Lesions

Every 12 hours, the victim makes a resistance check against the lesions. The check is an opposed **CON** against the lesion's potency of 18. If he fails the check, he loses 1 **CON** temporarily.

The lesions manifest themselves initially as unsightly scars appearing beneath the skin. When the victim reaches 6 **CON**, the lesions manifest themselves in grotesque insect apish limbs trapped just beneath the victim's skin. At this stage the victim must make a **SAN** check each day (0/1D2).

Should the victim reach 0 **CON**, then the insect lesions burst, birthing a fetal dimensional shambler, an act which kills the victim. The shambler's first action after its appalling birth is normally to eat what it regards as its fetal sack (the victim) and then fade into another dimension. A person witnessing this event must make an immediate **SAN** check (1/1D6). If the fetal shambler is attacked, it flees.


Nightmares From Dark Dimensions

The investigators might learn useful things from the whispers in their dreams, in the places where the shamblers watch and wait as their plan nears completion. Each night, an investigator can make an **Idea** check. If it succeeds, he has one of the nightmares listed below; if not, his sleep is merely troubled by terrifying fluting. Characters experiencing a nightmare they have previously had make **SAN** checks at +25%.

1. You hear voices from behind the wall of your room, but even though you listen hard, you cannot make out words. Then the wall begins to bulge, its surface boiling into a vast cyst that threatens to burst. You leap back from the wall screaming and find yourself awake, dripping with sweat cringing in a corner. **SAN** 0/1D2.
2. You have a dream where you are aware that something is watching you. Peering into every mirror and every reflective surface you try to see what it is that is watching you, yet you cannot. You are suddenly aware that this is no dream, and that you are awake staring at a mirror in your room. **SAN** 0/1D3.
3. Your skin boils as you wake up in a terrible sweat. You fumble to see your skin which itches abominably. As you light a lantern you see that your skin is indeed bubbling, bursting with distended boils and festering cankers. You scream as you awaken. **SAN** 0/1D3.
4. Whispers blight your sleep, as though someone were inside your head talking to a puppet version of yourself. The voices belong to a mouth not designed for human speech. **SAN** 0/1D3.
5. You have a dream of being eaten alive by insect-anthropoid terrors. **SAN** 0/1D4.
6. The voices press inside your skull, and you hear a voice like your own speaking, telling dark secrets, but you cannot feel your mouth move. Then the room suddenly lights and you realize the truth – you cannot feel your mouth because it is not part of you anymore. An alien insectoid thing bearing grotesque ape-like aspects wears your mouth and your face like a mask, and it is the mask that is speaking. As the creature notices you, it comes over and plucks out your eyes, pushing them into its own head so you can see what it can see – your dissected, but still-living body twitching on a slab. “We need you,” says your mouth. “You must not die.” You wake up screaming. **SAN** 1/1D6.

Player Beginning

The investigators receive a telegram from Father Hrost (see **Player Handout A**). He is an old associate of, or possibly a mentor to, one of the investigators, who knows him to be a level-headed Catholic priest, and a man of grave faith and of impeccable character. So a request for help should not be ignored. The investigator also knows that Father Hrost is a member of the *International Historical & Archaeological Society*.



As the telegram comes from West Sumatra, the Keeper must be the judge as to how the investigators arrive. However, the logical way is by boat as long flights by the aeroplanes of the time are dangerous, especially over long stretches of ocean. Dutch colonial ships regularly ply the waters of the Dutch East Indies and obtaining passage should not prove to be difficult.

Allow the investigators to organize themselves as they wish. However, as soon as their boat approaches the harbor, switch events immediately to **Scene 1**.

Father Hrost is a member of the *International Historical & Archaeological Society*, and provides the characters with an introduction into this adventure. The Society asks them to investigate his disappearance as a matter of urgency, and provides necessary tickets and travelling expenses.

As mentioned, should the investigators have a closer associate within the Society that seems appropriate to use, then use that NPC accordingly and alter the details within the adventure.

Scene 1: The Terror Approaching The Cave

At the beginning of the adventure, the Keeper should read or paraphrase the following description:

Slowly the blur becomes focused. The harbor, the boat and the city of Padang have all vanished.

It is dusk. Insects sing into the darkening sky. The vast ceiling of a cave stretches above you, leading to a maw crowded in a head of ancient twisted jungle. There is an unpleasant taste of blood and bleach upon your lips, and a droning behind your eyes, which resolves into the noise of an automobile moving rapidly away from you.

You sit up as a stream of bats pours from the cave, a vast procession of silent flying hunters entering the night sky above you. As the hunters vanish, something else cries out in the dark, a fluting chitinous madness of a call, a mockery ape-call sound that causes the jungle creatures to fall silent.

Something is out there that has no place in this world, and nearby, people are screaming.

Unmaking Lesions Of Dark Dimensions

The first action the investigators should face is an immediate save against Engel's casting this spell upon them. Engel's **POW** is 17. Make a note of any investigator who fails this check.

At present nothing happens to them, but each feels violated in an alien way. Note that the spell causes memory loss (see **page 8**).

The investigators' bindings are fairly amateurish, and each can be escaped either by cutting the rope that binds them, or by a **STR (x2)** % check. With a successful **Idea** check, any investigator will hit upon the idea of using the axe (*see below*) to cut their bonds. All of these actions take a round.


The investigators' equipment has been taken, although if any investigator habitually keeps concealed equipment (such as a knife down a boot), then that has not been taken.



The Great Cave

The cave is approximately 200' wide and 70' high. The most immediate screaming as the investigators awaken comes from the five people who are blindfolded and shackled to the walls of the cave by sets of manacles. Another seven sets hang from the walls.

A tea chest and some equipment lean by the wall near the investigators. The equipment consists of three shovels, a wood axe, 30' of heavy rope, a trio of hurricane lamps, a drum of paraffin, a funnel, and a folding knife. The shovels can be used as improvised small clubs. The tea chest contains a sack of rice, a small camping stove, a barrel of water, and some wooden spoons.



The cave is surrounded by dense jungle. A single dusty road vanishes to the south, whilst a **Spot Hidden** check allows the investigators to notice the path used by an escaping villager (*see below*). A **Track** check reveals the same path, the tracks of a truck can also be seen on such a check, these tracks lead directly to Padang.

The prisoners are all European. One is dead, the other four are irredeemably insane, having been trapped here for many days, and seen the results of what is going on inside them. They have been subject to the *unmaking lesions* spell and already show signs of serious internal physical injury; their bodies are covered in welts. A **Medicine** check allows an investigator to work out that their wounds are internal. The victims are down to 2, 4, 4, and 6 **CON** each. The dead man has been through the final stages of the *unmaking* spell and is partially eaten.

The Escaping Automobile

As the adventure begins, a large vehicle containing Evertson, Engel, and the three thugs heads out of sight on the road to Padang. It is 400' away from the cave. A **Spot Hidden** check reveals the vehicle to be a truck; a subsequent **Idea** check that the truck is a Kleiber truck, a relatively new vehicle that is rare outside of America.

The Fleeing Figure

Perhaps unnoticed, a figure is also fleeing the scene. The figure is Kupang, a local from the nearby village of Singkarak who comes here to feed and water the prisoners. A **Spot Hidden** (-20%) check sees the figure and the direction that he travels in. For more information on Kupang, see the entry below.

Volcanoes

There are several volcanoes within this region, and it seems that at present, each of them is in the process of erupting. Six volcanoes can be seen in all, illuminating the night sky. The closest is Gunung Talang, which lies some 50 kilometers or so away, the furthest is Gunung Bukittinggi, which lies some 100 kilometers to the north.

The Thing That Is Approaching

A dimensional shambler is approaching the cave. Drawn by the casting of the *unmaking lesions* spell, it has slipped through the shadows at the edges of sight and arrived here. However, although the shambler is horrific and approaches closely to the investigators, it does not attack unless itself is attacked, instead content in the knowledge that yet more victims of the *unmaking lesions* have been added to the Thra'yrdh's plan. For more information about this plan see **Scene 4**.

The shambler is heralded by a terrible insectoid and apish screeching and arrives 5 rounds after the adventure starts. It walks in an awkward, dislocated way, its insectoid heritage and vile ape-like ancestry merged into a single horrible impossibility. The shambler walks up to each of the investigators and inspects them, sniffing at them one by one. It does not attack unless attacked and if left alone, the creature slips back between the angles and vanishes.

Dimension Shambler

STR	CON	SIZ	INT	POW	DEX
19	16	19	7	11	10
Move: 7	Damage Bonus: +1D6	Hit Points: 18			

Weapons: *claw 30%, 1D8+1D6

*can attack with both foreclaws at once, with the same **DEX** rank

Armor: 3-point thick hide

Sanity Loss: 0/1D10 points to see a dimensional shambler


Clues - Beyond The Cave

The investigators have few clues to go on. As well as the track, they might see the pathway used by Kupang. If they do, they can follow the pathway for approximately half a mile through dense jungle to Singkarak. Kupang is merely a lackey used by the Brothers to feed and water their prisoners. He knows Evertson and Engel only, but is aware of Evertson's position in Padang and who he works for. If they follow Kupang's tracks to the village and confront him, he readily surrenders and imparts what information he knows: he keeps an eye on those at the cave for the cultists, and knows the antagonists who have just fled.

Investigators following the track beyond the village find that after about 3 miles it joins a second, larger road often used by a few heavy lorries, but many elephants to transport timber from a nearby lumber yard (where the road ends) to Padang. Whilst walking along this road, allow one player character to make a **Luck** check, if he succeeds, the investigators are picked up by a passing lorry and taken to Padang as they wish. Otherwise, 4 hours pass before they can make another such check. It is 25 miles from the cave to Padang, and there are only a few small settlements on the way.

Remembering

*The unmaking lesions of dark dimensions spell causes memory loss, which affects the investigators. Every 4 hours allow each investigator to make a **Luck** (-30%) check. If they succeed, consult the following table to see what they*



remember. The investigators can remember the same things, and do not make checks whilst asleep (their dreams are far too troubled for that). The names in brackets indicate who is talking to whom, so allow the investigators to remember the faces of these people in their dreams.

1. The investigator remembers waking up in bed, but being unable to move. He is bundled from what is clearly a hotel and taken through its grounds and dumped into the back of a waiting truck. **(These events occurred at the New Montplein, modify them accordingly.)**
2. A conversation that begins with someone questioning why the investigators are not being killed and ends with a discussion about how they are a greater source of energy than the locals. **(General conversation.)**
3. “Is the priest still alive?” “Just barely!” (laugh) **(Thug to Evertson.)**
4. “We’ll use them through the lesions, and then if they live, he can question them at his leisure.” **(Engel talking to Evertson.)**
5. “The spell works from within. They become progressively worse until the infestation emerges, killing them.” **(Engel.)**
6. “I kept one of the experiments in the jail when the birth took place. (Pauses to wipe sweat from his face.) The screams were almost unsettling. Had it been a European, I think I would have had some sympathy.” **(laughs) (Evertson.)**

Scene 2: Padang

Padang (the name means “field”) is a flat, sprawling city built along the north shore of a palm-fringed river. The population is around 30,000, and made up almost entirely of Sumatran natives. The docks lie at the extreme west end, whilst the European quarter lies at the east end of the city, home to the Hotel New Muntplein (**Scene 2A**), a few dozen Dutch colonial townhouses owned and operated by merchants, and a railway station.

Evertson and Engel operate from the Rubber Plantation and Big House. For more information on that location, see **scene 3**.

Remember that even though De Groot is governor, Evertson is his number two, and as such is a powerful enemy. He can basically do as he pleases, and has a host of soldiers and guards at his disposal, although he is always reluctant to involve any non-cultists in De Groot’s plans. Although they

are not the only Europeans in Padang, the investigators will need to be careful to avoid Evertson’s agents. The investigators can use disguise to stay out of sight during the day, whilst a Sneak check achieves the same result at night. Assume a successful check allows the investigators 1D4 hours of exploration unless their actions alert the authorities (such as openly attacking the hotel).

By the time that the investigators enter Padang after escaping from the cave, Engel has already left for Mount Marapi by train. There are twenty-four soldiers in the city (operating from a small fort near the docks and effectively doubling as the local police), as well as Evertson and his trio of heavies at the Big House. Evertson is likely to use some of his cohorts to hunt down the investigators and keep the authorities out of the picture. Should the investigators become brazen about their exploration of Padang or attack either the Big House or the New Muntplein, then Evertson will be forced to take further action and order some of the soldiers from the fort to aid in the hunt for the investigators.

The Keeper should assume that Evertson becomes aware of the investigators if they enter the Hotel, the Big House, or visit the railway station. If the investigators approach Evertson directly, he will try to hide his surprise, although they can notice how nervous he is with a Psychology check. Unless the investigators act immediately, Evertson sends for three other local thugs that he has at his disposal who behave as detailed below. Evertson then locks himself and his trio of personal thugs in the Big House until such time as the investigators are brought to him – dead or alive.

Hunted in Padang: Once he is aware that the investigators have escaped from the cave and are in Padang, Evertson sends several local thugs out to “deal” with them. **The Thugs** find the investigators in 10D6 minutes unless they make some effort to hide their movements around the city. The investigators can avoid pursuers with relative ease as there are plenty of places to hide in and around Padang, which is also surrounded by jungle. Allow the investigator with the highest **Idea** roll to make a check (+15%). This allows the characters 1d4 hours to investigate the city, keeping a low profile before they have to make the check again. If they fail the check, allow pursuers a chance to discover them with a **Spot Hidden** roll. If the investigators are discovered, the pursuers attack; assume that the two groups are 10D6 feet apart when this happens.

Locals in Padang: Asmoro is able to divert the soldiers and thugs to help the investigators. If they are on friendly terms with him, Asmoro also frightens the local thugs off.



Thug, Local (3)

STR	CON	SIZ	INT	POW
14	16	10	10	9
HP	DEX	APP	EDU	SAN
13	12	10	8	45

Weapons: Large club 50%, 1D8
.22 rifle, bolt action 40%, 1D6+2

Skills: Dodge 45%, Spot Hidden 40%

Asmoro Sosrodihardjo And The Rebels

The Colonists have always been unpopular, but the recent spate of horrible deaths (caused by the *unmaking lesions* spell) has made these feelings boil into hatred.

Asmoro and his men are deeply suspicious of any foreigners, and at first do little more than watch them. The Investigators can make a **Spot Hidden** check every hour to notice them watching. If they make a **Spot Hidden** check (-25%) on subsequent hours, then they notice that Asmoro is always in this group.

Asmoro and his men (use the local thugs above for these NPCs) only openly approach the investigators before they enter the Rubber Plantation (**Scene 3**). However, if they approach the watching natives before and manage either a successful **Fast Talk** or **Persuade** check (+25% if the investigators mention the wounds caused by *unmaking lesions* and having been at the cave) the investigators will be able to convince Asmoro that the two groups have more in common as allies than as enemies.

If the check fails, Asmoro and his men are still only likely to attack if they think that the investigators are working with the cultists, and revert to watching them. They move in to confront the investigators again outside the Rubber Plantation as the investigators leave, and this same confrontation can take place. If after this confrontation the investigators still have not convinced them of their honorable intentions, Asmoro and his men withdraw and do not take any further part in this scenario.

Should the investigators convince Asmoro and his men that they share the same enemy, the locals help the characters. Throughout the rest of the adventure, there are entries that indicate where the investigators have another option presented to them by Asmoro. In each case, the investigators can choose to take this option or not. Furthermore, Asmoro accompanies the investigators on the adventure wherever they wish, and also fights alongside them.

The Railway Station: The main train between Padang and Fort de Kock departs from here. The train station is always busy, and if the investigators ask around and make a

Fast Talk or **Persuade** check (remembering that very few locals speak English, although some speak Dutch), they will learn that they have not been seen here before.

The Docks: The ship the investigators arrived aboard stays in port for 24 hours. Arrivals check in at the nearby fort, which houses 24 Dutch colonial soldiers. Any investigator making a successful **Fast Talk** or **Persuade** check can get access to the arrivals control area and find details of their passports and check-in. Corporal Jan Hendriks, a port guard who speaks English, remembers one investigator asking him which was the best hotel in town. He remembers because his answer – the New Muntplein Hotel – is that it is the only hotel in Padang.

The Locals: Remember that virtually no locals speak English and are distrustful of outsiders. However, if the investigators can speak either Indonesian or Dutch they can make a **Fast Talk** or **Persuade** check to get the locals to reveal that over the past few months there have been numerous unpleasant deaths, all amongst the local population. A couple of locals claim to have seen things tearing themselves from dying victims, partially eating them, and then vanishing when attacked.


The locals all know about the Kleiber truck, and that De Groot uses it to travel between Padang and his Rubber Plantation (**Scene 3**).

The Colonists: The European visitors are more inclined to talk, but have less to say. Each regards De Groot as firm, but fair. He has been missing from the city for the last few days, and they assume he has gone to Fort de Kock for an important meeting. The Europeans are blissfully unaware of any deaths amongst the natives. It is widely known that Engel and De Groot have an interest in local artifacts and pay high prices for any curiosities. A **Fast Talk** or **Persuade** check gets some of them to reveal that the pair has some pretty strange items kept in the Big House at De Groot's Rubber Plantation (**Scene 3**). Anyone from this group can also tell the investigators about the truck that De Groot usually travels about in.

Strange Dreams: If the Keeper runs more than one adventure in this compilation, then a theme of related dreams connects them. The first time that the characters sleep in **Scene 2** or later, they all share the same strange dreams. Read or paraphrase the following as they awaken:

You are at the foot of a towering volcano that hangs malignantly above you. The colossal peak dominates your senses; surrounds you, envelops you, crushes you. Beneath your feet the ground suddenly screams as though the earth was dislocating below you, and above, something is approaching





through choking mists of scorching ashes, something whose words cannot be heard above the ripping of the world.

As you sit bolt upright in bed, your hands across your ears, you begin to wonder what is awake and what is dream...

Scene 2A: The New Muntplein Hotel

Use this paragraph to describe the New Muntplein Hotel to the players:

The New Muntplein is a lush place, rising from immaculately tended gardens. A grand entrance welcomes visitors, watched by a pair of Sumatran men dressed in elaborate military uniform and sporting swords.

The Brothers have been using the Muntplein, and its compliant owner, Mr. Indah, for a few years now. It is used not only to bolster the Brothers' stock of European victims for the *unmaking lesions of dark dimensions* spell, but also to obtain artifacts and items from over-greedy collectors, all of whom now lie rotting in the jungle.

Mr. Indah is generally to be found in the lobby (**Area 2-1**). If attacked, he calls out for his guards, but only if he thinks he can escape attack himself. When he sets eyes on the investigators (for a second time), Indah's gaze widens; any investigator making a **Psychology** check (+25%) realizes that this man has seen them before. He pointedly does not ask them to sign the visitor's book (q.v.), and if the investigators insist, Indah turns the book to a new page.

Mr. Indah

STR	CON	SIZ	INT	POW
9	10	7	15	11
HP	DEX	APP	EDU	SAN
9	12	16	11	55

Weapons: Smith & Wesson Model 10 .38 revolver 20%, 1D10 (N.B. in **Area 2-4**)

Skills: Fast Talk 29%, Other Language (English) 48%, Spot Hidden 30%

Indah is a small man in his late forties. A native of West Sumatra, he prides himself on wearing European clothing (a suit) and speaks English quite well. The hotel has a pair of guards, and a staff of ten, all dressed in fine local livery. If they ask for a room he is happy to supply one, but immediately sends word to Evertson that the investigators have somehow returned from the dead.

If Indah is caught, he tells the investigators that it was fear that made him act (he is lying; it was greed), and tells all, including about the gas, the secret room, and the other

victims. He tells the investigators that Evertson is terrifying and bullies him (this is true), and that their belongings (less any cash that they had on them, which sits in his pocket) were taken to the Big House, where De Groot and his cohorts operate from (**Scene 3**). Once overpowered or rumbled by the investigators, Indah stays out of matters.

A Second Night At The New Muntplein?

If he hears that the investigators have returned to the hotel, Evertson contacts Indah and this time the two hit upon an act of murder. They plan to use the experimental gas held at the hotel to attempt to once again render the investigators unconscious, and then do them in.

Indah and Evertson thus wait until 2AM before entering the secret room in the hotel (**Area 2-6**) and releasing the gas, whilst they themselves wear the gasmasks in the room. A **Listen** check (-50% if the investigators are asleep) is required to hear the gas escaping.

Unconscious investigators are killed, unless the pair is stopped.

Area 2-1 – The Lobby

This area is decorated in cool marble with exotic plants and flowers. Mr. Indah sits at a marble counter during normal hours (daybreak to midnight), sleeping in his office at other times. A set of room keys dangles on a cabinet behind him, whilst a large visitor's book sits on the counter. An **Idea** check is required to get a look at the book without anyone noticing. The investigators are the last visitors recorded in the book.

The keys in the cabinet include the key to Indah's office (**Area 2-4**) and the secret room (**Area 2-6**).

The two guards only leave their posts to sleep in the kitchens at midnight. They are aware that something odd goes on at the hotel, but are wise enough to keep quiet about it. When they see them a second time, the investigators can make a **Psychology** check to notice something odd about the way that the guards stare. However, only the use of force gets them to reveal that they have seen the investigators before. The guards do not speak for fear of losing their livelihood; they put up a stiff fight, but if either is injured and taken to 7 hit points or less, they both flee.



Guards (2)

STR	CON	SIZ	INT	POW
14	16	12	10	9
HP	DEX	APP	EDU	SAN
14	12	10	8	45

Damage Bonus: +1D4

Weapons: Sword 50%, 1D8+1+1D4

Skills: Dodge 55%, Spot Hidden 45%

Area 2-2 – The Bar

Read or paraphrase the following:

This is a large and ornate bar opening onto a fine terrace.

The bar has an admirable selection of drinks. Hidden behind the bar, adjacent to a till (which usually holds the equivalent of around \$15 in Dutch Guilders), is a small bottle of chloral hydrate (unlabeled). A **Spot Hidden** check (-20% unless the investigator is behind the bar) is required to see the bottle, which is half full, and holds seven more doses.

Area 2-3 – Staff Backrooms

The kitchens, laundry, and drying room all occupy this area of the hotel. The locals working here have no knowledge of any of the more sinister events going on at the hotel.

Area 2-4 – Office

Indah has a small office that he keeps locked at all times. The door can be forced using a **STR (x2) %** check. Read or paraphrase the following:

This is a small, neat office, with a desk, a walnut filling cabinet, and a picture of Padang harbour hanging over a small bed.

The desk contains various financial ledgers, a loaded Smith & Wesson Model 10 .38 revolver and 12 spare bullets, a further bottle of chloral hydrate and approximately \$50 worth of Dutch Guilders. The filing cabinet contains a bottle of bourbon, some fine cigars and some love letters from Indah's youth.

Area 2-5 – Guest Suites

These chambers have plush beds with mosquito-nets, decanters with water in ice-buckets, a WC and bath, a wardrobe and washbasin. Each room also has ventilation grills at the foot of one wall. This is not unusual, except for the fact that these link to the secret room behind the guest suites.

Area 2-6 – Secret Room

This door is locked. Opening it reveals a small set of stairs rising to the second floor and an area containing a quartet of simple gas-masks and three canisters of gas marked "*Gefahr! Experimentell!*". A character making an **Other Language (German)** check is able to translate this as, "Danger! Experimental!".

This gas is part of a store of equipment brought over by Feldwebel Lukas Fuerst, most of which has now been used. There is enough gas in each canister to fill a room three times (this assumes that the gas has been used on the investigators as well).

The gas masks have built-in filter drums and are of German origin. They effectively make the wearer immune to the effects of the poisonous gas here, and if worn in the Volcano (scene 5), reduce the potency of the gas there by 10. Whilst wearing the masks, however, all **Spot Hidden** checks are made at -25%.

Scene 3: The Big House And Rubber Plantation

About three miles north of Padang, reached by the railway to Fort De Kock (q.v.) and then a dirt track, sits De Groot's Rubber Plantation. De Groot uses Evertson as his overseer for the plantation, and the Dutchman rules with an iron fist. He employs a trio of thugs, who keep order using whips and mastiffs. At night, these thugs take great delight in allowing the mastiffs to wander the picket-fenced garden of the Big House at will, occasionally escaping to maul some innocent worker.

A sizable local village stands near the main factory, within which rubber is drawn into sheets for transportation to Padang and beyond by rail.

Entrance: The main entrance is little more than a gap in the fence through which a railway track and road pass. A gate bars entry to the road, and this is watched by a colonial thug leading a mastiff at all times. Visitors are not welcome. A sign (in Indonesian) on the gate says "Intruders will be shot." A similar entrance, signed and unmanned, is located on the plantation's northern side.

Boundary Fence: A 6' high barbed wire fence surrounds the plantation. The wire must either be cut, or climbed over. Characters making a **Climb** check take no damage crossing the wire. Those who fail this check must try again and take 1 point of damage unless they make a **Luck** check.

The Village: The locals rest and relax here by night after facing grueling hours in the factory or on the plantation.



Sneaking In: By day, the locals gather rubber from the thousands of trees in the plantation under the thugs' watchful eyes. Unless the investigators make a **Sneak** (+25%) check, they are spotted by one of the thugs, who will be leading a mastiff. Each guard has a whistle which he blows to warn the others of danger. If a whistle blast is heard, the other guards rush, with their mastiffs, to "interview" any unexpected visitors. By night, the **Sneak** check is made at +50%. However, the mastiffs will be wandering in the grounds immediately around the Big House and unless the investigators successfully **Sneak** through the grounds, the mastiffs have a chance to hear or smell them. If they become aware of intruders the dogs begin barking and then attack.

If the investigators are on friendly terms with Asmoro, he finds them an alternative way into the plantation. He smuggles them in, either by having them don local attire, taking them in by cart, or sneaking them in under darkness, ignoring any problems with the fence or guards until they arrive outside the Big House and factory grounds.

Several of the locals have intimate knowledge of the Big House and Factory. Investigators allied with Asmoro are given details about the exact layout. No local has ever set foot in the study or office (**Areas 3-5 and 3-7**) in the Big House, or in the museum upstairs (**Area 3-18**) in the factory.

Thug, Colonial (3)

STR	CON	SIZ	INT	POW
16	16	14	8	9
HP	DEX	APP	EDU	SAN
15	10	10	8	45

Damage Bonus: +1D4

Weapons: Bullwhip 50%, 1D3 or grapple
Double-barrel shotgun, 20 gauge 45%,
2D6/1D6/1D3

Skills: Dodge 45%, Spot Hidden 50%

Dog, Mastiff (3)

STR	CON	SIZ	POW	DEX
10	10	7	5	10

Move: 12 **Hit Points:** 9

Weapon: Bite 30%, 1D6

Skills: Listen 70%, Scent Something Interesting 90%

The Big House


This is a grand whitewashed building built in the colonial style. The building has a terrace and summerhouse, two floors, and is surrounded by a low picket-fenced garden.

The Big House is written as a series of rooms without occupants. This is because the main antagonists – Everston and his trio of thugs – are not static NPCs; they react to their surroundings. The Keeper should use his judgment as to the placement of each.

Everston is aware of the facts listed below. However, he does not give up these facts without a fight. A Fast Talk check, together with the threat of violence is enough to get him to reveal the following:

- De Groot and Feldwebel Lukas Fuerst left for Gunung Marapi last week with a quartet of other Brothers.
- Engel left as soon as they returned from the ill-fated attempt to imprison the investigators in the cave (**Scene 1**).
- The two ways to reach Marapi (as detailed in **Scene 4**: a train or drive in the truck).

The house is airy and spacious. It is lit by paper lanterns at night. Usually a few local staff mingle about, particularly at mealtimes. Doors are not usually locked; however, if Everston is aware of the threat posed by the investigators, he bolts each from within. In this case, the investigators can ei-



ther break windows and enter, requiring a successful **Climb (+25%)** check (each investigator that fails must make a further **Luck** check or take 1 point of damage), or force the doors, with a **STR (x3) %** check.

Area 3-1 – The Ground

This is a neat garden with a Kleiber truck sat on the drive. The truck is clearly a recent purchase.

Area 3-2 – Summerhouse

Read or paraphrase the following:

This is a finely made summerhouse attached to the house terrace.

The summerhouse has a trio of simple wicker chairs within.

Area 3-3 – Terrace

The terrace is small and neat. At night it is lit by paper lanterns.

Area 3-4 – Living Room

Read or paraphrase the following:

This is a room cluttered with fetishes, artifacts, and curios. The room also has an uncomfortable-looking settee and chairs, a dining table with chairs, and a central fireplace which looks like it has not been lit for years.

The artifacts are more showy than interesting, although an **Anthropology** check reveals them to be of Minangkabau origin. An **Occult** check reveals that in general, the imagery is of fire and is dedicated to the local god Fthagghua; the Great Serpent. A further **Cthulhu Mythos** check points to a potential similarity between Fthagghua and Cthugha.

Area 3-5 – Study

Like the living room, the study is clearly dedicated to anthropology and the occult. Fetishes, masks, and some old wayang kulit puppets point to the same connections as those found in **Area 3-4**.

The study also contains a clock, a roll-top desk with a captain's chair drawn up to it, and a chaise longue.

The desk is unlocked, and contains a selection of maps, journals, and weighty tomes. The maps are of the region around Padang, with several local volcanoes circled. The journals are those of Kapitein De Boor. They are written in Dutch and detail his investigations and actions up to his final fateful voyage to Krakatoa. An **Other Language (Dutch)** check reveals (in 1D4 hours) the basics of De Boor's mad scheme to summon Cthugha; the diary ends a week before

Krakatoa erupted in August, 1883. The weighty tomes are all written in English, are about vulcanology, and run to several volumes. However, several slips of paper have been thrust into the pages of *Volume VII – The Dutch East Indies*. Again, these papers are marking the same set of volcanoes in the local region; however, one has been consulted much more than others. With an **Idea** check (or if the investigators think of it), loosely holding the book by the spine opens it to the page consulted again and again by De Groot – the page on Mount Marapi, which contains brief details on the turbulent history of the local region's most active volcano. A **Spot Hidden** check reveals the faint indentation of writing on this page, as though something was written above. This indentation is in Dutch; an **Other Language (Dutch)** check, reveals the message detailed in player **handout B**.

Area 3-6 – Kitchen

Read or paraphrase the following:

This is a neat, well-stocked kitchen with a spice cabinet giving out heady aromas.

Area 3-7 – Office

Read or paraphrase the following:

This room is split by an oak counter, behind which hangs a gun cabinet.

The cabinet is not locked and contains four double barreled shotguns and 100 cartridges. If the thugs are armed, three of the shotguns are missing. There is also a M1903 Springfield .30-06 Bolt-Action Rifle with 20 rounds, and a pair of Model PO8 Lugers.

Area 3-8 – Lock Up

The lock up has a table and three cells, one of which is locked. The keys hang off a hook by the entrance. The table is covered with the investigators' belongings, each of which appears to have been thumbed through. Any valuable items are likely to have been pocketed by Evertson; adjust his personal equipment accordingly.

Father Hrost is in the locked cell. He has been badly beaten, but is alive. He can tell the investigators about the cultists, and that two of them – De Groot and Lukas Fuerst – have been away for some days. His Dutch and German are not great, and he is aware that the cultists have been very careful to talk out his earshot, but basically he believes the cultists have headed to one of the nearby volcanoes to summon Cthugha. He does not know which volcano, however, but is willing to help the investigators in any way that he can.



Father Hrost

STR	CON	SIZ	INT	POW
11	(15) 2*	13	14	14
HP	DEX	APP	EDU	SAN
(14) 8	10	14	16	26

Weapons: handgun 55%, rifle 35%

Spells: Deflect Harm, Enchant Candle

Skills: Archaeology 46%, Cthulhu Mythos 2%, History 75%, Occult 81%, Other Language (Dutch) 31%, Other Language (German) 29%, Other Language (Latin) 73%

* Hrost has succumbed to the unmaking lesions spell. His body is covered in painful swellings which have taken on an unsettlingly fluid quality, as if they are about to burst.

Area 3-9 – Hallway

Read or paraphrase the following:

This cluttered room contains hats and coats.

Area 3-10 – Master Bedroom

Read or paraphrase the following:

A bed dominates the room. There is also a wardrobe filled with male clothing.

Area 3-11 – Engel's Room

Engel's room is given over to the study of the Minangkabau (the indigenous peoples of West Sumatra) and, like the study and living room downstairs, is cluttered with a large number of tribal objects.

Engel has gathered a considerable collection of writings devoted to various subjects and his books and journals are stacked into several piles that sit on the room's shelves, table, and across the floor. Whilst most of these books are either basic occult tomes, or treatises on the Sumatran tribes, some of the books contain details about the Mythos, including a rather battered copy of *Remnants of Lost Empires* by Otto Dostmann. However, this book has several pages missing, and in their places are added pages from other manuscripts as well as some hand-written pages. Consider it a standard copy of *Lost Empires*, but double the SAN loss and Mythos reward. A loose-leaf copy of the *Unmaking Lesions of Dark Dimensions* spell written in German is held in the back of the book, which also contains the spell *Call/Dismiss Cthugha*.

Area 3-12 – Evertson's Room

This room is used mainly for storage. Read or paraphrase the following:

A small bed lies dwarfed by copious amounts of tents, cooking stoves, hammocks, mosquito nets, folding shovels and other such equipment.

Area 3-13 – Bathroom

Simple and clean.

The Factory

Read or paraphrase the following:

A crude concrete building with an asbestos roof stands adjacent to the railway line. The building has windows, but no glass, and stands open to the elements. The hum of an electrical generator drones in the background.

The factory is crammed with machinery, racks, metal moulds, and other clutter. It is difficult to move around in the dark, and characters attempting to do so at anything other than a slow walk (a quarter of normal movement) must make a **Dex (x5) %** or fall, taking 0-1 points of damage. The combination of the noisy generator and the clutter means that all **Sneak** and **Hide** checks are made at +25%.

Area 3-14 – Main Factory

Read or paraphrase the following:

The stench of rubber is almost overpowering from this cluttered factory room.

The raw rubber is poured into vats and, when it hardens, forms rubber slabs. These are transported across to tables and cut into strips, passed through wringing machines (like mangles) and then hung to dry. This room, like others, is crammed with machinery.

Area 3-15 – Generator

Read or paraphrase the following:

The slow thud of a diesel generator thumps out day and night from this room.


The generator is very large (about the size of a car engine) and is fed by a tank of diesel. A character making an **Electrical Repair** check can work out how to switch the unit on and off.

Area 3-16 – Sheet Drying Area

Read or paraphrase the following:

This room is filled with racks of drying rubber sheets, stretching from the top of the racks, which are six feet high, almost to the floor.

The sheets are like very thick curtains, and hamper visibility. Investigators can move directly through a curtain of drying rubber at a quarter speed, and whilst the sheets pro-



vide no cover, characters firing through them blindly have a 50% chance to miss whatever they are aiming towards.

A dimensional shambler occupies the shadows of the factory, watching the museum in particular. It is drawn by movement at night, and attacks any of the investigators if they draw weapons, start to smash the place up, or are clearly sneaking about. The creature is not stupid, however, and slips in and out of the curtains of rubber attempting to separate the investigators, preferring to terrify and kill lone victims. Use the dimensional shambler statistics from **Scene 1** to resolve combat.

Area 3-17 – Stairs

Read or paraphrase the following:

A set of iron stairs rises 30 feet to a door on the floor above.

Area 3-18 – The Museum Upstairs

Read or paraphrase the following:

This large room contains a ghastly collection of weird and outré fetishes and masks, the burnt remains of creatures and, most incongruous of all, a huge refrigerator.

The door is locked and can be smashed by a **STR (x2) %** check or **Lockpick** check. This is where Engel and De Groot keep the more unsettling parts of their collection.

The collection includes:

- A set of very deep and very uneven steps clearly not made for human feet.
- A trio of dried corpses showing signs of dreadful injury. If the investigators examine the dried bodies and make a **Medicine** check, they realize how the poor men died (from the unmaking lesions spell) and must make an immediate **SAN0/ID3** check.
- Various volcanic rocks carved with obscure foci and circles.
- The lower jawbone of some appalling creature.
- A collection of sketches in charcoal depicting some sort of storm with wings.
- A new-looking notebook.
- A strange pipe which appears to be a musical instrument.

The relics are all related to the **Cthulhu Mythos** and are tagged and labeled. The collection dates back to the mid-1700s. The notebook details the final effects of the unmaking lesions spell on victims held at the cave; these notes

are in Dutch, but anyone reading the accounts must make a **SAN** check (0/1D2).

The refrigerator has a heavy door, and contains:

- A fleshy frozen tentacle with teeth.
- A small wrapped package. The package contains the appalling mummified remains of a dimensional shambler foetus (**SAN 0/1D6**) from an unmaking lesions spell. It is labeled “Experiment 1” in Dutch.
- A corked flask of frozen liquid. The flask contains an opaque green liquid, which, until it begins to melt, is nothing more than strangely unsettling in its viscosity. Once the contents begin to melt, however, a human eye begins to stare from the murk. This eye is living, its pupil dilating in darkness (**SAN 0/1D3**).


Scene 4: Mount Marapi

Marapi is, like other volcanoes in the region, very active. Of all the local activity, it is Marapi that is truly erupting at present – a cloud of ash hangs over the peak and grows daily as the adventure progresses.

The Brothers present in the volcano – De Groot, Engel, and Fuerst – believe that they only need the appearance of Formalhaut over the horizon to summon Cthugha. They are mistaken; a cataclysm is about to happen, caused by a creature known as the Thra’yrdh. The Thra’yrdh is a thing composed of dimension shamblers literally drawn together to wander the twisted dimensions of forever. Due to the curiosity of Engel and the Brothers, its attention has been brought to this region, and it is about to conduct an experiment of its own.

Mount Marapi lies some 90 kilometres by road or rail journey north of Padang. The investigators have two methods at their disposal to reach the volcano. The first is to await a train to Fort De Kock and leave that train at the village of Kota Baru. The second is to take the Kleiber truck and drive. On a **Persuade** check, the investigators can learn directions to the summit of Marapi, but no guide accompanies them unless they have Asmoro on their side.

Trains leave daily at 6AM, but are slow, and take four hours to reach Marapi. The car journey might be quicker; however, the road is very rough. Investigators driving to Kota Baru must make three **Drive** checks. If they succeed on all of them, they arrive in the village three hours after departing. For each failure, they add one hour to the journey time. If they fail all three checks, they have a crash and roll



the vehicle. If investigators roll and burn, they get a **Luck (-25%)** check every two hours to get picked up by a passing empty truck, otherwise a **Mechanical Repair** check is required to fix their vehicle. Characters reaching Kota Baru within 3 hours avoid Check 1 detailed below, if they arrive after this time they have to face this check along with the others as detailed.

Kota Baru

When the investigators reach Kota Baru, read or paraphrase the following:

The great volcano boils above, its summit engorged with ash. Cowering below it like a scalded child, sits Kota Baru village. Between you and the roaring summit of fire stands the jungle, its interior alive with falling rocks and fire bombs hurtling from the crater towering above you.

It takes at least five hours to climb to the summit. With a successful **Persuade** check, the locals will tell the investigators when the Brothers left the village and began their ascent...

The journey up the erupting volcano is handled by a series of checks over five stages of the climb. Each check should take an hour; however, if the majority of investigators fail one of these checks, they will need to be made again, adding another hour to the climb up the volcano. Each hour the investigators spend climbing the side of the volcano exposes them to the danger of bombardment. Each investigator also needs to make a **Luck** check. If the check fails volcanic bombs from above may hit them (60%, damage 1D6) unless the investigator can make a **Dodge** check.

Check 1 – *Head through steaming jungle:* **Navigate** check

Check 2 – *Find the faint trail through vegetation:* **Spot Hidden** check

Check 3 – *Clamber up the barren foothills:* **CON (x5) %** check

Check 4 – *Climb the steep volcanic:* **Climb** check

Check 5 – *Ascend onto the ridge through clouds of sulphurous ash:* **Navigate** check.

Investigators who are friendly with Asmoro can request a guide to lead them up Marapi. In this case, everyone can be assumed to succeed on all their checks to find the trail on the way to the caldera, and each stage takes no more than an hour.

Marapi

When the party reaches the summit, read or paraphrase the following description:

The awesome forces of nature boil about you. The steaming ash cloud towers above, whilst ahead and below the caldera seethes. Ahead, you see a rough trail across the summit and downwards towards a steaming vent.

The Brothers have gathered at the vent to summon Cthugha. They have yet to attempt the spell. However, the Thra'yrdh lingers in the folds between dimensions, watching.

The Brothers have set up a camp of 3 heavy tents at the lip of the vent, on a treacherous limb of rock standing 100 feet above the lava. De Groot, Fuerst, and four Brothers have been here for several days, and have been joined recently by Engel. The Brothers are watchful only about the volcano and the night sky. By day, the principal NPCs sleep whilst a trio of Brothers keeps watch in case of collapse or fire-bombs. If they spot the investigators they attack.

Within the tents, the cultists have bed rolls, plenty of food, a great deal of water, their weapons (they tend not to wander about with them), gas masks similar to those found in **Area 2-6**, a pair of experimental Great War grappling guns, a pair of climbing harnesses, and a case of German hand grenades in case the Great Old One gets nasty.

The grapple guns can fire a hefty steel grapple and attached cord into stone; characters can use their rifle check to fire the guns, which have a range of 30 yards. A successful hit indicates that the grapple has plunged into rock and taken hold, a failure indicates it needs reloading (an act that takes 2 rounds). All the Brothers know the correct way to use the gun, which has been brought along in case of a need to climb out quickly. The guns can be used as improvised weapons, the base attack chance is 10%, damage is 2D8+2, and range is 30 yards.

The climbing harnesses can be attached to the cord and used to climb. However, the cord can only hold up to 200 lbs. at a time. Any more weight than that and there is a 1 in 6 chance (plus 1 per 50 extra pounds) that the cord snaps. A **Climb (+50%)** check is needed to climb using the harness on the cord, and a character can move 30 feet per round. There are 18 grenades in total, they are well-travelled, and every other one fails to explode when thrown.

The gas within the volcano is presently harmless, but acrid; and **Hide** checks are made at +25%. However, when the volcano begins to erupt, this gas becomes much thicker and therefore more harmful (**See Below**).

Brother Of Secrets (4)

STR	CON	SIZ	INT	POW
15	12	13	12	10
HP	DEX	APP	EDU	SAN
13	10	10	14	40

Damage Bonus: +1d4

Weapons: Bullwhip 50%, 1D3 or grapple
Double-barrel shotgun, 20 gauge 45%,
2D6/1D6/1D3

Skills: Dodge 45%, Spot Hidden 50%

Spell: Call Cthugha

The Thra'yrdh - The Turmoil That Feasts Upon Itself

In the meantime, the Thra'yrdh has been patiently waiting to ruin the Brothers' plans and hijack their power. The Thra'yrdh wants its plan to work. However, if it sees the cultists being attacked by, or attacking the investigators, it takes its chances and makes an appearance - the arrival of the investigators, and the cultists' failure to summon Cthugha, forces it to rethink.

Appearance of the Thra'yrdh: The creature appears and immediately attempts to draw power from Engel and De Groot (and their associated **POW** via the *unmaking lesions* spell) to form a rupture between its own dimension and ours before drawing the region surrounding the volcano into it. This act causes a ghastly ochre light to erupt between the Thra'yrdh and Engel, De Groot and all of their victims. The ochre light provides 3 points of armor to both De Groot and Engel, who are free to act whilst shrouded in light, but cannot escape it unless the Thra'yrdh dies. Consider that the Thra'yrdh is able to draw **1D6 POW** through each of the two lead cultists per round, and that as the Power drawn from them increases, so its own world becomes more apparent (for more details **See Below**).

The investigators affected by the lesions might also have their **POW** drawn at this time; assume that as they are close at hand they must make a **POW** against **POW** check on the resistance table against Engel's current **POW** or they lose 1D6 Power. Make this check only once during the encounter. If Engel is killed the investigators are immune from this effect.

If the Thra'yrdh accumulates **50 POW**, it succeeds, ripping this region into its own. For details of that ghastly eventuality see the Conclusion section. If both Engel and De Groot die, the Thra'yrdh abandons its attempt.





The Thra'yrdh appears at point X on the map, and as it does the volcano, twisted by the drawing dimensions, erupts with full fury. The round after the Thra'yrdh appears, the section marked on the map collapses as it shambles towards the group.

For every round thereafter, a further 1D3 5' square sections also collapse. Assign these collapsing squares randomly as shown on the map by using two different colored sets of D6s. Characters standing on a collapsing section can make a Jump, **DEX (x2)** or **INT (x2)** % check, to variously leap, dash, or find a clever way to avoid falling into the vent. Characters failing this check get a final **STR (x2)** % check to avoid falling. Characters falling into the vent die, horribly.

Furthermore, there are hazards from gas and spewing lava. For every minute of exposure, anyone in the volcano (except the Thra'yrdh) must make a **Resistance** check against the gas, which has a **POT** of 12. The gas has an immediate effect and begins to suffocate those within the caldera who fail their checks. The excess gas doubles the bonus to **Hide** checks to +50%.

The spewing lava is equally deadly to those within. For every minute of exposure characters inside must make a **Resistance** check based on their Con against **18 CON** or take 1 point of heat damage.

The Thra'yrdh: The Turmoil That Feasts Upon Itself

When the Thra'yrdh appears, read or paraphrase the following:

There appears a mass of swarming creatures, a flotsam of dimensional shamblers born into a seething mass, as though the creatures within have been tossed onto some mad artist's canvas and given breath to a swarming blaring cacophony that has no right to be. The thing has many faces, and rises spastically on two huge tentacles to reach a grotesque head of many mouths. Its form changes and as you stare, it wretches a further serpentine head from within itself.

STR	CON	SIZ	INT	POW	DEX
42	23	51	15	16	10

Move: 8

Damage Bonus: +5D6, but only for dimensional devour

Hit Points: 37

Weapons: Clawed tentacle 80%, 1D10
Biting malleable appendage 50%, 1D10

Armor: 6-point thick hide

Sanity Loss: 1D3/1D20 points to see the Thra'yrdh

Attacks: The Thra'yrdh is able to create a malleable appendage, usually a snakelike tentacle ending in mouths (but sometimes other things), which can strike any creature within 50 feet. If the appendage hits, it seizes the character, who must immediately make a successful **STR** against **STR** roll on the **Resistance Table** or the victim is lifted into the creature's form the next round. The Thra'yrdh can draw one creature into itself every round, but can only make one appendage at a time. Victims drawn into the creature are crushed, lacerated, and feasted upon by the twisted mouths of dimensional shamblers that make up the being's whole, and suffer 5D6 damage per round. There is no limit to how many creatures the Thra'yrdh can consume in this way.

Getting The NPCs To Help

With their plans in chaos, their leaders being devoured by the Thra'yrdh, the investigators probably attacking them, the Thra'yrdh also attacking, and an erupting volcano, the remaining Brothers are faced with death and ruin. This is the perfect opportunity for the investigators to take charge of this situation. If, after the Thra'yrdh appears, the investigators continue to attack the remaining Brothers (less Engel and De Groot), they decide that it is every man for himself and rush to grab the grapple guns and attempt to escape the burning vent. In their anguish, even if they succeed, the Brothers are so desperate to escape that two climb along the same line using the climbing gear and plunge into the lava below as the cord snaps – leaving those stranded on the promontory with just a single grapple gun left.


Any investigator making a **Psychology** check can see that Fuerst is terrified as he looks almost pleadingly towards them. A **Fast Talk (+20%)** at this time persuades him to join forces with the investigators against the creature (he does not, however, attack any of the Brothers unless a further **Fast Talk** is made). If the first **Fast Talk** succeeds, Fuerst directs the other Brothers to attack the Thra'yrdh. If they see the investigators attack Engel or De Groot, he assists them.

The Unplace

The appearance of the Thra'yrdh causes a tear between two places. When the Thra'yrdh first appears, so does the Unplace. Read or paraphrase the following description:

Beyond this affront to natural law hurtles a place that human words cannot describe, a place touching you and yet far away, oppressive and remote; at once you are crushed by this place and then fall away from it. And as you pray to slip





into unconsciousness you see that this world is devouring your own.

The presence of the Unplace grows as Thra'yrdh's plan reaches its climax. Each round anyone stays within this place they must make a SAN 0/1 check.

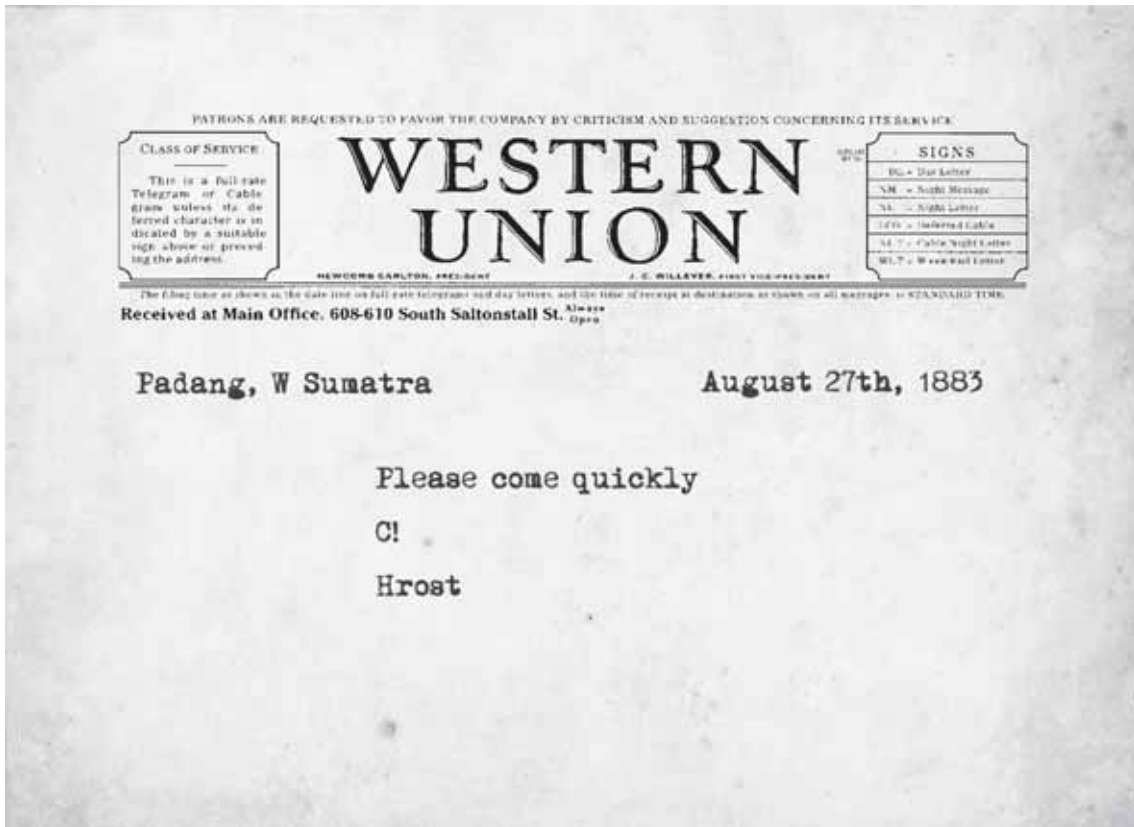
Conclusion

If Engel and De Groot are killed, the Thra'yrdh vanishes back to its own dark folds. This means the entire final combat can be ended by killing Engel and De Groot. The volcano continues to erupt for a further few days (meaning that the investigators must still escape), but then calms. Once the Thra'yrdh goes, it is up to the Keeper to decide how the remaining Brothers react to the investigators efforts to escape from the volcano – do they join forces, or do they try to flee, pushing past, or even attacking the investigators to ensure their escape? If the investigators defeat both sets of protagonists, grant them **2D6 Sanity** points.

If the Thra'yrdh succeeds, then this whole region around the volcano and Padang is drawn into its own realm of madness where it is free to act with impunity and pursue its twisted, alien experiments on the local people in an area of a hundred square miles. To the world left behind, the rift causes a cataclysmic eruption of volcanoes in this region, resulting in an explosion larger than Krakatoa; this entire area is considered vaporized by the volcano, and after thousands of deaths the place slowly rebuilds but never forgets. Those trapped with the Thra'yrdh, including surviving Brothers and the investigators, are not allowed the luxury of death, however, and those who directly opposed the creature are selected for special experiments...

A month after events occur, Father Hrost, or a surviving relative of his, pens a letter of thanks to the investigators. In the letter, he informs them that certain papers have come to light that suggest that in the moments before eruption, figures were seen on Krakatoa. He ends his letter by wondering if those men in fact died, or were taken somewhere...

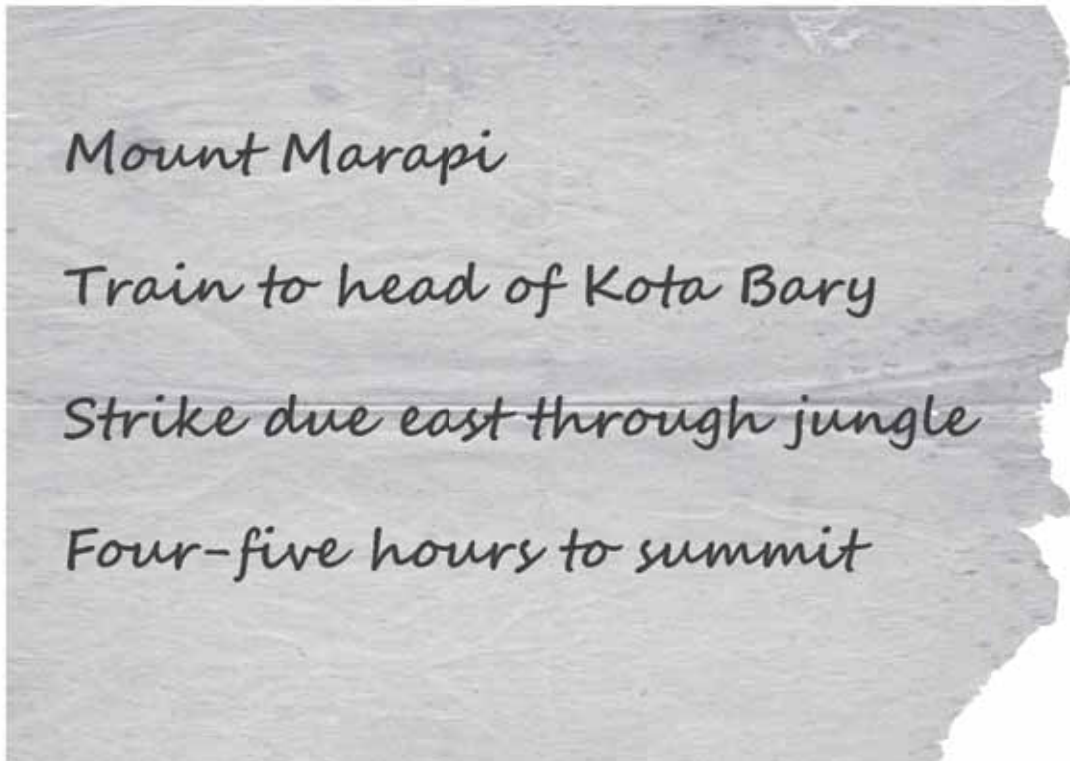
Handout A



Trim along dotted line.

Permission granted to photocopy this page for personal use.

Handout B



Area 2
Padang

100 ft.



Fort & Docks

Oldtown

railway station

New Munplein

□ = 10 feet

3 miles to big house



Area 4
Mount Marapi

Marapi's Vent

camp



Marapi's Vent

□ = 5 feet

Section due to collapse

camp



Padang Environs

30 kilometers



Fort Dekock

Kota Baru

Gunung Marapi

Cave

Padang



Big House and Rubber Plantation

300 ft.

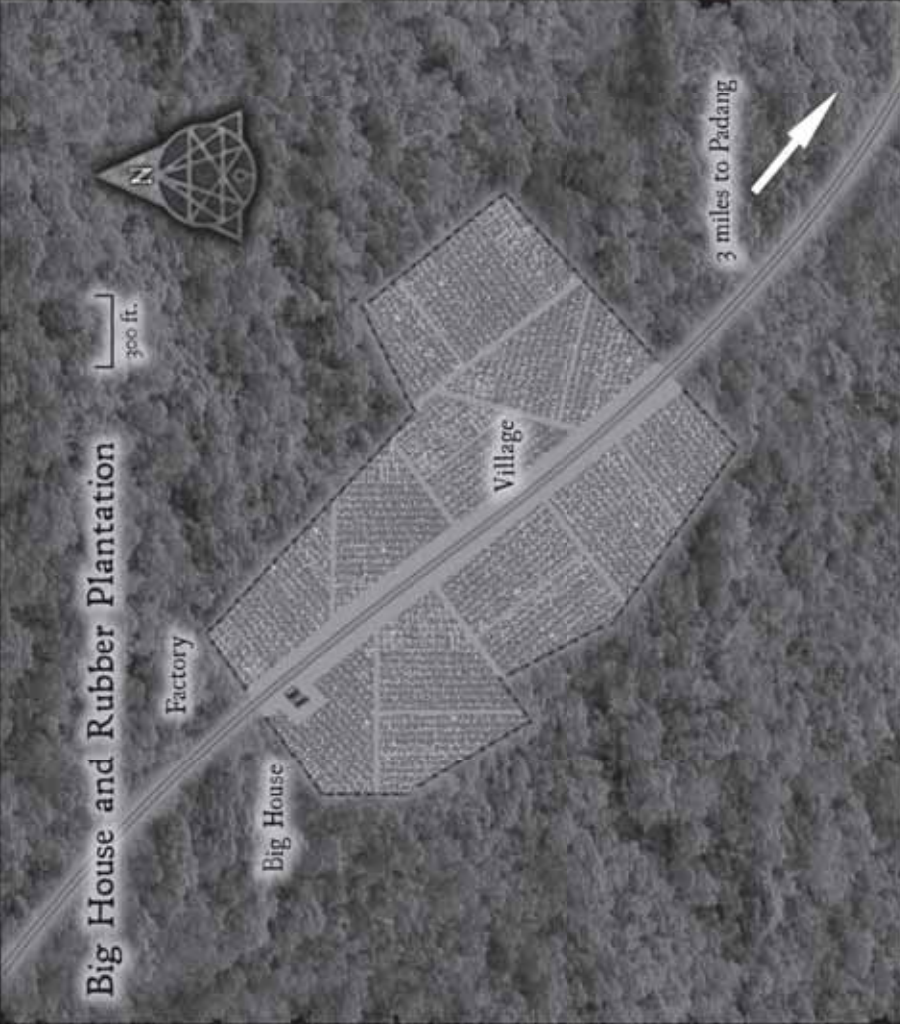


Factory

Big House

Village

3 miles to Padang



Factory

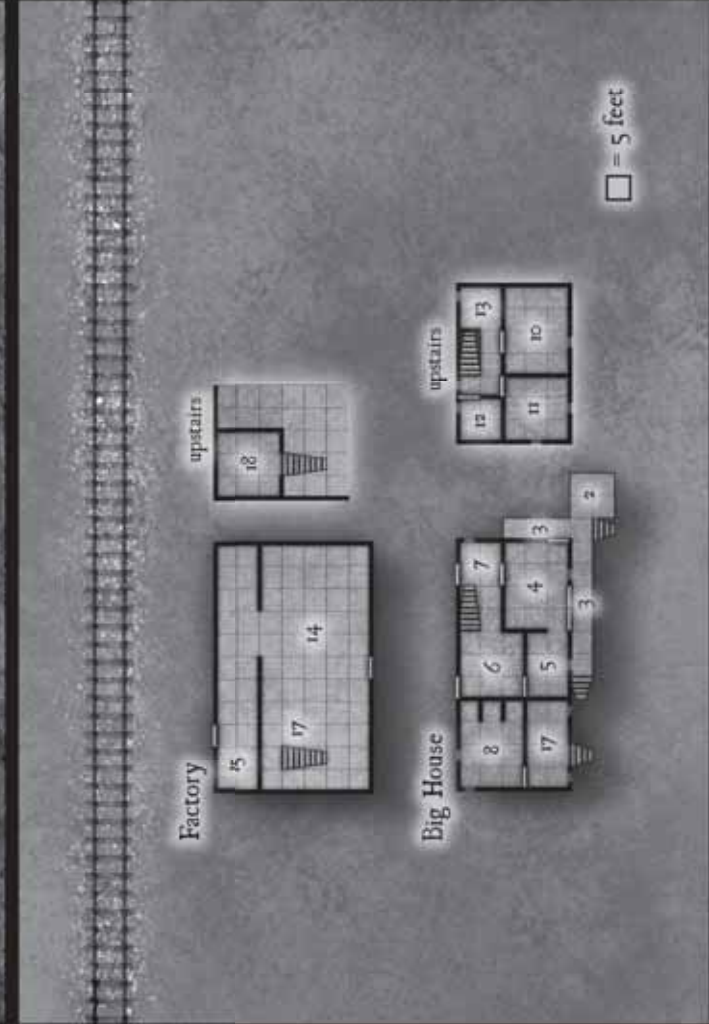
upstairs

Big House

upstairs



□ = 5 feet







Terror At The Top Of The World

By: Rick Maffei

Introduction

Terror at the Top of the World is a scenario designed for 4 to 6 players. This scenario takes place largely in Tibet, with an earlier scene in Massachusetts.

The sudden onset of madness in a famous explorer spurs the investigators to visit a remote village in Tibet. The journey is filled with hazards, unexplained madness, and death, but in the Forbidden Land at the top of the world, the investigators find the answers that they seek.

The **Cthulhu Mythos** has an extremely light “footprint” in this scenario. Keepers and players alike should enjoy the change of pace. If a heavier Mythos component is desired, the Keeper might wish to either add villager cultists devoted to Nyarlathotep, or have a minor **Mythos** (or Dreamlands) creature slip through the incomplete *mandala* gate and cause trouble for the investigators.

Investigators' Information

One of the investigators receives a letter from the noted explorer and anthropologist Sam Avery, describing weird events in a region of Tibet that he has called home for the last two years. In a grim coincidence, a mere day after the (obviously delayed) letter arrives; the investigator or an acquaintance notices a newspaper article describing Avery's untimely death.

Curiosity about both the unusual Tibetan reports and Avery's fate should spur the investigator into getting involved. Once assured of the investigator's sincerity, Avery's wealthy parents are eager to facilitate any expedition that might shed light on what happened to their son.

Keeper's Information

Samuel Avery, PhD, was not the stereotypical anthropologist. Born into wealth, he could have enjoyed his privileged position and simply become a socialite, but instead he devoted his natural intellect to a lifetime of learning and exploration. Moreover, Samuel's brilliance was easily matched by his energy and sense of adventure. Publication in respected research journals won him the respect of the scientific community; indeed, those peers meeting him for the first time were often surprised to encounter a fairly young man. By virtue of his engaging personality, wit, and knowledge, Avery soon became widely recognized and respected by his

peers and the public alike. He became known as a fearless field researcher, happiest when exploring far-flung cultures and ruins. Avery has assisted the *International Historical & Archaeological Society* on numerous occasions, though he is not an official member of the group.

Two years ago Avery slowed his pace and seemed to become more introspective. Whether this was a result of years of ceaseless, wearying expeditions in the field or some life-changing event, none could say. Avery traveled to Tibet, gained entrance permission from the Dalai Lama by virtue of a chance meeting and his sheer charisma, and took up quiet residence in a remote village south of Lhasa. Eventually the local monks, sensing his intelligence and open-minded nature, gave him permission to study at the nearby Shukpa monastery.

Two months ago, everything changed. Avery's family received word that he had been found by the roadside in soiled clothing, babbling incoherently. After a brief examination in India, arrangements were made to transport him stateside. The newspapers buzzed with the news. The greatest shock came when his parents first saw him – a disheveled, wild-eyed, and incoherent shell of a man, his formerly black mane of hair now a ghostly white. Feeling that he could convalesce better in familiar surroundings, his parents took him in and cared for him. Five days later he left a confounding note and hurled himself out of a third-story window.

As shocking as Avery's death was to family and friends, he was merely an incidental casualty... and the cause of his madness lies halfway around the world.

Goba

There are a thousand roads to enlightenment, but some paths are dark indeed.

Dorje Goba was a gifted, but undisciplined monk in residence at the monastery during the time that Avery was there. His lama was dismayed by his lack of patience, but heartened by his tireless quest for knowledge. One day, Goba reached a unique state of deep meditation and made fleeting contact with a mote of the unworldly consciousness of the Thing That Lurks Beyond the Veil. Nyarlathotep has a thousand forms – the Black Pharaoh of Egypt, Ahtu of the Congo, the Floating Horror of Haiti, and so many more – and the Thing is merely one of them.



Goba mistakenly assumed he was communing with Ra-hul, god of planets, but it was the Thing that answered. The brief contact was devastating. Goba was overwhelmed with the profusion of bizarre, irrepressible thoughts that persisted even after breaking off contact, and he quickly isolated himself in an attempt to control these new visions. It was of little use. He became overwhelmed by the Thing's malevolent emanations and descended into obsession, thereafter striving to open a window to the place where Azathoth holds court. Goba soon began work on a unique, intricate *mandala* – one that, when complete, would act as a gateway between planes.

What's A Mandala?

The word *mandala* originates from Sanskrit and can be loosely translated as “circle” or “essence.” A *mandala* is a complex work of art often used as a spiritual focus, teaching tool, or meditation aid. The symbolic nature of a *mandala* allows the viewer to enter deeper levels of meditation and unlock the hidden power of the subconscious. *Mandalas* are meant to be contemplated to the point of saturation, with the viewer both memorizing the smallest details and utilizing the work to reach higher levels of thought.

Individual *mandalas* vary in design, but most are concentric in nature and ripple outward like rings of water from a central point, or seed. Amid the many other elements are depictions of deities or holy figures.

In the Tibetan tradition, *mandalas* can be constructed from sand, painted upon walls, made as *thangkas* (scroll paintings), or even crafted as three-dimensional models of wood or other materials.

One evening, while deep in thought, Avery wandered down a wrong corridor and entered a secluded area of the monastery. He noticed foot prints that led to a long-neglected door. Curious, he unlatched the door and entered the room beyond. Inside hung Goba's *mandala*-in-progress. Avery gazed raptly at the *mandala*. His mind unraveled as visions of dread planes of existence filled his thoughts. He collapsed, comatose, to be discovered by Goba, who swiftly carried him outside the monastery and left him on the road.

Goba's fellow monks continued to be confused by his odd, selfish, and often menacing behavior over the next several weeks. His master reluctantly took the extremely unusual step of asking him to leave the monastery. Goba pretended to leave the area, but instead secretly took up residence in an abandoned house on the fringes of the village. There he has dedicated his every waking hour to completing the unearthly *mandala*.

As each section of the *mandala* is completed, the gate becomes all the more real. The fabric of reality has weakened around the *mandala*'s location. Unearthly nightmares are now common in the village. Many fear something is amiss, but none have discovered the source or come to suspect the “missing” Dorje Goba. Worse still, the concentration of odd dreams and events in the village – all caused by the *mandala* – has manifested a *tulpa*, a malignant entity formed from either purposeful concentration or (as in this case) mass subconscious thought.

The *tulpa* is becoming more substantial and dangerous with every passing day. Drawn by strong emotion, especially fear, it has begun to prey on the villagers. Those meeting it have been left dead... or worse. An awareness that something has been preying on them has only increased the level of subconscious fear in the village, much like putting blood in the waters where a shark lurks.

Meanwhile, Goba continues his secretive labor, pausing only for the odd sip of water or morsel of food. The dread *mandala* is now nearing completion.

Handling The Tulpa

The Keeper should carefully play the *tulpa* to maximum effect: a mysterious creature immune to physical harm that strikes without warning, leaving death and madness in its wake. The *tulpa* can be glimpsed or its damage witnessed, but it should not come into direct confrontation with the party until the final scene.

Note that fending off or even dissipating the *tulpa* does nothing to stop the future completion of the gate. Only destroying the dread *mandala* or immobilizing Dorje Goba can accomplish that.

Investigation Summary

The adventure is organized into scenes, so that a Keeper can flip easily from one to the next as needed. Most scenes can be played in any order, depending on the path the investigation takes.

Player Beginning, Page 29: In which the investigators receive a long overdue letter and read about the fate of one Samuel Avery.

Scene 1, Meeting The Averys (Springfield, Massachusetts), Page 29: A brief interview with Samuel's bereaved parents yields some clues.

Scene 2, Travel To Ginjeste, Page 30: The party journeys to the village of Ginjeste, braving dangers along the way.





Scene 3, Ginjeste Village, Page 33: In which the investigators arrive at their destination, and join the prey.

Scene 4, The Bön Shaman, Page 34: In which the party visits a shaman in hope of gaining some insight to the odd events surrounding them.

Scene 5, The Sky Burial, Page 36: In which the party attends a very unusual funeral and are badly received by the local fauna.

Scene 6, Shukpa Monastery, Page 38: In which the investigators visit the humble Shukpa monastery looking for answers.

Scene 7, Deaths In The Night, Page 41: In the dark of night, the *tulpa* claims two more victims and the party witnesses the handiwork of the *tulpa* firsthand.

Scene 8, The Mandala, Page 42: In which the investigators confront a very driven man and his near-complete gate to beyond.

Player Beginning

One of the investigators has a close connection to Sam Avery – professional, convivial, or a combination of the two. Based on the pregenerated characters, the Keeper should ask one player to describe the relationship. That investigator receives a delayed, crumpled letter from Tibet. A day later, one of the investigators notices a disturbing newspaper article. Give the players **Handouts A and B**.

Strange Dreams: If the Keeper runs more than one adventure in this compilation, then a theme of related dreams connects them. The night before the players receive Avery's letter from Tibet, they all experience the same shared dream. Read or paraphrase the following:

You find yourself on a barren, frozen plain, the cold wind whistling fiercely in your ears. You are naked and totally alone. Around you lies only emptiness, yet the very vastness itself seems to draw ever closer, threatening to suffocate you. From the distance comes the sound of many voices whispering in unison. The exact words they utter remain maddeningly just outside your perception, but the tone is conspiratorial and hints of madness and depravity. You suddenly espy a shape in the distance... something huge approaches, something whose voice cannot be heard above the howling wind.

You bolt awake, shivering, in your bed. Snowflakes clinging to your nightshirt swiftly melt away before your eyes, making you question what is dream and what is reality.

Scene 1 – Meeting The Averys

John and Sarah Avery live in a well-appointed estate in Springfield, Massachusetts. Their mansion is reached by a long, winding path and looms over a few lesser estates nearby. The three-story structure sits on twenty acres. The grounds are well cared for, but the house itself is largely dark and somewhat menacing.

Gaining an audience with Sam Avery's parents requires a **Fast Talk** or **Credit Rating** roll, but they speak with any party furnishing Samuel's letter (**Players Handout A**). Read or paraphrase the following aloud to the players:

John and Sarah Avery meet you in a well-appointed parlor. They both look to be in their late sixties. John wears a double-breasted vest and grey, single-breasted jacket, his neat clothing in stark contrast with his weary, lined face. Sarah is garbed in a somber straight-line chemise and cloche hat (which she tugs on incessantly). They both have a haunted look in their eyes, but they also look at you with what might be hesitant hope.

John and Sarah are despondent, but they eagerly accept aid from the investigators if they believe it will shed some light on the cruel fate that befell their son. They can impart the following information:

- Samuel was 38 years old.
- Samuel spent nearly 2 years in Tibet before his unfortunate return.
- Samuel was home for 5 days, and then he committed suicide by leaping to his death. The Averys returned to find his broken body on the ornate flagstone path below his window. He left a note of seeming gibberish behind in his rooms.

The investigators can obtain permission to view Samuel's note with a successful **Persuade** roll (+15%). The paper is filled with what looks like jumbled, meaningless scrawl, but a successful **Spot Hidden** roll discerns the following phrases buried amid the chaos:

GATE TO DARK INFINITY / HE PAINTS THE WAY / MY EYES ARE SCREAMING / CIRCLE IN THE SQUARE IN THE CIRCLE / FLUTES / IT LIES BEYOND THE VEIL

The scrawlings refer to the *mandala* gate, Goba, the circle-within-a-square *mandala* design, and the Thing.



The Averys, through their considerable resources, are able to fund a small expedition and arrange for documents allowing entry into Tibet. Assuming the brief interview goes well, the Averys extend an invitation to the investigators to join the hastily organized party. The expedition is to be led by Dr. Charles Ramsey, a sometime-colleague of Samuel's. Allow each investigator a **Know** roll to recognize Ramsey's name as a well-respected and Yale educated anthropologist field researcher with a short, but prolific history of academic publication typically in the field of cultural anthropology research.

Investigators should jump at the chance to explore Tibet. Even after the Younghusband and Bell expeditions of 1904, entry to Tibet by Westerners is still rare in the extreme, and female investigators could well be among the first Western women to cross the border. The added allure of investigating the odd fate of a celebrity-explorer should make this trip one they cannot in good conscience refuse. If they join the expedition, tickets are hastily procured in their name for the steamship *SS City of Baroda*, which departs from New York for Calcutta in 3 days. The characters must arrange for their own transportation to New York, via car or rail.

If the investigators ask to be paid, the Averys offer \$200 per investigator (and may be haggled by greedy investigators up to \$300 with a successful **Bargain** roll), plus reasonable expenses.

Scene 2 – Travel To Ginjeste

After a long journey of about 98 days, the investigators reach Calcutta, India via the steamship *SS City of Baroda* (traveling approximately 9,830 nautical miles). Calcutta, home to well over a million inhabitants, is bustling and crowded. Many sights evoke wonder, such as the Imperial General Post Office, the Writers' Building just north of busy Dalhousie Square, and the magnificent domed Victoria memorial. Yet despite the sense of wonder, an oppressive squalor hangs over all. Horse-drawn carts jostle past omnipresent beggars and the destitute, and the city seems to be enveloped by an inescapable humid haze that saps both energy and spirit.

The investigators then forge northward toward Darjeeling via rail. The railway is primitive at best, and thick with passengers. At Siliguri, they disembark to switch trains, boarding the Darjeeling Himalayan Railway, or so-called "Toy Train," a comically miniscule train on a two-foot narrow gauge track. The tiny train jerkily and noisily proceeds steadily uphill, following a zigzagging path that loops and crosses itself more than once before arrival in Darjeeling. The entire 195-mile journey north from Calcutta to Darjeeling takes approximately 7 hours.

Once in Darjeeling, in the shadow of the Himalayas, the investigators join the pre-arranged expedition headed by Doctor Charles Ramsey and immediately head north. The remainder of the trip must be carried out on foot. Accompanying Ramsey is his assistant, Joseph Davidson. Their entourage consists of twelve Indian porters and animal handlers, eight yaks, and sixteen mules heavily loaded with gear. Supplies include cold-weather clothing, bedrolls, tents, climbing gear, medicine chest, instruments (theodolite, sextant, aneroid barometers, etc.), and rations. Advance word has been sent and the investigators are fully expected to avail themselves of the equipment, but Doctor Ramsey remains the final authority and leader of the expedition.

Investigators *cannot* enter Tibet without joining the Ramsey party. All attempts to sneak into Tibet on their own find the investigators repelled (or worse) by watchful Tibetans that scrutinize the mountain passes and obvious points of entry.

Charles Ramsey, Anthropologist And Field Researcher


STR	CON	SIZ	INT	POW
10	15	11	16	14
DEX	APP	EDU	SAN	HP
8	9	20	70	13

Damage Bonus: –

Weapon: .303 Lee-Enfield bolt-action rifle 35%, 2D6+4; walking stick 40%, 1D6+1

Skills: Anthropology 76%, Bargain 27%, Climb 50%, Credit Rating 60%, Drive Auto 21%, History 56%, Library Use 55%, Natural History 45%, Other Language (Mandarin) 46%, Other Language (Latin) 41%, Other Language (Tibetan) 63%, Persuade 50%, Psychology 15%, Ride 64%, Track 40%

Physical Description: Charles Ramsey is respected in his field, and he knows it. He is confident to the point of being arrogant, but he can also be very loyal to those that have proven themselves personally helpful or knowledgeable about esoteric anthropological subjects. He does not suffer fools gladly. He is a fit man in his early fifties with salt-and-pepper hair, a well-trimmed beard, and spectacles. He is rarely without his trusty haversack and heavy walking stick. When agitated, he tends to wave his



walking stick scant inches from his audience. Ramsey cares little about the fate of Samuel Avery; his only goal is researching Tibet and writing about it in academic journals later.

Dr. Ramsey is a fellow of the *International Historical & Archaeological Society*. Although he is generally respected by most members of the Society, he is not well liked.

Joseph Davidson, Assistant Professor Of Linguistics

STR	CON	SIZ	INT	POW
10	9	11	17	9
DEX	APP	EDU	SAN	HP
11	13	19	45	10

Damage Bonus: –

Weapon: Smith & Wesson Model 10 .38 revolver 20%, 1D10

Skills: Archaeology 71%, Bargain 20%, Credit Rating 52%, History 45%, Library Use 50%, Natural History 60%, Occult 38%, Other Language (Mongolian) 65%, Other Language (Tibetan) 79%, Persuade 40%, Photography 45%, Psychology 45%, Ride 58%

Physical Description: Joseph is a slender man in his early thirties. He has sandy hair, pale skin, and long fingers. His ill-fitting clothes hang on his frame, but he is always fashionably attired and even wears a wristwatch for a bit of flair. He was drafted for this mission primarily because of

his language skills; his experience as a field researcher is limited. He slavishly obeys Doctor Ramsey, but happily follows the investigators after Ramsey's death (see **Scene 7**). Davidson is easily startled and prone to bolt or faint when the going gets tough.

Tibet

Ostensibly independent, Tibet lies under the competing interests of England, China, and Russia. Few outsiders saw the interior of the country during the 19th century. In 1904, the Younghusband Expedition fought its way to Lhasa, the capital of Tibet, and subsequent treaties opened the doors of Tibet and made it to some degree a *de facto* British protectorate. The Chinese attempted to establish direct rule in 1910, but withdrew several years later. In 1913, both Mongolia and Tibet signed a treaty proclaiming their independence from China.

Tibet lies at high altitude, much above 10,000 feet, and was aptly christened “the Roof of the World” by Victorian travelers. The natural fortress of Tibet is defended by mountains on nearly all sides – the mighty Himalayas to the south; the Kun Lun, or Mountains of Darkness, to the north; and the Karakoram range to the west. Outside its scattered villages and monasteries, this largely lawless land is home to roaming wild dogs and dangerous bandits.

The cold, forlorn region can itself be a threat to incautious visitors. When the investigators arrive the temperature is approximately 56° F (13° C) with no snowfall, but typically strong winds.

High-Altitude Illnesses

Most of this adventure takes place at high altitude. Lhasa sits at an altitude of 11,450 feet and the (fictional) village of Ginjeste lies at 11,320 feet. High-altitude illnesses are a factor in any exploration of Tibet by those not indigenous to the area.

Individuals ascending to altitudes above 8,000 feet typically experience some symptoms of *acute mountain sickness* (AMS). As one ascends, the barometric pressure decreases and the typical breath intake contains fewer molecules of oxygen, forcing the individual to breathe deeper and faster in the attempt to reach an oxygen intake similar to that found at sea level. Typical symptoms of AMS include light-headedness, severe headache, nausea, vomiting, anorexia (appetite loss), and atypical fatigue (increased with exertion). In addition, those unused to higher altitudes often experience poor sleep: vivid dreams, feelings of suffocation, and/or sleep apnoeas that cause the afflicted individual to suddenly bolt upright gasping for air.

AMS can be eased somewhat by controlled breathing and increased fluid intake, but the only cure is descent to a lower altitude. In this scenario, the reality-warping effects of the *mandala* might easily be confused with sleep disturbances associated with higher altitudes. The Keeper should do nothing to dispel such confusion.



Game-Related Effects

Once reaching 8,000 feet, investigators should make an opposed CON check versus a base passive value of 5 (modified by +1 for each additional 1,000 feet in elevation above the 8,000 foot mark; so an altitude of 11,000 feet would yield a value of 8, for example). Those failing this opposed check immediately suffer AMS. The effects of AMS are summarized as follows:

- -10% to the **Climb, Dodge, Fist/Punch, Grapple, Head Butt, Jump, Kick, Swim, and Throw** skills
- -5% to all other skills
- All non-native investigators might also suffer difficulty sleeping. Investigators failing a nightly CON roll get a poor night's sleep and take an *additional* penalty of -1 to **Strength** and -5% to *all* skills for 3 hours after waking.

Acclimatization: At the start of each day allow each AMS-afflicted investigator a CON x5 check. Those that successfully make two consecutive checks have acclimatized (possible sleep disorders still apply). After one week, acclimatization is automatic.

Events On The Road

The 26-day journey from Darjeeling to Ginjeste sends the investigators across extremely rugged, desolate terrain. The vista of the surrounding mountains is beautiful, but the temperature is frigid and the air extremely thin. The party occasionally encounters pilgrims and yak herders, but much of their journey takes place across a frozen landscape comprising empty plains broken by low valleys, hills, and ice-cold streams. The Keeper should emphasize the forlorn atmosphere and convey that the investigators are now cut off from routine civilization. Investigators hear what seem to be whispered voices on the wind, and there is the overwhelming feeling of being watched, but if they look about there is, of course, no one there.

The Keeper may wish to use some of the following events to spice up the investigators' journey:

Dogpas

Those making a successful Listen check discern a group of men on horseback lurking in the distance. The bandits, a dozen in number, shadow the party for an hour just to observe them. They make no overt moves and stay approximately 100 yards away. Unless attacked, they hang back in the hopes of grabbing pack animals that wander too far from the party.

Typical Bandit (12)

STR	CON	SIZ	DEX	POW	HP
13	13	11	14	10	12

Damage bonus: –

Weapon: Bow 35%, 1D6+2 (range 80 yards); knife 40%, 1D4

Dangerous Trail

This part of the trail circles a high peak. Following the trail requires carefully leading the animals across dangerous-looking wooden scaffolding.

There is a 50% chance that the lead yak balks, requiring a **Ride** or **Persuade** roll to move it along (otherwise an hour of travel time is lost). In addition, there is a 5% cumulative chance that each person walking across the scaffolding causes a plank to break. If this occurs, the individual must make a **Jump** roll or plunge 180 feet, suffering 18D6 damage. If two planks are broken, the scaffolding must be repaired (1D6 hours work) before the rest of the party can safely continue forward.

Rope Crossing

The party must cross a deep gorge using a primitive rope bridge. Transporting the pack animals and heavy equipment is a laborious process, and requires several hours of hard work transporting each draft animal, person, and pack across.

When the last investigator crosses, the ropes groan under the weight, but hold. As the last person – a porter or other non-investigator – crosses, the main line snaps and he plunges to his death. The party cannot turn back via that route unless a day is spent repairing the bridge. For the rest of the day the remaining porters go sullenly about their tasks and mutter in their native Hindi that the expedition is cursed.

A Sign In The Heavens

As the party travels overland, one of the porters suddenly points skyward. A cloud formation has taken on an eerie resemblance to a human skull. After a moment, the formation drifts apart in the wind.





A Susurrus On The Wind

Under the ubiquitous howling of the wind, the investigators hear what seem to be voices whispering in unison. Before individual words can be discerned, the whispers fade into what sounds like an unearthly fluting and swiftly fade away.

Scene 3 – Ginjeste Village

Ginjeste lies beyond Tuna and somewhat south of Guru, near a tributary of the Brahmaputra River. The village is inhabited by some 96 souls, most of whom live in two-story rectangular houses constructed of mud and stone. Visitors from more “civilized” areas might be shocked at the squalor – refuse is in plain sight, as are small pools of filthy water from which animals drink. Wild dogs lurk about, seeking an opportune meal.

A few natives are wary of strangers, but even the most cautious quickly turn warm and hospitable. “*Khyerang gane yin?*” (“Where are you from?”) is a common first question put forth to visitors by inquisitive locals. The people of Ginjeste are a hardy lot: slow to complain, quick to laugh, and seemingly oblivious to the poverty and brutal weather that surround them. They work hard, drink a seemingly endless supply of tea, and happily engage in conversation with foreigners.

Village traders offer clothing, woven goods, foodstuffs, and religious items for trade. They eagerly barter with investigators and are skilled negotiators (**Bargain 70%**).

After the party arrives in Ginjeste, several events occur. These events take place at a set time, regardless of what else the investigators do.

Time	Event
Day 1 Afternoon	The Ramsey party arrives at Ginjeste
Day 1 Afternoon (Later)	The Bön shaman appears (see Scene 5)
Day 2 Morning	The <i>sky burial</i> (see Scene 6)
Day 2 Evening	Ramsey and the Bön shaman are slain by the <i>tulpa</i> (see Scene 7)
Day 3 Evening	The <i>tulpa</i> seeks out the investigators

Bad Dreams

Each investigator should make a **Sanity** check for every night spent in the village. Those failing this roll experience an unsettling dream and bolt awake, gasping for air. Some


suggested dream themes are:

1. *An endless series of circles within squares within circles flows toward you, surrounded by a choking mist filled with squirming beings. From the center emerges something with three central eyes around which radiate long, yearning tentacles.*
2. *A form that can barely be conceived – a writhing, pulsing mass of energy that surges outward to the beat of deep drums and ghostly fluting that drones together and rises in intensity.*
3. *A long passenger train hurtles through the heavy mist at dangerous, breakneck speed. Before your eyes the train begins to change into something otherworldly, its headlight turning into a three-lobed burning eye and the whole twisting and shaping itself into something monstrous.*
4. *You crawl across a fog-shrouded plain. From the mists around you come a discordant, yet musical sound – something that could be fluting mixed with distant screams. You catch sight of several forms through the mist in quick succession: a red-garbed, man-like figure; a kneeling figure in tattered robes gazing raptly upwards; bloody forms draped over rocks. Each vision lasts for but a second. Then something larger and more terrifying emerges from the edge of the mist, a purplish entity with three staring eyes that strains toward you hungrily, lurching ever closer.*
5. *A gleaming, metallic cylinder with Art Deco ornamentation stands upright in a vast chamber, fed by blinding white pipes. The bizarre construct rumbles and begins to shake.*
6. *Wind and snow howl through a valley situated between vast, impossibly high mountain chains. A short distance away stands an unearthly, pentagonal tower composed of dark stone that seems to beckon you within.*

The Village Elder

Mingma Tashi, the wealthiest man in the village, sends his servant to fetch the party. He politely questions them about the purposes of their visit and how long they intend to stay. Surprisingly, Mingma speaks English and can converse with investigators directly.

If questioned about Avery, the elder professes to know little. He can recount that an old woman discovered Avery, quite out of his senses, and alerted the other villagers.



He also reports that three days ago another incident took place. Two *dokpas* (herdsmen) discovered the torn bodies of two villagers near the road. They were traveling to the monastery north of the village for a routine visit and the monks confirmed that they never arrived.

The Villagers That Found The Recent Victims

The two *dokpas* are located an hour later in the fields, tending their yak herd. The brothers Jinpa and Pasang, aged 42 and 48, speak only Tibetan. They were gathering a stray *dzo* (yak-cow) and they stumbled upon the bodies. The deaths did not appear to be the work of wild dogs or bandits, so the brothers blame demons. They grow fearful if questioned overlong about the incident, and they believe Avery's arrival somehow begat the village's troubles. They fear that the arrival of more foreigners cannot be a good thing.

The Villager That Found Avery

The village elder can identify the old woman who found Avery. Nima, aged 78, speaks only Tibetan. She insists in inviting the investigators into her hovel for tea and *tsampa*. When she found Avery, his hair was white and he had both hands in front of his face, as if to ward off an attack or block the sight of something. He had seemingly lost his senses, and she soon cried out for aid.

The Survivor?

If the elder is questioned about the fate of the insane survivor of the first attack mentioned in Avery's letter, he states that he died three days ago and, being a man of some importance, a special funeral is being held for him tomorrow morning. (The body is being held by the family and they do not want to be disturbed.) The investigators can attend the funeral if they wish (see **Scene 5**).

Questioning The Other Locals

If approached in a friendly manner, most families will invite the investigators to join them in a meal or tea. Tea laced with yak butter is offered, and guests that make a good impression might also be offered a meal consisting of yak meat dumplings or perhaps *thenthuk* (noodle soup). During the meal, the eldest male does most of the talking, asking about the outside world and the investigators' homeland(s). Conditions inside the typical Tibetan home are squalid by Western standards, and the investigators will certainly encounter a smoky environment with insects or other vermin in evidence. The investigators are invited to sit in a common room where the walls all bear a tar-like residue left behind from continual fires fed by yak dung.

Villagers, barring the key individuals named previously, provide the same basic information. If asked if anything unusual has occurred recently, they can relate the following:

- Many in the village have reported having disturbing dreams in the last few weeks.
- The village animals have begun behaving oddly: freezing in place, biting their handlers, or bolting unexpectedly.

If questioned specifically about Avery, any villager can relate the following:

- Samuel arrived at the village almost 2 years ago.
- He was well regarded in the village (for a foreigner).
- He had studied at the local monastery for 2 weeks before the incident occurred.
- He was found on a road just north of the village, unharmed, but insane.

If asked what lies near the northern road, they respond that the monastery lies a half-mile to the north and two abandoned homes (whose owners died of disease a year ago) are a short distance to the northeast beyond that.

Investigating The Attack Sites

Enterprising investigators might wish to survey the location where Avery's group was found and/or the place where the more recent victims were discovered. The village elder can bring them to either location.

Avery's attack site: Nothing of interest is found here, and no signs remain of the struggle that took place here.

Recent attack site: Allow investigators thoroughly searching the area a **Spot Hidden** roll; success reveals a scratched arrow mark in the dirt. Show the players **Handout C**. A dying victim scratched the mark to indicate the origin of the being that attacked him. It points northwest to the monastery and the abandoned homes beyond (see **Scene 10**).

Scene 4 – The Bön Shaman

After the party's arrival in the village, a mysterious character arrives. Paraphrase the following:

A man dressed in shabby red robes emerges from behind the hill, walking with quiet intent. An ornate dagger hangs from his belt, and he carries an odd trumpet-like instrument. Hanging about his neck is a long necklace made of round circlets. He quietly speaks with several of the villagers.

The man is a bön practitioner. A successful **Medicine** check reveals the trumpet to be made from a human femur.

The necklace is constructed of 108 circlets, each round piece punched from a different human skull (allow a second **Medicine** check at -15% to detect this). The dagger is a magical ritual dagger, or phurba, made mostly of bronze and very valuable as a work of Tibetan art.

If asked, the village elder states that the shaman was asked to come to the village to offer protection from the demons tormenting the people of Ginjeste. If the shaman himself is questioned, he directs the investigators to visit his hut later in the afternoon. If the investigators comply, see “*Visiting the Bön Shaman*” below.

Bön is thought to have originated to the northwest of Tibet, in the mysterious land of Olmo Lunging. The religion is shamanistic in nature and has been in steep decline since the eighth century, when Songtsen Gampo overthrew Shang Shung and established Buddhism as the chosen religion of Tibet. The religion’s roots are steeped in respect for nature, but it is similar to Buddhism in that it shares a commitment to ending suffering. Bönpo, or followers of Bön, accept the existence of numerous demons, elementals, and spirits. At times the relationship between followers of Bön and Buddhism has been contentious, but in many places in Tibet the two exist side by side without incident.

Jangbu, Bön Shaman

STR	CON	SIZ	INT	POW
12	11	12	15	13
DEX	APP	EDU	SAN	HP
11	5	10	65	12

Damage Bonus: –

Weapon: knife 40%, 1D4+2

Skills: Astronomy 65%, Bargain 55%, Climb 68%, Conceal 48%, Fast Talk 48%, Natural History 68%, Occult 78%, Persuade 52%, Psychology 46%, Spot Hidden 40%

Physical Description: Jangbu wears his long hair in unkempt braids. His eyes are two dark beacons shining from a weather-worn face. An old leg injury forces him to walk with a jerky motion, but he is spry and limber for his age.

Visiting The Bön Shaman

The villagers or the shaman himself can provide directions to his hut, which lies just west of the village outskirts. Read or paraphrase the following:

You have come to a large hut constructed from dark wood and clay. Colorful banners and strings of bones flap



from posts outside the structure, moving occasionally as the wind catches them.

If they enter, read or paraphrase the following:

Inside, the structure appears smaller than it does from the outside, and is cluttered with battered furniture and many unusual objects. A large prayer wheel leans against one wall, and several long swords and a staff lean against another. A number of small charms hang from the walls on leather thongs. Above the doorway through which you just entered hangs a sword, twisted into a spiral and decorated with white silks. A long table holds a profusion of objects, including: a flat hand bell with a white yak tail adornment, a drum that appears to be mostly constructed from bone, butter lamps and brass incense burners, a wooden bowl, a clay jug, a dagger, and a tiny skull. A smoldering fire pit full of grey coals dominates the center of the hut. Sitting on a chair beyond the fire is a man garbed in red robes.

A successful **Medicine** or **Occult** check identifies the drum as being constructed from two human craniums and stretched human skin (SAN loss 0/1). A **Natural History** or **Biology** check identifies the small skull as being that of a raven.

Whether or not they spoke to him before their visit, the shaman acts as if he were expecting the investigators. “Why do you seek me?” he asks in Tibetan, scarcely turning to face them.



If questioned about the odd happenings in the village, he states vaguely that evil forces are obviously afoot. He asks for an offering as a token of appreciation to the powers that grant him special knowledge. He proceeds if given a suitable gift – coins (any currency), a valuable object, or the like. The shaman then addresses the lead investigator: “Do you doubt my powers? I have performed the ritual of *chöd*, and emerged wiser for the task. Tell me, do you wish to see the *future*, or examine the *present* more closely?”

If the investigator chooses future:

The shaman walks to the dying fire and blows once, twice, three times on the coals, sending a small swirl of sparks into the air. He intones a few odd words, and suddenly the air around you almost seems to grow closer and more oppressive. The shaman, still mumbling, walks to a corner of his hut and rummages through a sack, withdrawing what appears to be a jawbone of some kind. He tosses it onto the fire with a flourish and steps back. He then grasps the bell from the table, holding it aloft with the mouth pointing upwards and the yak tail adornment hanging down, and shakes it three times briskly overhead. He then places it down and sits before the fire, waiting intently.

The shaman waves off any interruptions. After several minutes, the heat from the fire causes the jawbone (identified as from a cow or yak with a **Know** or a **Natural History** roll) to crack in several places. The shaman scrutinizes the jawbone for several long minutes, breathing deeply as he does so. He then addresses the investigators, saying:

“The future is filled with dire omens. An evil force is loose in the village, but it is not a demon. I sense it originated here. It will cause more harm before it is overcome. I see death.” He looks at you steadily, but there might be regret in his eyes. “You must confront your greatest fear.”

If the investigator chooses present:

The shaman whistles softly, and a young man you didn't see before immediately enters the hut. The boy lights incense and begins busily stoking the embers of the dying fire. The shaman straps on a thick leather waistband.

The shaman breathes deeply and leans back in his chair. The boy gathers some embers in a shallow brass bowl and blows smoke directly into the shaman's face. The shaman's face grows red, and he begins to mumble intently. The boy offers the shaman one of the swords. He seizes it, turns the sword toward his torso, places the sword tip against his waistband, and thrusts the sword against himself. The metal blade bends like taffy, and he places the sword carefully on the floor. The shaman then stands upright and howls in Tibetan, spittle flying from his lips as he speaks:

“It hunts men! It grows ever stronger as the gate that gave it life grows stronger! Even now the gate swings wide!”

The shaman then immediately slumps to the floor. The boy cautions you with a raised hand to remain at a distance and helps the shaman back into his chair. The shaman accepts a few sips of tea, and his color slowly returns to normal.

Allow each investigator present an **Idea** roll (-10%); those succeeding can note that the sword lands facing north-east (it points directly to Goba's lair, in fact). The shaman is weary and will not elaborate on either prognostication. The boy motions for the investigators to leave.

Scene 5 – The Sky Burial

The morning after the investigators arrive at the village, the villagers hold a funeral for the insane man mentioned in Avery's letter. The man in question was very esteemed and his passing warrants a *sky burial* – an elaborate funeral unique to Tibet.

The shallow earth in Tibet covers stone or permafrost, making burial of the dead difficult, and the scarcity of wood makes cremation similarly impractical, so corpses are often left exposed to the elements. In a *sky burial*, known in Tibet as *jhator*, the body of the deceased is given to the native birds as an offering. Buddhist adherents regard the body as an empty shell after death; the spirit has already moved on.


The ceremony is conducted at a nearby *durtro* (charnel ground). The investigators can view the ceremony from a discreet distance if they wish, provided they do not interfere. Any attempts to photograph the proceedings are met by hostility in the form of hurled stones. Ramsey does not attend the funeral; he is recovering in his tent from an unexpected reoccurrence of acute mountain sickness.

The Keeper should paraphrase the following:

A number of villagers have gathered in a wide circle around a flat, altar-like stone. The family members stand some distance away. As sunlight strikes the altar, the ceremony commences. Several men wearing white aprons carry a linen bundle to the stone. One opens the bundle, and a stiff body tumbles out. The men then draw curved knives from beneath their clothing and immediately begin hacking apart the body, working along the spine to remove large sections of flesh and amputating the limbs. The men show no reverence for the corpse, chatting and even laughing, though often the hard work causes them to grunt with effort. They pause only to sharpen their tools on the stones nearby.

Soon the altar stone and their aprons are spattered with blood, and vultures begin to eagerly circle overhead and alight on the ground nearby. Once the body has been fully





dismembered, one man decapitates the corpse, holds the head aloft, utters what sounds like a brief prayer, and then stoves in the skull with two hard blows. The chief butcher addresses the gathering birds, shouting “Tria...soya...tria!” At this signal the men leave the corpse for the quickly encroaching vultures.

For long moments the carrion eaters tear viciously at the body, vying noisily over choice morsels. The vultures reduce the body with frightening efficiency, their smooth heads darting into the body cavity in unison. Occasionally one of the buff-chested birds glares at the investigators with piercing brown eyes.

When the vultures have dispersed, the men return to the torn, skeletal remains. Now they draw out mallets and pound the bones into powder, mixing them with what appears to be flour. They then withdraw again, as now hawks and crows arrive to eat. Soon virtually nothing remains. The family members, heads bowed, walk slowly away and the other villagers quietly begin to disperse.

Any non-Tibetan viewing a *sky burial* in full for the first time automatically loses 1 SAN.

An investigator might well be justifiably distracted by the proceedings, but at the height of the ceremony allow all of the investigators present a **Spot Hidden** roll (-5%). Those making this roll notice a misty form appear behind the shaman, and then drift through the air to assume a position nearby the deceased’s family members. Shortly thereafter, it disappears. (Neither the shaman nor the villagers note seeing anything unusual if asked.)

Read or paraphrase the following:

The distraught family members remain at a distance, silently watching the proceedings. Behind them, you catch a glimpse of something unusual, a man-like shape that hovers and wavers as if made of smoke. You perceive two red eyes in the mist before the air wavers and, just as suddenly, there is nothing there.

The misty form is the *tulpa*. Attracted by the varied emotions here, it first materialized behind the shaman and was then tempted by the strong emotions of the family members (some of whom still dwell upon the mysterious attack). It longed to attack, but the number of individuals present caused it to refrain. It will later find easier game – in the form of the restless Dr. Ramsey.

A Bizarre Attack

As the ceremony draws to a close, most of the vultures have departed except for a few stragglers. Before the investigators leave, three vultures break off from the rest and inexplicably attack!

Paraphrase the following:

Three blood-speckled vultures swoop back down, their tan bodies barely distinguishable from the mountains behind them. Instead of landing near the offering stone they fly directly at you, talons outstretched!

The emanations from the gate-in-progress are slowly driving the local animals to madness, and these vultures have succumbed to the *mandala*’s power. The vultures surround and attack the investigator with the smallest **SIZ** score (in case of ties select the weakest-appearing character). Any bird struck for damage retreats, and a loud noise – such as a gunshot – drives them all away.

The Keeper should make the lingering birds appear threatening – crows seem to stare malignly at the investigators, vultures continue to circle menacingly overhead, etc. A successful **Natural History** (+15%) or **Know** roll verifies that the vulture attack is abnormal, and the locals have never seen anything like it (overeager vultures rushing a corpse is the worst that they have experienced). Make the investigators paranoid about any animals in the area.

If the investigators choose not to attend the *sky burial*, they might hear later of an odd incident: a villager who had his eyes inexplicably pecked out by crows and was subsequently torn apart by vultures in front of the helpless gathering.

Griffin Vulture, *Gyps Fulvus*

STR	CON	SIZ	POW	DEX
16	10	14	12	19

Move: 5/12 flying

Damage bonus: +1D4

Hit points: 12 each

Attacks: Bite 45%, 1D6; Claw 40%, 1D6+1D4

Armor: 2-point feathers

Scene 6 – Shukpa Monastery

The Shukpa monastery is a half a mile north of the village and is reached by a narrow trail that angles upward steeply from the main road. The site consists of a main hall surrounded by humbler dwellings in which most of the monks sleep. The area around the buildings, in defiance of the largely barren landscape hereabouts, contains giant junipers and clumps of rhododendron. Part of the monastery extends into the mountainside itself, and the monks have plans to expand.

The Gelug denomination of Tibetan Buddhism is practiced here. The focus of study in the monastery is on logic and philosophy. The monks typically wear simple red robes and keep their heads shaved. On certain occasions ceremonial headgear is worn by the geluggpas, but otherwise their heads remain bare except in truly frigid conditions (when a wool toque is worn).



The Lama

Yeshe Thubten speaks some English and can converse with investigators directly, if haltingly. Curious investigators are invited to spend a night at Shukpa if they like.

If asked about the empty tasha (see below), Yeshe states that a monk left the monastery some months ago. A successful **Psychology** roll reveals that Yeshe is hiding something, but if pressed he says only it was time for the monk to depart.

If the lama is questioned about tulpas or the weird events surrounding the village, he offers no answers, but he mutters the name “Rinzen” under his breath (allow all present a **Listen** roll to discern this). If the party questions the name, he states that the monk Rinzen Zopa might know of such things, as he knows many things that are hidden to most, but he has long ago chosen to enter permanent seclusion. A successful **Persuade** roll convinces the lama to allow a single party member to speak with Rinzen. He explains that the anchorite has chosen a life of extreme solitude and strict meditation; once a day monks deliver food and water to him, but he rarely speaks. The lama does not know if he will respond to inquiries (see **The Immured Anchorite**).

Yeshe Thubten, Lama

STR	CON	SIZ	INT	POW
14	15	9	16	18
DEX	APP	EDU	SAN	HP
14	12	17	90	12

Damage Bonus: –

Weapon: grapple 25%, Special


Skills: Art (Thangka painting) 64%, Dodge 58%, First Aid 45%, History 60%, Library Use 68%, Martial Arts (Boabom) 46%, Occult 41%, Other Language (Mandarin) 61%, Other Language (English) 54%, Persuade 72%, Psychology 75%

Physical Description: Yeshe is 60, but physically, he is as fit as a 40-year-old man. He is thin, but muscular, and his true age shows only in his heavily creased face and fathomless eyes. He typically wears red robes over a yellow undercoat. In the unlikely event that he is attacked, Yeshe, who abhors violence, will defend himself against his attacker with a pin or a hold, using his martial arts skill.

Area 6-1 – Courtyard

Read or paraphrase the following:

You have entered a courtyard of frozen earth. To your left stands a line of huge brass prayer wheels mounted vertically on thick posts. The main building lies ahead seemingly nestled into the mountainside with several small dwellings to its left.



Occasionally monks pass through the courtyard as they walk to and from the main hall; otherwise the courtyard is largely quiet when the investigators arrive. The investigators are welcome to spin the prayer wheels, but turning them counter-clockwise is frowned upon at the monastery and will draw the ire of any monks witnessing this. The structures to the left of the main building are the domiciles of the lama and the monastery's other two highest-ranking monks.

Area 6-2 – Du-khang (Prayer Hall)

Read or paraphrase the following:

This rectangular, pillared hall is adorned with many murals of varied deities, Buddhas, flowers, revered lamas, and decorative shapes of all kinds. Rows of butter lamps along the floor give off an orange glow that illuminates scroll paintings and alights on large silver reliquaries. Long tables fill much of the room, between which lie colorful rugs. At the right-hand side of the chamber are several raised platforms with padded seats and a large gilded Buddha statue.

The urn-like reliquaries hold the mummified bodies of former senior lamas. Anyone examining the many hangings that also deciphered with Sam Avery's note should be allowed an **Idea** roll. If the roll succeeds they recognize that, despite their heterogeneity, many of the thangka paintings contain a circle with a square within a circle design (which may bring to mind Sam Avery's note).

Area 6-3 – Lha Khangs (God's Houses)

These three chambers are similar in that they contain at least one idol surrounded by butter lamps. The illumination makes the idols appear to be almost hovering in the dark recesses of these alcoves. Years of the steadily burning lamps have imparted an almost rancid smell to the air and coated all surfaces (including the floor) with a grease-like substance. Most monks come here to utter a prayer or meditate, after which they light a lamp and depart.

The west alcove holds a statue of Sonam Gyatso, the third Dalai Lama. The larger central alcove holds a Buddha statue and lama-like subservient figures. The eastern alcove holds an eight-armed Green Tara.

Area 6-4 – Kitchen And Storage

This area is typically manned by several junior monks busy preparing tea, vegetables, soup, tasma, or noodles (depending in part on local donations). There are several tables and cabinets here, all manner of utensils and containers, as well as dried yak meat.

Area 6-5 – Library

A successful **Persuade** roll made when speaking with the lama will grant a single investigator access to the monastery library, provided that a monk accompanies them. Read or paraphrase the following aloud:

This chamber contains a bewildering number of tall wooden shelves crammed with row after row of wrapped books and scrolls. Many of the boxes and scrolls appear extremely old, especially those on the uppermost shelves.

The "books" are unbound manuscript pages wrapped with cord. A diligent search here offers a chance of discovery. An hour spent searching with a successful **Library Use** check yields one ancient scroll that refers to *tulpas* and defines their general nature. The scroll states that while some *tulpas* are intentionally created, others have been formed from the troubled thoughts of a group of people.

Area 6-6 – The Dead End

Read or paraphrase the following:

The hallway turns and comes to an abrupt dead end at a wall of mortared slabs.

An **Idea** or **Spot Hidden** (+10%) roll discerns a clear difference in construction between this dead end wall and other nearby walls. A **Track** roll allows the investigator to perceive signs of foot traffic leading directly up to the brick wall.

Beyond this brick wall is the immured anchorite. Investigators making a successful **Spot Hidden** check notice that one brick at eye level is not mortared. The brick can be pulled out with some effort; disturbing this brick summons the anchorite (see **The Immured Anchorite**).

Area 6-7 – Old Storage Room


This disused storeroom is where Goba first painted the dread *mandala* in secret. When asked to leave the monastery, he tore down the scroll painting and took it with him. A **Spot Hidden** roll locates two scroll fragments still attached to the wall, and a **Track** roll reveals two differing sets of footprints and the outline of a body in the dust (where Avery fell comatose).

Area 6-8 – Storage Rooms

These rooms are for the storage of foodstuffs, tea, clothing, furniture, craftworks, etc.

Area 6-8 – Tashas

These simple, low-roofed dwellings are where the majority of the monks sleep. Most are spartan affairs nearly bare of trappings, except for an occasional rug or bookshelf. An **Idea** roll reveals that one tasha is empty. This was Go-



ba's previous residence and it is also, ironically, the tasha offered to the investigators if they decide to spend the night at Shukpa. It is completely bare of furniture.

Monastery Life: Any adventurer wishing to spend the night gets a brief glimpse of monastery life. At the break of dawn, two young monks wearing ornate yellow head coverings clamber onto the flat roof of the assembly hall and blow into conch shells. Each draws breath as the other blows, creating a long, unbroken sound that wafts over the monastery. At this sonorous signal, the other monks swiftly emerge from their nearby *tashas* and enter the hall, carefully leaving their felt boots outside of the threshold.

Once inside, the monks swiftly take their places, seating themselves cross-legged behind the long tables. The younger novices sit at the end, nearest the door, and here space is made for the investigators as needed. The lama assumes a position with two other seniors on a raised platform near the Buddha statues to the west. To the northeast sits the sharp-eyed *chöstimpa*, the monk who enforces discipline within the gumpa. Next to the *chöstimpa's* tall chair lean a rod and a hide whip with knotted thongs.

The series of guided meditations is punctuated with the ringing of deep-sounding bells and the occasional wail of a winded *gyaling* (an instrument resembling a hautboy or oboe).

If the investigators fail to show respect for the hall by speaking or gesturing, the *chöstimpa* allows them a grave stare in warning, because they are visitors (allow each guilty investigator a **Spot Hidden** roll to notice this). Any further transgressions, however, and the *chöstimpa* swiftly leaps down from his seat and strides imperiously across the floor, whip in hand. The guilty are expected to prostrate themselves and await punishment, and the *chöstimpa* seizes those lagging by the neck and hurls them to the floor. He administers several lashes to each guilty party member (inflicting 1D3 damage). Attempts to resist punishment rouse the ire of all monks present, though the investigators can beat a hasty retreat from the monastery with a single **Fast Talk** roll or individual **Dodge** rolls (after which they are unwelcome).

After several hours, junior monks emerge from the nearby kitchen with wooden buckets of steaming tea, flavored with butter and salt in the Tibetan manner. The disciples draw out small bowls from their vests to receive it. A junior monk fetches bowls for investigators. After this, the juniors distribute a pat of butter and tsampa flour made from roasted barley) to each person present to eat. The food provided varies day to day, but recent donations have been generous. The monks remain in the assembly hall until the afternoon, after which many depart to perform menial tasks or meditate elsewhere.

The Immured Anchorite

Rinzen Zopa is a so-called immured anchorite. By his own request, he has been effectively sealed into a windowless alcove in the monastery for life, to better meditate and reach a higher state of awareness. The alcove has but a single opening through which he receives a daily ration of food and speaks to others. Rinzen has been sealed in the alcove for nearly 30 years.

Show the players **Handout D**, then read or paraphrase the following aloud to the players:

A wizened monk beckons you forward with an odd wrist shake, leading you down several dusty corridors lit only by the occasional flickering butter lamp. You pass barely illuminated alcoves containing Buddha statues or ancient thangka paintings. After a sharp turn, the corridor ends abruptly at a bricked wall. The monk raps several times on the wall. After a moment of silence, one of the bricks high up on the wall slowly moves aside with a low grinding sound. There is another pause, and then a pale hand with dirt-caked nails appears, feeling feebly along the opening.

Viewing the hand and coming to the realization that a man is permanently walled up in this small alcove necessitates a **Sanity** roll (0/1 SAN).

The old monk whispers a few sentences in Tibetan, and the ghostly hand drops away. The monk places a piece of bread and a large wooden cup filled with water on the floor by your feet. He then addresses you.

"He will speak to you now. Be brief, for his strength is failing. Then leave him the bread and water, and depart."

The monk turns on his heel and silently departs.

The anchorite will answer polite questions put forth in Tibetan. His voice is a barely audible, halting whisper. He answers only five questions, his voice growing fainter with each answer, after which he falls silent. The following are answers given to possible questions:

What happened to Sam Avery?

"I cannot say, but I sensed his distress."

What is causing the odd happenings in the village?

"I sense a gateway is opening. It is not a gateway to higher enlightenment, but to another, more dangerous place. Something on the other side hungers."

What attacked the villagers?

"Describe what has been seen." This request does not count as a question answered. If the investigators describe the *tulpa*: "It could be an angry spirit; or a *tulpa*."



What is a tulpa?

“It is thought given form, given life by directed will or unconscious thought. It is drawn to strong emotions. If not carefully controlled, it will grow ever stronger and more malevolent with each passing day.”

How can we defeat a tulpa?

“If purposefully created, only the creator can dismiss it. Such a *tulpa* can, however, be redirected. If created by unconscious group thought, destroying the trigger of those thoughts will dismiss the *tulpa*.”

Redirected how?

“Through force of will. Filling one’s mind with a single subject might arouse a *tulpa*’s interest in that subject. Your concentration must be unbroken or it will sense your weakness and turn on you.”

What is causing the weird dreams the villagers/we are experiencing?

“They/you glimpsed what lies in the dark realm beyond. The wall between the realms grows ever thinner. Can you not feel it?”

What could have caused this gateway/tulpa?

“I do not know. But I have heard of special *mandalas* that can serve as gateways between worlds. Only truly dedicated monks can create them, and they are most dangerous.”

What do you know of Dorje Goba?

“His dedication was strong, but his focus recklessly applied. I had always feared his impatience would be his downfall. I sense he has made contact with an entity beyond our realm, and weakened the wall between worlds.”

If offered the provisions, the anchorite pulls them into the alcove and a moment later the brick is pushed back to fill the opening. The anchorite does not respond to further summoning that day.

Scene 7 – Deaths In The Night

The second morning after the investigators arrive at the village, Doctor Ramsey does not appear. The absence of the always-punctual Ramsey is conspicuous. No one in the party has seen him. Eventually, his battered corpse is discovered in his private tent.

Ramsey’s body is supine, one arm slung across his face as if to block the sight of something. Beneath his arm, his eyes are wide open in seeming terror. His other arm has been torn off at the shoulder and can be found at the opposite side of his tent. A successful **Medicine** roll determines that rigor

has not yet set in and many of his ribs are broken. Oddly, his tent is not torn. When the investigators first arrive, the tent is tied off from the inside. Nothing of value has been taken from the tent, though his items are thrown about and spattered with blood. Anyone discovering Ramsey’s broken body loses 1/1D4+1 SAN.

Doctor Ramsey was a victim of the *tulpa*. His thoughts as he tossed sleeplessly mixed anger, fear, and pride with more intellectual questions, and the resulting blend of thoughts was too tempting for the *tulpa* to resist.

Returning To The Shaman’s Hut

The bön shaman fell victim to the *tulpa* on the same night as Ramsey. If the investigators choose to visit the shaman’s hut after this takes place, read or paraphrase the following aloud:

The door to the shaman’s hut bangs loosely in the wind. The place is eerily silent.

If they enter:

The interior of the hut is a shambles. A table has been overturned and the floor is littered with broken pottery and scattered charms. The fire is cold, and some ash lies spilled about. A man lies facedown on the floor.

The man lying here is the shaman, dead of numerous broken bones and contusions. He stood his ground when the *tulpa* appeared, and survived only long enough to get a sense of its origin. His jawbone has been savagely torn off, and lies half buried in the cold ashes of the fire (SAN loss 1/1D4+1). A **Spot Hidden** roll reveals that one of his fingertips is covered in blood, though it does not seem to be cut. Allow characters searching the place a **Spot Hidden** roll to discover a message clumsily written in blood on

the lower part of a wall: དབྱིལ་འཁོར། (“*mandala*” in Tibetan)

and below that འཆརས (“place of uneasiness”). Show the players **Handout E**. The “place” refers to the abandoned house north of the monastery. Successful **Other Language (Tibetan)** and **Know** rolls determine that “place of uneasiness” can refer to an abandoned house, and any villagers can identify the two residences northeast of the monastery as such places.



Scene 8 – Goba’s Residence And The *Mandala*

Goba’s current residence lies north of the village, a short distance up the road from the monastery. Read or paraphrase the following:

Two buildings are here, approximately 100 yards from the trail. These residential structures look to be in very poor repair. Debris has accumulated against their lower floor, and from the roofs drying poles hang askew and disused.

A successful **Spot Hidden** roll discerns a thin plume of smoke coming from one structure (or at night, the dim glow of a fire). These residences were abandoned after the former owners died of disease, but a month ago Dorje Goba took up residence in the northernmost house. The other house stands empty.

Area 8-1 – Storage

Read aloud or paraphrase the following:

This filthy room is littered with old wooden containers and refuse.

There is nothing here of interest.

Area 8-2 – Animal Area

Read or paraphrase the following:

This dark area stinks of animal dung and fur, beneath which lies an unknown, much viler scent. Lying about are a few disused harnesses and saddles.

A **Spot Hidden** roll detects blood here, some fresh and some old. Beneath the old straw on the floor are a number of bones. A **Biology** or **Medicine** check identifies some as pack animal bones and others as human (SAN loss 0/1).

Area 8-3 – First Living Area

Goba has pulled up the wooden ladder allowing access to the upper floor. A **Climb** check is required to reach this floor: Read or paraphrase the following aloud:

Grey smoke fills this room. Through the haze you can dimly make out a few mean sticks of furniture.

A low fire fueled by yak dung burns in this area, warming the upper floor and filling this room with a smoky haze. If the first person entering this area fails a **Spot Hidden** roll (-10%) they trip over and land next to a mutilated body (SAN loss 1/1D4+1). This corpse is missing flesh from the torso and limbs; an **Idea** roll reveals that the flesh has been gnawed off. Aside from the body, there is nothing here of interest, but a successful **Listen** roll reveals the presence of someone in the adjacent area (area 8-4).

Area 8-4 – Second Living Area

Show the players **handout F**, then read aloud or paraphrase the following:

This chamber stinks of sweat and worse. A bald Tibetan in tattered robes kneels before one wall here, dabbing a brush at the bottom of a long, intricate scroll painting.

This room has been Goba’s living quarters since he left the monastery, and he has labored here day and night on the dread *mandala*. He has torn himself away from his labors for only the occasional sip of water or morsel of food, and when his *tsampa* ran out, he killed his animals and ate them raw. Days later, weakened again from hunger, but not willing to stray far from his precious *mandala*, Goba snared a lone pilgrim and resorted to cannibalism.

If the *tulpa* has not been previously dissipated, it manifests and attacks the first investigator entering the room, then turns to the next, and the next. As the *tulpa* approaches a potential victim, paraphrase the following:

A misty form roughly the size of a man seems to emerge from the wall painting and drifts toward you. A scent of decay and corpses wafts over you. Two spots of red illumination coruscate from the mist, shining steadily with malign hunger. You can feel the thing’s growing presence in your mind, like a swarm of insects crawling through your thoughts.

A victim failing their **POW** resistance roll sees the *tulpa* transform into something terrifying as it attacks – an image from some frightening time in their life, even childhood. The *tulpa* systematically attacks each investigator present, unless rerouted or dissipated.

If any attempt is made to interrupt his work, Goba viciously attacks to kill, while grunting through clenched teeth (in Tibetan), “*The gateway... must be... completed...*”

Hanging around Goba’s neck is a silver necklace, seized from Sam Avery after the *mandala* reduced him to madness. Allow an **Idea** roll to investigators that made their **Spot Hidden** roll examining the photos in **Scene 2**; those succeeding recognize the necklace.

If the *mandala* painting is destroyed (tearing it from the wall and hurling it into the fire in the adjoining chamber is one possible method) the *tulpa* is instantly destroyed and Goba howls in pain before curling into a fetal position. The shock of the *mandala*’s destruction forever scars Goba, who is reduced to a permanent comatose state shortly afterward. Successful destruction of the *mandala* earns the investigators **2D6 Sanity** points.



Dorje Goba, Madman

STR	CON	SIZ	INT	POW	DEX	HP
13	15	10	12	15	14	14

Damage Bonus: –

Weapon: Teeth 35%, 1D4–1

Tulpa

STR 24	SIZ 14	INT 4	POW 16
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Move: 5/12 flying

Sanity loss: 1/1D6 Sanity points

Damage bonus: +1D6

Attacks: Claw 65%, 1D8+1D6

A *tulpa* can attack physically or psychically. Physical attacks come in the form of a striking, smothering, or clawing attack delivered with frightening strength. Other victims are drained of intellect, left physically unharmed but insane.

To attack psychically, match the *tulpa*'s **POW** versus the victim's **POW** on the **Resistance Table**. The victim will feel the overwhelming presence of the *tulpa* as it attempts to feed. This psychic attack calls forth fearful memories or

inherent terrors the target possesses. If the target's roll fails, he or she loses 1D4 **POW** and 1D4 **INT**.

If the target successfully resists, the *tulpa* loses 1D4 **POW** and hesitates, during which time the victim may attempt to direct or (if the *tulpa*'s creator) dismiss the *tulpa*. An individual attempting control at this point should be allowed a **POW** versus **POW** roll on the **Resistance Table** (now the former victim acts as attacker). Temporary control is limited to forcing the *tulpa* to accomplish a clearly imagined task ("Seek out and kill Dr. Jones," etc.). The controller may also purposefully dismiss the *tulpa*, causing it to dematerialize for 1D6 hours instead of performing a task. If the attempt to redirect the *tulpa* fails and the *tulpa* still has **POW**, it continues its attack. If the *tulpa* is reduced to zero **POW** at any time, it is dissipated for a number of days equal to the total **POW** lost. A *tulpa* reduced to zero **POW** by its creator is destroyed.

Tulpas are immune to most forms of physical attack, though a large explosion – such as that caused by dynamite – might disperse their essence for days. *Tulpa* destruction is achieved by various methods:

- Death of the *tulpa*'s creator (a *tulpa* always dissipates harmlessly upon its creator's death)



- Removal of the creation trigger (in the cause of unintentionally created *tulpas*)
- Focused concentration by an exceptionally skilled individual

Creating and controlling a *tulpa* is *not* accomplished via a **Mythos** spell, but rather via an act of extremely disciplined concentration (or more rarely, as in this scenario, it is a creation of *en masse* unconscious thought). If the Keeper prefers that *tulpa* creation and control be treated as actual spells he or she should certainly treat them that way. If the Keeper goes this route, it is recommended that *tulpa* magic be considered Occult magic indigenous to the Tibet region.

The Dread Mandala

The *mandala* is a huge thangka, or scroll painting, done in the venerable Kadampa style. The painting is incomplete, but what exists represents an incredibly complex series of images: a central circle within a square within a circle, surrounded by obscure images of writhing beings (some roughly identifiable as servitors of the outer gods, leng spiders, and hunting horrors by those making a **Cthulhu Mythos** check). The central circle contains a veiled image of the Thing That Lurks Beyond the Veil, a purple-cerise, starfish-shaped entity with coiled tentacles or feelers radiating out from three central eyes.

Investigators examining the mandala lose 1/1D6 SAN, gain 3 **Cthulhu Mythos** percentiles, and must immediately make a resistance roll pitting their **POW** score against a **POW** of 15. Those failing fall under the spell of the mandala and can only sit rapt before it, lost in its horrid imagery. (If pulled forcibly away by other investigators they recover their wits after 1D10 minutes.) Investigators driven temporarily insane by the aforementioned **Sanity Loss** actually attempt to help Goba complete the mandala during this time and attack anyone – including fellow investigators – attempting to foil this activity.



June 15, 1928

My dear Sir,

Your name has emerged many times in conversation with members of the Society as a learned individual with an interest in the unusual. I write to you to share a curious and rather disquieting incident you may find of interest.

The area surrounding Gijoceta, the long Tibetan village (correctly call him, is as strange to the old. I have personally witnessed incredible feats of mind over matter, including the practice of long-jump, wherein monks race for long distances with no fatigue evident. The surrounding mountains, if taken are to be believed, are home to all manner of fantastic beasts. Some of these tales are indeed just that—mere myth easily dismissed by well-travelled Westerners or men of education—but about others I draw no conclusion.

The distant Himalayas are long said to be the haunt of so-called ogres or "wild men"—bipedal creatures of average disposition. The local elders, whom I have come to trust, also tell of rarely seen entities that leave behind etched footprints and have been overheard speaking in a fearful, hoarse tongue.

Recently an incident put these myths in the forefront of my mind. There was but a single man in the vicinity of the monastery but were overcast in their return. A day later a village discovered them on the road and fled back to Gijoceta for help. Two of the men were dead, their bodies torn as if by the claws of a bear, and the other was returned but hobbled incoherently and had seemingly taken all hair of his arse. More frightening still, the surviving member of the party now had a shock of white hair, where before his hair was quite black.

The survivor has been rendered quite mad from whatever experience befell their unfortunate, and my attempts to speak to him have been for naught. The manner in which the others were torn apart disturbs me from assuming the survivor murdered his comrades—or was could affect the lives of others.

I plan to return to Shalpa tomorrow to return my studies there, and I hope to ask the learned monks again about the local legends in hope of penetrating this mystery. As a fellow student of the unusual, I would greatly appreciate your valued insight in this matter. I hope to provide the frightened locals with some answers.

Yours most sincerely,

Samuel J. Avery

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DEATH ANNOUNCEMENTS

Springfield—Famous world explorer and anthropologist Samuel J. Avery was found dead yesterday afternoon. The inquiry proceeds, but sources say his death has been ruled an accident, the apparent result of a fall or leap from his third-story bedroom window.

After a long sojourn in the wilds of Tibet, Avery had returned stateside in ill health, and after a brief stay at the Buffalo State Hospital returned to his childhood home to convalesce.

John and Sarah Avery returned home from a fundraising dinner in Hartford only to discover their son's lifeless body.



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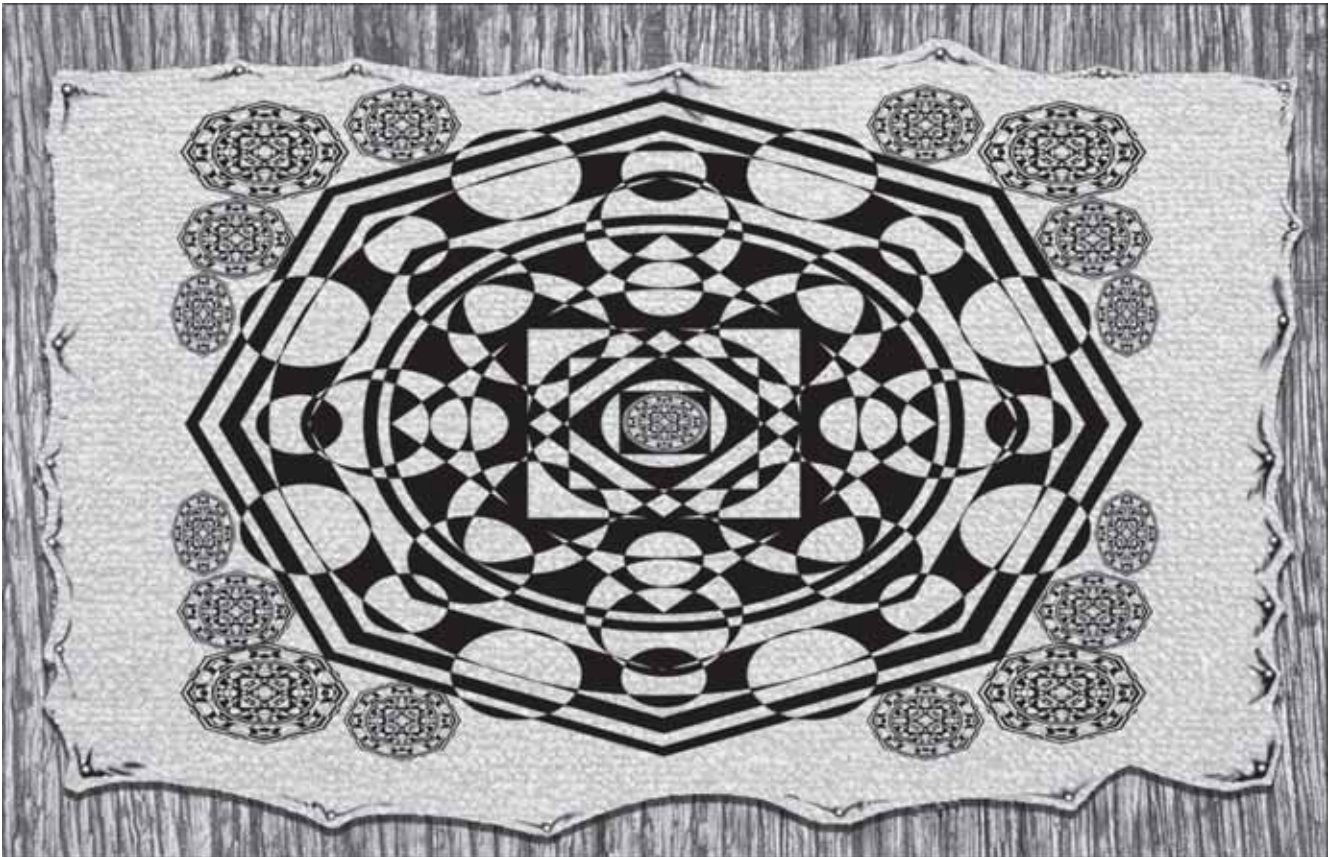
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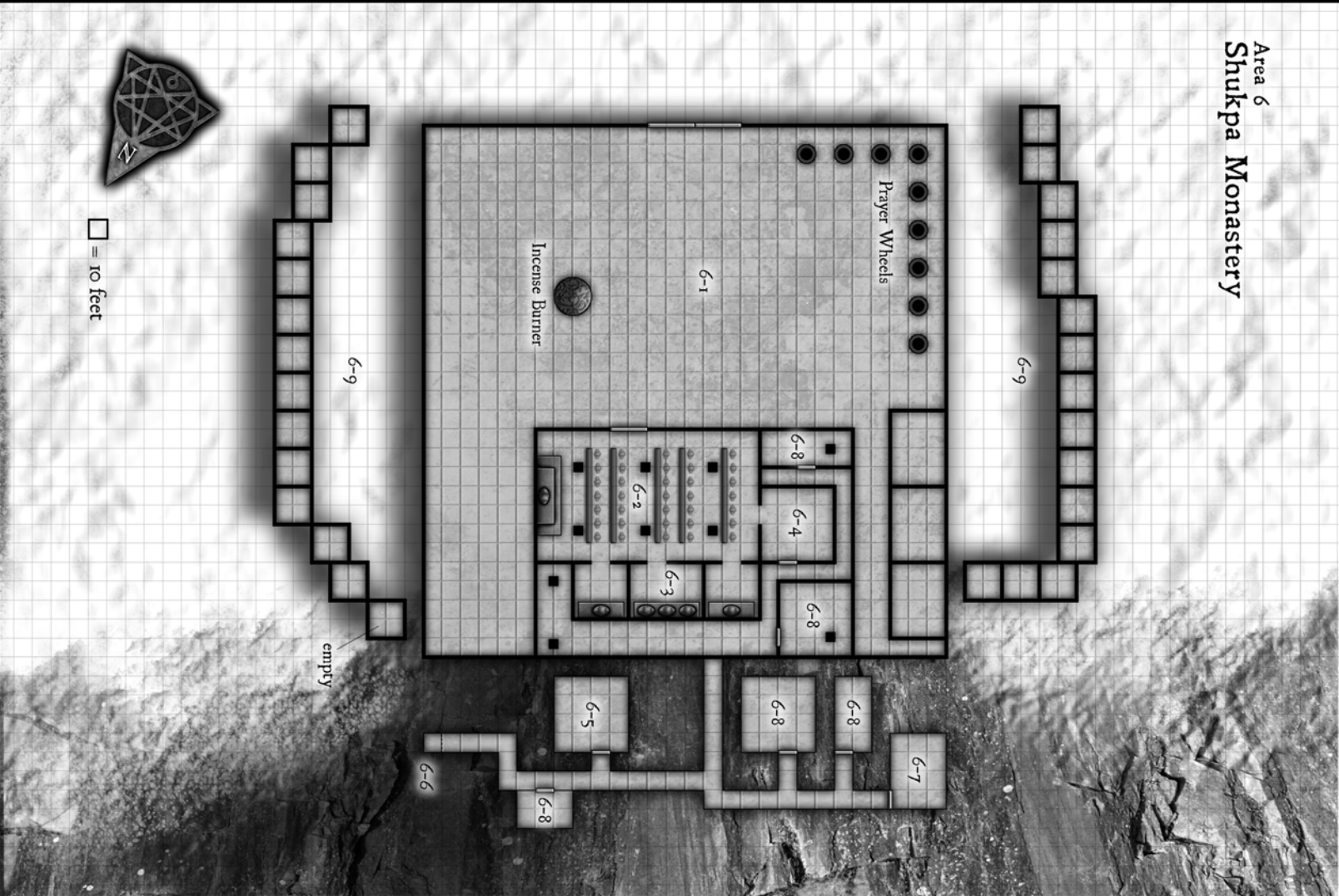
Ginjeste Village



LEGEND

- A. Shukpa Monastery
- B. Durtro
- C. Shaman's Hut
- D. Goba's Lair

Area 6 Shukpa Monastery



□ = 10 feet





Abominations Of The Amazon

By: Mike Ferguson

Keeper Information

Introduction

Centuries ago, the Inca Empire ruled over the mountains and jungles of Peru. With a culture steeped in military might, and through many amazing achievements in the arts and technology, their civilization made a mark upon the face of South America that was truly remarkable to behold. They also accumulated vast amounts of wealth to go along with their power. Mining vast amounts of gold and silver from the Andes Mountains, the Incas created treasures beyond imagination, each worth a king's ransom.

However, the Spanish conquistador Francisco Pizarro brought the might of the Incas to an end. Through treachery and brute force, the Spanish laid to waste a proud civilization all in the name of conquest and glory. Many of the treasures of the Incas also fell into the hands of the Spanish conquistadors, who melted down most of these glorious creations into bars and sailed back to Spain with them.

The most famous of the Inca treasures, though – the Treasure of the Llanganatis – was never found by the Spaniards. The Treasure of the Llanganatis was a huge sum of worked gold and other artifacts, supposedly hidden deep within the Llanganatis mountain range of Ecuador by the Inca general Rumiñahui. According to legend, the Incas moved the treasure from its home in the mountains after learning of the death of their leader, Atahualpa, at the hands of Pizarro. Many conquistadors searched for the treasure, but none ever found it.

Summer, 1927: An American explorer named Professor Duncan Edwards believes that he has found the location of the Treasure of the Llanganatis. He believes that the treasure no longer lies in the mountains, but in a strange ruin in the jungles of Peru. He summons his trusted colleagues from around the world to help him find it.

Little does he know that while he is on the right path, he has also unwittingly sealed his own doom (and perhaps that of the investigators as well). For while treasure indeed lies in the ruins, this treasure is not just the ordinary remains of stone temples and other such buildings. This is the trouble that awaits the investigators when arrive in the Peruvian city of Iquitos.

Roughly twenty-six hundred years ago, the Chavín civilization ruled over the lands that would one day become known as Peru. The Chavín worshipped a number of anthropomorphic deities, including a deity of the underworld represented by a giant anaconda. Though a few scholars believe this snake-god was called amaran – the vortex of chaos – others, more familiar with the occult and with the Great Old Ones, have another name for the creature: *Yig*.

Servants of Yig – serpent-men, who came from subterranean cities far beneath the Andes Mountains – also walked among the mortals of the Chavín. Some of them headed the temples as priests; some of them ruled over tribes of the Chavín as kings, particularly in the jungles. Though not nearly as powerful or as fearsome as the Father of Serpents, these serpent-men rules over many of the Chavin tribes as cruel despots. They demanded terrible sacrifices from their human thralls, working them to death or torturing them in sadistic rituals, usually just for their own hedonistic pleasures. Even in modern times Human/serpent-men hybrids lurk in the shadows of the more remote Peruvian villages. That such creatures still walk the earth is testimony to the monstrous cruelty of their serpentine forebears.

As with all despots though, the power of the serpent-men waned over time, and their slaves took notice. The Chavín saw that Yig had abandoned his children. During a total eclipse in the year 537 B.C., the tribes of the Chavin living in the jungles of the Amazon rose up against their tyrannical masters and in the darkness slew them.

Only a handful of the vile serpent-men managed to escape into the darkest recesses of the Amazonian jungle. Here they entered strange crypts and fell into a state of self-induced hibernation in order to avoid being slain by the Chavín. The tribes of the Chavín followed these serpent-men, and unable to kill their former masters, tried to destroy the crypts instead. Their efforts proved fruitless and so the Chavín abandoned them, leaving the crypts to be swallowed by the jungle instead.

Over the intervening centuries, the Chavín civilization crumbled and fell; giving way to other cultures and civilizations that also rose and fell, until the Incan civilization came to power around the year 1200 A.D. By that time, the crypt of the slumbering serpent-men was known to mortal man only as a place of great power, where fearsome serpent gods were to be worshipped by those seeking power.



When the conquistadors came to take the treasures of the Incans during the fall of their Empire, some of the Incans took those treasures to the crypt in order to hide them. These Incans believed that the powers of the serpent gods would be able to protect them and the treasure from the clutches of Pizarro and his soldiers.

In hiding the treasure though, the Incans inadvertently awoke one of the serpent-men – a crippled, weak servant of his more powerful elder brethren called Cyathothys. Realizing that he alone had been revived and that the humans that awoke him believed him to be a god; Cyathothys saw this as an opportunity to be more than just a servant. Calling himself “Yig,” the newly wakened serpent-man made himself the self-styled ruler of the Incas who had escaped into the jungle. Leaving his more powerful brothers to sleep in their crypt, Cyathothys ruled over the Inca survivors and their descendants for the next few centuries, enjoying both the treasures of the Incas and the decadent pleasures that his new slaves could provide for him.

This god-like existence came to an end however, with the arrival of Professor Edwards’s team. With only a handful of inbred human and human/serpent-men hybrids remaining in the ruins to serve their false god, Cyathothys proved unable to stop Edwards from fully opening the crypt. Expecting to find the legendary Treasure of the Llanganatis, Edwards and his team instead awoke the rest of the serpent-men. Angered by the humans who dared to intrude upon their slumber – as well as their craven brother Cyathothys,

who chose to let them sleep for far too long – the serpent-men unleashed centuries of their rage upon all those that they could find in the ruins that surrounded them.

Now, the risen serpent-men do more than dream, they plot. They seek to reclaim the glory that once was theirs. And the only thing standing between the serpent-men and those dreams of grandeur are a small, intrepid group of investigators, headed to the ruins at the behest of Professor Edwards, unaware of what lies in store for them once they arrive...

Investigation Summary

Abominations of the Amazon is designed as a free-form investigation, where the player characters can take several paths (indeed, even doubling back on their trail) in their quest to learn the secrets of the ruins discovered by Dr. Edwards. The adventure is organized into scenes, so that a Keeper can move easily from one to the next as necessary, without the need to adhere to a strict linear order of events.

Player Beginning, Page 52: In which the investigators arrive in Peru, and learn some disturbing news about Professor Edwards and his expedition.

Scene 1 – Into the Mouth of Serpents, Page 54: In which the investigators travel along the Amazon River and through the jungles towards the ruins, discovering along the way that some sort of supernatural evil has started to hunt them.



Scene 2 – The Ruins, Page 56: In which the investigators reach the ruins uncovered by Professor Edwards, and discover the unfortunate fate of his expedition. They also find a sinister group of natives, and a trapped, horrid beast claiming to be a fallen god.

Scene 3 – Behind The Walls Of Copper And Lead, Page 60: In which the investigators encounter the horrors lurking beneath the ruins, and learn of the secrets of the serpent-men. They also discover the Incan treasures that Professor Edwards and his expedition came searching for, leaving them with some hard choices if they wish to stop the serpent-men... or even survive.

Investigations In The Amazon Jungle: The adventure contains a mix of action and investigation, but focuses primarily on action. While the jungles of the Amazon are filled with peril, investigators can make their way through the wilderness – and to the Incan ruins that they seek – without always needing to fight. However, in some cases, the investigators may be left with only three alternatives: fight, flee, or die.

If the investigators find themselves completely at a loss as to what to do, the Keeper should allow the investigators to struggle for a brief while before assisting them with an opportune **Idea** roll. The Keeper should also feel free to utilize some of the minor NPCs presented in the various scenes (where reasonable) as either a method of kick-starting the adventure if things are headed nowhere, or as a means to provide the investigators with a little guidance.

A Note On Skills: The fifth edition of the *Call of Cthulhu* rules does not call for differentiated skill checks. In practice, all uncontested tasks are equally difficult, and it is only the character's skill that comes into question. *Abominations of the Amazon* runs against canon by noting instances in which the task attempted might be more difficult than another – comprehending a coded post-Atlantean spell for instance, as opposed to simply translating the Latin works of occult magician Johannes Trithemius. The Keeper is encouraged to disregard or employ this rule, as he sees fit.

When differentiated skill checks are listed in the text, they are followed by a percentile figure. For example, **Cthulhu Mythos (-25%)**. In this case, the investigator would reduce his chance of success by 25%, making it a challenging task indeed! In some instances, the skill is followed by a bonus, for example, **Archaeology (+10%)**, in which case the character would increase his skill by 10%, increasing his odds of success.

In some instances, a skill chance might be elevated above 100%, or reduced to less than 0%. If the skill check

is important to the game, the investigator should still make the attempt, given that rolls of 01% or 100% are always a success or a failure, respectively.

Player Beginning

Before the adventure begins, ask each player to describe his or her background and relationship with either Professor Duncan Edwards, or with the Treasure of the Llanganatis. Sample stories are provided with the pregenerated characters. If using original characters, the following reasons are suggested as to why the investigators would be headed to Peru, and to the wilds of the Amazon. Use whatever reason seems most appropriate for each investigator.

We're Here For The Fortune: The Treasure of the Llanganatis, long lost to civilization, is thought to be one of the greatest treasures known to the Incan Empire. Scholars estimate that the Treasure contains anywhere from seven to seven hundred tons of gold – and that does not even include the jeweled, ornate works of art thought to be part of that treasure. Whoever finds the Treasure of the Llanganatis would become wealthy beyond all imagination... assuming one lived long enough to enjoy that wealth, of course.


We're Here For Professor Edwards: Personal friends or acquaintances of Professor Edwards would initially have a vested interest in seeing their scholarly colleague find the Treasure, something for which the determined old man has been searching for a lifetime. The opportunity to assist Edwards with this once-in-a-lifetime opportunity would simply be too tempting to turn down, even if it means travelling half a world away from the comforts of home.

The adventure begins with the investigators arriving in Iquitos via train from Lima (and, prior to that, aboard steamship from New York City and through the Panama Canal, if the investigators hail from the United States). To begin the adventure, read or paraphrase the following:

Your journey to Peru has been long and grueling. The voyage from New York City to the ports of Callao took nearly two months and was plagued with problems – unsurprising perhaps, since your steamship – the Crofton Hall – is often called the “Often Crawl” by its crew. And while the journey by rail to Lima and Yurimaguas has taken days, not months, it felt long as well ... as did the final journey by boat to the city of Iquitos, and the rainforests of Peru. However, at last you have arrived, and your adventure can truly begin.

Now you are heading to a local hotel, expecting to meet up with Professor Edwards and the rest of his expedition there this evening. Professor Edwards arrived in Peru several months before you, leading an advance scouting party to some ruins where he believed that he would find the lost





Treasure of the Llanganatis. The letters that you received from him indicated his excitement, as he felt that he was close to making an important discovery, enough so that you decided to come join him in Peru.

As you look around for someone – a bellhop perhaps, to take your bags – a grizzled-looking man in an ill-fitting suit steps out of the shadows and approaches you. He seems nervous, and avoids looking directly at any of you.

“You... friends of Doctor Edwards, no?” the man says in an accented, quavering voice. When you nod, he shuffles around for a moment, and then produces an envelope from inside his jacket. “For you, then.”

At this point, give the players **Handouts A & B**. Both provide some information about Professor Edwards and his expedition, and where they have gone. **Handout A** is a note from Edwards explaining how he found the exact location of the Treasure of the Llanganatis. The note also explains that he and the members of his expedition already in Peru decided to head immediately to the treasure site, and that the investigators should meet him there. **Handout B** is a map showing how to get from Iquitos to the treasure site – first by boat, then by trekking through the jungle. It also contains a few odd scribbles along the margins, referencing snakes, snake people, and serpent-gods.

If given the opportunity (for example, if the investigators choose to immediately pore over the two documents contained in the envelope), the man in the tattered suit attempts to slink away unnoticed from the investigators and leave the hotel. If unsuccessful (and if corralled by the investigators), the man reluctantly answers any questions asked of him, if he can answer them.

The man’s name is Esteban Rojo. He is the younger brother of Ramón, who is the guide mentioned in **Handout A**. Though Esteban appears as though he might have something to hide, he does not – he just wants to get away from the investigators as fast as possible, as he has no desire to accompany them or his brother to the ruins. Esteban does not specifically know what has happened at the ruins, nor does he know about the serpent-men lurking there.

If questioned by the investigators, here are some of the answers that he provides, albeit reluctantly and with a great deal of stammering:

Where Did You Think You Were Going? “Away from here. My brother thinks I should go with you to the ruins in the jungle. Little but bad luck will be found there, I fear.”

Why Do You Think That? “Some of the expedition was supposed to return a week ago, maybe two. No one’s come back yet. Ramón says it’s because they found something important, but I don’t believe him.”

Have You Been To The Ruins? “No. Not many people have. The journey to it is supposed to be difficult. Legends say that worshippers of the snake gods once lived there, and all sorts of unholy serpents and other creatures of the jungle guard it from men.”

What Do You Know About These Worshippers, Or About “Snake People”? “Not much. Most of what I know comes from legends – they disappeared long ago into the jungles to escape the conquistadors.”

Esteban does not know much else, apart from that he has “a very bad feeling” about what has happened to Professor Edwards’s expedition. After being interrogated by the investigators though, he agrees to take them to see his brother Ramón in the morning, and to accompany them on their journey to the ruins. If he manages to escape from the investigators without being noticed, then it is Ramón who shows up at the hotel in the morning and introduces himself, and then offers to take the investigators to his boat.

Ramón Rojo

STR	CON	SIZ	INT	POW	DEX	HP
14	13	15	12	11	09	14

Damage Bonus: +1D4

Weapons: .38 Revolver 50%, damage 1D10; Machete 40%, damage 1D6 + db; Grapple 30%, damage special.

Skills: Pilot Boat 60%, Hide 45%, Listen 30%, Sneak 40%, Spot Hidden 30%, Track 50%

Esteban Rojo

STR	CON	SIZ	INT	POW	DEX	HP
10	12	13	10	15	08	13

Damage Bonus: 0

Weapons: .30 Lever-Action Carbine 50%, damage 2D6.

Skills: Hide 60%, Listen 25%, Sneak 50%, Spot Hidden 25%.

Regardless of how or where the investigators eventually meet Ramón, read or paraphrase the following once they finally reach his boat:

As you head to the docks of Iquitos, you begin to wonder why you agreed to this mad journey. The boat before you appears old and rickety, and black smoke pours forth from its rumbling steam engine. A tall, lean man with a mustache appears to be inspecting the hull of the boat, but he stops and grins when he sees you.

“Friends of Professor Edwards are friends of mine,” he says as he approaches you. “It is good to finally meet you. I’m Ramón – hopefully you read Professor Edwards’s letter.

I'll be taking you to see him at the... the site. I think you'll be pleased by what he's found."

"The ship will be ready to go by late this afternoon – just a few last minutes patches to make, I think. After that, we can get underway!"

Should the investigators decide to converse with Ramón while he works (or even try to help him), he offers the following pieces of information, at the Keeper's discretion:

- Professor Edwards headed off to the ruins little less than a month ago, along with a half-dozen Peruvian workers and three colleagues (Viola Daniels, a journalist; Malcolm Baxter, an archaeologist; and Harold Lockwood, a renowned photographer).
- Ramón confirms that Professor Edwards and his group should have returned a week earlier, but unlike his brother, is not worried about the delay. He is convinced that the Professor made his discovery (Ramón knows about the Treasure of the Llan-ganatis) and that is the real reason for the delay.

In addition to this general information, the Keeper should feel free to impart any additional knowledge from the **Introduction** or **Keeper Information** sections to the investigators, if it helps move the story forward in the manner that works best for his play style and his players.

From there, let the adventure begin!

Scene 1 – Into The Mouth Of Serpents

The journey from Iquitos to the ruins takes a few days. Half of the journey takes place on the Amazon River. After that, Ramón docks the boat in a secluded area and leads the investigators on a winding trail through the jungle to the ruins. The two major areas detailed in this scene are a chase along the river, and an encounter along the jungle path to the ruins. At the Keeper's discretion, more areas can be added in to provide the investigators with more background information or additional mysteries.

Area 1-1 – The Chase:

Read or paraphrase the following:

You have been heading up the mighty river known as the Amazon for several hours. Your boat, though appearing old and battered, has made surprisingly good time through the deep waters, and has held up far better than you would've initially suspected. It seems that you may be meeting up with Professor Edwards and the rest of his expedition sooner than you thought.

Suddenly, you hear the distinct crack of gunfire, and a bullet whizzes over your heads! Looking behind you, you see




a smaller, faster boat headed your way. Three angry men armed with rifles are in the front of the boat, and they seem grimly intent on murder. You also see another man in the back of the boat, standing behind the wheel, steering the craft in your direction.

"Hang on," says Ramón. He pushes open the throttle of the boat, and it begins to accelerate. "I think I can outrun them."

The men in the boat are human/serpent-men hybrids, sent to Iquitos to eliminate any of Professor Edwards's associates. They are the descendants of the original Chavin natives and the original serpent-men that live in the ruins sought by Professor Edwards. They mostly resemble typical humans, except that they have mottled green patches of scales on their forearms. Because of their disturbing appearance, the investigators should make a **Sanity** check upon seeing them up close (**Sanity** loss 0/1D3).

The hybrids missed the investigators in Iquitos, but now plan to take care of their deadly business on the waters of the Amazon. If the investigators tell Ramón to stop the boat so they can talk with their pursuers, they face a difficult task in talking their way out of the situation. The hybrids are bloodthirsty creatures, and have no problems killing the investigators even if they had nothing to do with Profes-



sor Edwards's expedition. A **Fast Talk (-10%)** roll might work, but only if the investigators convince the hybrids that more of the expedition still remains in Iquitos, or are headed elsewhere. If convinced of this, the hybrids demand that at least one of the investigators accompany them in search of this imaginary part of the expedition. If this ploy fails, the hybrids attack.

Parleying with the hybrids may also provide the investigators with some clues about the presence of the serpent-men at the ruins, as well as confirming that Professor Edwards and his team are in serious trouble, if the Keeper wishes to provide that information.

If the investigators decide to let Ramón try to outrun their pursuers, they immediately discover a problem – the hybrids' boat is faster than theirs. The investigators' boat moves at 30 miles per hour; the hybrids' boat moves at 50 miles per hour. (This speed is factored more for simplicity in possible grid-based combat than for historical accuracy, as noted below.) The investigators can increase the speed of their boat to 40 miles per hour by tossing crates and other cargo overboard (which takes approximately 1 minute of time), and to 50 miles an hour if one of the crew or passengers jumps (or is tossed) overboard. If more than one passenger or member of the crew is thrown overboard, then the investigators' boat will have enough speed to outrun their attackers.

For purposes of the chase, if the Keeper wishes to map things out precisely, it should be assumed that the river is roughly 100 feet wide and 20 feet deep at any given point, and that both of the boats are 15 feet wide and 30 feet long. Assume that if a grid-based map is being used, the investigators' boat moves 6 squares per combat round when fully loaded, and the hybrids' boat moves 10 squares. Tossing cargo overboard gives the investigators' boat a move of 8 squares, and throwing people overboard after that gives it a move of 10 squares or more. (This might not be purely accurate in terms of history or physics, but is meant to be simplified in order to keep the chase moving quickly, so to speak.)

If the investigators on the boat attempt to hide and do nothing else, the hybrids shooting at them take a -10% penalty to their attack rolls. If the investigators shoot back or pilot the boat, the hybrids face no penalty.

If an investigator pilots the boat because Ramón attacks the hybrids, or because Ramón is killed, allow him to do so with a **Drive Auto (-10%)** roll, or **Pilot Boat** roll without any penalty. If the Keeper really wants to make things interesting, he can place objects in the river such as large rocks, or other similar-sized obstacles. Assume that if the investigators' boat collides with any object (including the other boat) it takes enough damage to sink in a few minutes.

Any investigator that wishes to leap from ship to ship can do so when the boats come within 10 feet of each other (**Jump** roll). If the roll fails, the falling investigator can either swim to shore (**Swim** roll) or climb back aboard one of the boats, if he is close enough (**Swim** roll, followed by a **Climb** roll at -10%).

Clues: Should the investigators capture one of the hybrids, they will be unable to gather much information from them – the creatures are fanatically loyal to their serpent-men masters and will attempt to kill themselves rather than betray their masters. However, if the investigators manage to engage any of them in conversation, they may learn the following items in conjunction with a successful **Fast Talk** roll: that some sort of serpent creatures live at the ruins; that those serpent creatures captured Professor Edwards and his expedition; and that in the new few days, the serpent creatures intend to kill their human captives.

4 Human/Serpent-Men Hybrids

STR	CON	SIZ	INT	POW	DEX	HP
14	14	10	10	12	12	12

Move: 6

Skills: Swim 75%, Climb 75%

Damage Bonus: +0

Damage: Fist 60%, damage 1D4 + db; Grapple 30%, damage special.

Weapons: .30 Carbine 45%, damage 2D6, range 50 yds.

Skills: Dodge 40%, Jump 65%, Pilot Boat 50%.

Sanity Loss: 0/1D3 Sanity points to see a hybrid.


Area 1-2 – Secrets of the Snakes:

Read or paraphrase the following:

You've been walking along the jungle path for hours. The path is narrow, twisting, and dark – often, you see nothing but leaves and tree branches just inches in front of your face. You know that without a guide, it would be easy to become lost in the jungle wilderness. As dangerous as the waters of the Amazon River proved to be, you feel as though you may have been safer there. At least on the river, you could see where danger was coming from.

Slightly up ahead of you, you suddenly hear Ramón cry out. "¡Dios mío!" he exclaims. "I fear he is dead!"

As you take a few steps closer, you see your guide standing over the remains of a man clad in bloodstained khakis. A camera and a torn backpack lie to the side of the man's body, and one of his hands is badly mangled. The dead man



clutches something wrapped in silver chains tight in his other hand, and seems desperate to keep hold of it, even in death.

The dead man is Harold Lockwood, a photographer who was part of Professor Edwards's expedition team – if there, Ramón identifies him as such. The hybrids living at the ruins attacked Lockwood when he tried to escape. Though he managed to escape their clutches and make his way back to the jungle, their attacks – and those of the creature known as the minhocão (see **Area 2-4**) – proved fatal.

Clues: None of Lockwood's standard possessions prove to be of much interest, save perhaps for the camera, and two cryptic notes. In the unlikely event that any of the investigators have the means to develop film, they find (**Photography** roll) that Lockwood took photos of the ruins, the treasure... and of serpent-men.

It is more likely that the investigators will only be able to read the two notes. The first details the contents of his film. The note reads: "*Rolls 1-5: River journey, Rolls 6-7: Jungle trek, Rolls 8-13: Outer ruins – evidence of natives? Rolls 14-17: Pyramid, Rolls 18-19: Treasure!!! YES!, Roll 20: Are the Gods real*" ...and then the lower part of the paper is torn away. The second note, which the investigators see is written in Professor Edwards's handwriting, only cryptically states:

“ONLY THE DREAMS CAN SAVE US.”

The silver chain in Lockwood's hand was part of the lost treasure. Should the investigators pry his hand open, they see that a small pendant in the shape of three intertwined snakes. A successful **History** or **Archaeology** roll means that the investigators recognize the pendant as being made by the ancient Incans; a successful **Occult** roll means that the investigators recognize the pendant as being a symbol of prophecy or dreams. Lockwood also holds in his hand a small vial filled with a blue liquid; investigators making a successful **Chemistry, Medicine, or Pharmacy (-10%)** roll recognize it as a local concoction said by natives to promote healing or sleep, while those making an **Occult** roll (-10%) know that it is used to induce prophetic visions. Those who make successful **Occult** rolls for both the pendant and the vial know that the two are meant to be used together. The vial contains enough for 3 full doses.

If one or more of the investigators imbibes the contents of the vial but does not wear the chain and pendant while doing so, they start to wildly hallucinate. They see their flesh rip open, and then dozens of writhing snakes pour out of their bodies. Have these investigators make a **Sanity** check (1/1D6) after this initial vision. An investigator wearing the pendant while imbibing the liquid does not have this initial vision.

After that, any investigators that drank the liquid will enter a trance-like state, where they see possible visions of the future. The visions are of a pyramid, and of Professor Edwards and the remaining members of the expedition being menaced by shadowy serpent-men. They see themselves there, rescuing the expedition, and the pyramid blowing up in a fiery explosion. The vision lasts about five minutes.

When they wake up from the trance, they instinctively know that if they turn back to Iquitos, Edwards and his expedition are doomed, and that their only chance for survival is if the investigators head immediately to the ruins rescue them – there is no time to return to Iquitos for help. In addition, if any of the investigators that drank the liquid are injured, they will heal 1D6 hit points.

Wrapping Up Scene 1: After the events of **Scene 1**, the investigators should be headed on their way to the ruins to the nightmares that await them there. Depending on how the events of **Scene 1** unfolded, they should at a minimum know about the serpent-men lurking there, and possibly know that a pyramid awaits them, as well as a big explosion.


Scene 2 – The Forgotten Ruins

Scene 2 takes place at the ruins where Incan natives brought the Treasure of the Llanganatis centuries ago, and where the serpent-men have slumbered for aeons. The recent awakening of the serpent-men scared off most of the human natives (and some of the hybrids) who had been living at the ruins, ruled by the degenerate serpent-man Cyathothys, whom they believed to be Yig. Only a handful of the natives remain, and these people live in utter fear of the newly-awakened serpent-men. They do the bidding of the serpent-men, but to a man they are desperate individuals who believe that Yig has either abandoned them or is testing them, and will do whatever they believe necessary to restore order to the ruins.

Scene Summary: The investigators arrive at the ruins, searching for Professor Edwards's expedition, and hoping to possibly rescue them. They encounter the denizens of the ruins – some vaguely human, some not – and have the opportunity to save some members of the expedition. They also learn the location of the Treasure of the Llanganatis, and where Professor Edwards is being held captive. Depending on what the investigators learned in **Scene 1**, the investigators will either be surprised by what they find, or be able to get the drop on their foes.

Area 2-1 – The Cleansing Pool:

Read or paraphrase the following when the investigators approach this area:



You see before you a giant pool of foul-smelling, stagnant water, rectangular in shape and presumably man-made. The pool is shielded from the sky and the elements by a stone roof, supported by many columns. However, parts of this roof have crumbled away, and moss and vines cover much of the remaining structure. At the far end of the pool, you faintly make out the shape of a dais, and the remains of a broken statue sitting upon it.

Close to the statue, you see the shadowy figures of two men with rifles. You can hear them speaking to one another in hushed voices, although you're not sure what they're saying. The men stand over someone – or something – that's bound and tied, and appears to be squirming. One of the men kicks the bound figure, and it squirms a little less.

The “two men” are actually hybrids that are loyal to the serpent-men in **Scene 3**. The person that is bound and gagged is Malcolm Baxter, another member of Edwards's expedition. The hybrids guarding Baxter were told to watch the prisoner until their masters needed him in their lair.

Until recently, another member of the expedition – Viola Daniels – was being held with Baxter. Some hybrids less loyal to the recently-awoken serpent-men took her away under false pretenses, though (see **Area 2-3** for details). Neither Baxter nor the hybrids guarding him know the reasons for her being taken, but they know that she has been taken to a place of sacrifice.

The hybrids are not expecting intruders, so if the investigators are careful (**Sneak** roll), they can get a surprise attack on the hybrids. If they get Baxter's attention without attracting the watchful eyes of his hybrid guards, he tries to distract the guards, giving the investigators a +20% to their **Sneak** rolls.

The hybrids are loyal to their serpent-men masters, but they are not stupid. If the investigators get the upper hand in a fight, they threaten to kill Baxter unless the investigators stop their attacks, or try to run for the fortress beneath the pyramid to warn the serpent-men.

Clues: If the investigators manage to rescue Baxter, it is clear that he is a little unhinged, because his first concern is the treasure. He has seen it, and knows exactly where it is in the fortress beneath the pyramid. He is concerned with rescuing Viola and Professor Edwards as well, but is convinced that with the investigators' help, that not only can the serpent-men be defeated, but that the treasure can be salvaged as well.

Depending on how events unfold in **Area 2-3**, he also knows about the dynamite on top of the pyramid, and might suggest its use if things start going badly (the Keeper should

reference the section of the adventure called “*When Things Go Boom*” at that point).

Stats for the hybrids in this area are the same as for those in **Area 1-1**.

Malcolm Baxter

STR	CON	SIZ	INT	POW	DEX	HP
10	09	10	17	16	07	04

(wounded)

Damage Bonus: +0

Skills: Archaeology 70%, Handgun 25%, History 90%, Natural History 45%, Occult 60%, Persuade 20%, Rifle 45%.

Area 2-2 – Where The Creatures Live:

Read or paraphrase the following if the investigators enter any of the small huts marked on the map:

You see a small, thatched hut, one of many that stand in this clearing of the jungle. For the most part, it appears empty and abandoned.

Human descendants of the Incans that brought the Treasure to this place once lived in these huts, serving and worshipping a degenerate serpent-man called Cyathothys, whom they thought to be Yig. When the rest of the serpent-men awoke days ago, most of these humans fled. Only a few of the human/serpent-men hybrids chose to remain. The huts contain some of the evidence of this exodus (journal entries, items hurriedly abandoned, and the like).

Area 2-3 – Sacrifice!:

Read or paraphrase the following:

This crumbling building appears to have once been a temple. Its roof however, apparently collapsed long ago, leaving much of it nothing but rubble. A few ruined statues of snakes and serpent-men lie scattered about the rubble, along with a few stone columns that lead upwards to nothing but the sky above.

A woman, screaming and sobbing hysterically, is tied to one of the pillars. Four men dressed in rags and tattered robes surround her. One of the men holds a large, curved knife in his hands, and appears hell-bent on using it to cut her apart. The rest of the men chant a lonely, ominous song that is filled with despair.

A stone pit lies mere feet away from the woman and the pillar. It appears to be dark and deep, but even from where you stand you see signs of dark bloodstains all around its walls, and piles of burned, blackened bones lying within it.



The four men are also human/serpent-men hybrids, fanatically loyal to their god “Yig” (who in actuality, was just the degenerate serpent-man Cyathothys). They witnessed the awakening of the serpent-men below the pyramid, and saw Cyathothys captured and imprisoned by those creatures. Since they believed Cyathothys to be a god, the actions of the serpent-men completely terrified them, and they do not know what to make of them. They obey the serpent-men out fear, but this small group genuinely believes the end of days is upon them.

The hybrids decided that a sacrifice was needed to restore order to their world, so they lied to the hybrids guarding the expedition team, and took the woman – Viola Daniels – to their temple. As they and their ancestors have done before hundreds of times over the centuries, they plan to cut out Viola’s heart and offer it to the heavens as sacrifice, and then burn her body in the pit.

If and when a fight ensues with the hybrids, any creature that falls in the pit takes 1D6 points of damage from falling, and an additional 1D6 points of damage from the burned, jagged shards of bone at the bottom of the pit. Getting out of the pit without assistance is very, very difficult (**Climb -20%**), but with a helping hand, it will not present much of a problem.

The hybrids in this area are crazed, so it is doubtful that the investigators can get much information out of them. As the Keeper’s discretion, it is possible that the investigators could talk this group of hybrids into joining with them against the serpent-men, but this is exceedingly unlikely (**Fast Talk -30%**). Some amazing roleplaying should be a must if this occurs.

Clues: Unlike Baxter, Viola (if rescued in time) only wants three things, in the following order: to blow up the pyramid and the fortress beneath it, to rescue Professor Edwards, and to get the hell away from the ruins. She knows that most of the expedition’s supplies were brought to the top of the pyramid, and amongst those supplies is a sizable cache of dynamite. She is fully intent on blowing up the pyramid, whether or not the investigators choose to help her. She also knows where the entrance to the fortress below the pyramid is located. (The Keeper should reference the section called “*When Things Go Boom*” for more details on the dynamite and blowing things up.)

Stats for the hybrids in this area are the same as for those in Area 1-1.

Viola Daniels

STR	CON	SIZ	INT	POW	DEX	HP
08	14	11	10	15	14	13

Damage Bonus: +0

Skills: Hide 40%, Handgun 20%, Listen 60%, Psychology 50%, Sneak 20%, Spot Hidden 50%.


Area 2-4 – The Creature And The Pyramid:

Read or paraphrase the following as the investigators reach the base of the pyramid:

A steep pyramid looms ahead of you, tall and forbidding. It is comprised of three tiers, with a small, narrow staircase leading up one of its four sides from the ground to the uppermost tier. Vines cover the vast stone bricks used to build the pyramid; on occasion, you see birds nesting in their shadows, or snakes slithering in between them.

You hear something loud and vicious rumbling somewhere behind the pyramid. Suddenly, a terrifying beast lumbers out from behind the pyramid! The gigantic beast, which resembles some sort of giant prehistoric lizard with incredibly long arms and claws, bellows like something out of a nightmare... and then begins to head in your direction.

Have the investigators make a **Sanity** check (1/1D6) upon seeing the creature. The beast is called a minhocão, a foul, giant cross between an insect and a reptile. The serpent-men summoned forth the beast shortly after their awakening



in order to protect the ruins from further intruders (like the investigators). It is a mindless beast that fights to the death and knows no fear. It hunts the investigators unless they head for the hidden entrance leading beneath the pyramid to **Scene 3**.

The investigators face no problems ascending the pyramid (and the equipment that lies on top of it) if they use the stairs; however, doing so exposes them to attacks from the minhocão. Climbing up the side of the pyramid is slower, but allows better chances to hide from attacks and avoid detection, and the vines make climbing a fairly easy task (+10% to all **Climb**, **Hide**, and **Sneak** rolls when ascending the pyramid.)

Clues: If Viola is with the investigators, they have no issues finding the secret entrance to the underground fortress (and **Scene 3**). If she dies or otherwise is not present, the investigators only find it by searching along the base of the eastern pyramid wall (**Spot Hidden** roll).

In addition to a large box of dynamite, the investigators find a few more helpful weapons amongst the expedition supplies atop the pyramid. They discover a pair of .38 revolvers as well as a .30 M1903 Springfield rifle; along with a box of ammunition for each type of weapon (each box contains 100 bullets of the appropriate caliber).

Minhocão

STR	CON	SIZ	INT	POW	DEX	HP
42	28	50	12	10	10	39

Move: 10

Damage Bonus: +5D6

Damage: Bite 50%, damage 1D10; 2 claw(s) 40%, damage 2D6 each + db.

Armor: 4-point skin

Sanity Loss: 0/1D8 *Sanity* points to see a minhocão.

Wrapping Up Scene 2: Following the possible rescues of Viola and Baxter, the investigators have two options – flee, or still try to save Professor Edwards and get the lost treasure. Hopefully, their discoveries in this scene give them the right tools and motivation to attempt the latter.

When Things Go Boom


There is a distinct possibility that “Abominations of the Amazon” will end with an earth-shattering ka-boom, either by accident or on purpose. This section details the ways in which this can happen.

The box of dynamite atop the pyramid holds 30 sticks of dynamite. The heat and humidity of the jungle already has started to make the dynamite very, *very* unstable. If sticks of dynamite are lit and blown up individually, they cause 1D6 points of damage. The investigators should use their Throw skill to determine whether or not they hit a target with a lit stick. The dynamite also has a 10% chance of not going off at all, and a 10% chance of immediately exploding in someone’s hand. The dynamite is already fitted with blasting caps and fuses, but the fuses are generally short (going off a round after being lit), though there are longer fuses in the box that can be used instead. Investigators can attempt to shoot at individual sticks with guns in order to detonate them, though there is only a 50% chance of success using this method.

If the whole box – or at least the 20 remaining sticks in the box – is all detonated at once, the whole becomes greater than the sum of the parts. That explosion causes 30D6 points of damage to anything within 100 feet of it, enough to destroy part of a pyramid, or all of an underground fortress. Conventional fuses can be lit and used for this, or a detonator box can be wired to them. The fuse reaching from the detonator box to the dynamite stretches about 100 feet.

In **Scene 3**, there is also a self-destruct sequence in the underground fortress that can be activated. This essentially accomplishes the same thing. Once activated, investigators have 10 minutes to clear out of the fortress before a giant explosion collapses the fortress (and parts of the pyramid) and kills everything inside.

If all of the dynamite is set off while the self-destruct sequence is active inside the fortress, then hell on Earth is unleashed. Anyone standing anywhere in the area described in Scene 3 is vaporized instantly by the gigantic explosion that ensues.



Scene 3 – Behind The Walls Of Copper And Lead

Scene 3 takes place beneath the ruined pyramid, in a bizarre underground fortress built aeons ago by the ancestors of the serpent-men. No one knows what the original purpose of the fortress was anymore, including the serpent-men – it may have once been a traveling ship, or a laboratory, or an observation outpost, or have some other nefarious purpose. An explosion in the distant past inside the fortress destroyed the records of the fortress, as well as the devices that contained those records.

The serpent-men who descended from those original inhabitants of the fortress do not particularly understand most of the equipment in the fortress. They do not particularly care, either. They know that they derive their power from the *Chamber of Fear* (**Area 3-2**), they enjoy having human slaves to do their bidding, and they love the treasures brought to them centuries ago by the Incan natives. Anything that threatens these three things means that the serpent-men take whatever action they deem necessary to eliminate that threat.

The interior of the fortress is distinctly weird and alien. The walls and floors are all made from metal although in places both the walls and floors are corroded and covered with an emerald goo (any investigator that touches the goo automatically takes 1 **Hit Point** of damage). Ambient but faint violet light illuminates all of the chambers and hallways inside the fortress; however, there does not appear to be a clear source for this light. The temperature inside the fortress is uncomfortably hot and humid, even in comparison to the jungle outside.

If the investigators manage to sneak into the fortress beneath the pyramid without being noticed (or, at the Keeper's discretion, without attracting too much attention in **Scene 3**), the serpent-men lurking inside are unprepared for the investigators, and stand a chance of being caught off-guard by their intrusion. Give the investigators a +10% bonus to any **Hide** or **Sneak** checks that they make inside the underground fortress until the serpent-men discover their presence. Additionally, unless the investigators make a lot of noise or otherwise call attention to themselves, allow the investigators to make an initial surprise attack against the serpent-men the first time that they are confronted in combat.

If most of the events in **Scene 3** play out prior to the investigators heading into the underground fortress though, the serpent-men are ready and waiting for them (although they do not go out of their way to surprise or ambush the investigators).

Scene Summary: The investigators head beneath the pyramid to find the Treasure of the Llanganatis, and perhaps the final fate of Professor Edwards. In exploring the strange underground fortress, they learn about the presence of the serpent-men, and about the mad dreams of those strange creatures. Those with courage may even have the chance to end those dreams.

The purpose of the scene is to bring the adventure to a grand finale. Depending upon their actions and their heroics, the investigators either have the opportunity to rescue a friend and find treasures from an ancient time... or merely escape with their lives, if not their sanity.

Area 3-1 – The Main Chamber:

Read or paraphrase the following as the investigators enter the underground fortress:

The rough, hard dirt and stone of the tunnel slowly gives way to a strange sight as it spirals downward. The tunnel opens up into a large circular chamber with dull metal walls. Parts of those walls are coated with grime and a curious green goo; other parts appear to have odd devices with blinking lights jutting forth from them. The room is lit with a deathly bluish-purple hue, but from where that light emanates you cannot say.

A circle of slender copper pillars, reaching from floor to ceiling, is visible towards the center of the room. Scrawled on the floor of the chamber within that circle is some sort of bizarre symbol. Besides the symbol, you see something even more bizarre lurking near the pillars – two humanoid creatures, clad in gray robes and walking like men, but possessing mottled, scaly skin and the heads of giant snakes.

Additionally, if the serpent-men know the investigators are entering the chamber, read or paraphrase the following:

As you reach the entrance to the chamber, the two serpent-men turn and face you. Their black forked tongues flicker out in your direction, and they each draw a black, wand-like device from the folds of their robes.

“We shall make this painless for you, humans,” hisses the one closer to you.

This chamber is the hub of the “fortress” (presumably, it once had a grander purpose than that, but its current serpent-men denizens no longer remember what that was). Using some of the “odd devices” (also known as computer consoles), the serpent-men can monitor and occasionally manipulate events elsewhere in the fortress and above in the ruins. The hub generally serves as the staging area for the serpent-men's activities.

When the investigators entered the chamber, the two serpent-men were preparing to head to the surface and grab Viola Daniels from the group of captives above (unaware that the primitive natives had different plans for her in **Area 2-3**). The “wands” of the serpent-men are specialized weapons that discharge electrical charges – the specifics for how they work are noted below. If the investigators notice the serpent-men and attempt to flee, rather than trying to explore the underground fortress, the serpent-men pursue them to the surface if they are aware of the investigators’ presence.

Clues: Only a successful **Cthulhu Mythos** check allows a proper identification of the symbol in the middle of the chamber – it is a symbol of Yig.

If the investigators manage to capture any of the serpent-men alive and interrogate them, they also confirm this fact. The serpent-men also confirm if interrogated that their ancestors used to serve Yig, and came from a faraway place called K’n-yan, but that Yig abandoned them long ago.

If the investigators attempt to use the consoles, they potentially uncover some interesting possibilities. Despite the fact that the switches, keys, and buttons of the consoles are inscribed with letters of an alien language, any investigator with the **Computer Use** skill can easily figure out how they work. Since it is doubtful that investigators in the 1920s possess the **Computer Use** skill, successful **Electrical Repair** (-25%) or **Mechanical Repair** checks (-25%) should allow them to roughly figure out how they work as well. If the investigators merely wish to disable the consoles, a **Mechanical Repair** check (-10%) is all that is needed. A **Luck** roll does not provide any insight as to how the consoles work, but does allow fortunate investigators to randomly stumble across one of their possible functions simply by pushing buttons and pulling levers.

The consoles allow the serpent-men (and possibly the investigators) to accomplish four basic tasks. Those who understand the consoles can select a specific task; if using **Luck**, the task is selected randomly as follows:

D6 Roll	Task
1-2	Observation of activities within the fortress
3-4	Observation of activities outside the fortress, in the ruins
5	Security alarm
6	Self-destruct sequence

Any result of “observation” means that a panel slides open in the wall above the console. Activities within the fortress means that users can see things going on in any area in **Scene 3**; activities outside the fortress in the ruins means they can see what is happening in **Scene 2**. Users that un-

derstand how the consoles work can control what area they wish to view; otherwise, the selection is random and should be left up to the Keeper to determine.

A result of “security alarm” means that a loud klaxon goes off, and fills every area in the fortress with a loud, repeating sound. Any serpent-men in the fortress immediately start looking for intruders. Additionally, if the cell is **Area 3-5** happens to be open, the doors of the cell immediately slam shut.

A result of “self-destruct sequence” means that the Keeper should reference the section of the adventure titled “*When Things Go Boom.*”

2 Serpent-Men

STR	CON	SIZ	INT	POW	DEX	HP
12	10	12	16	14	14	11

Move: 8

Damage Bonus: +0

Damage: Bite 35%, damage 1D8 + poison (POT 10)

Weapons: Electricity projector 30%, damage 1D6 + 25% to stun 1D6 rounds, 10 charges each

Armor: 1-point scales

Spells: Deflect Harm, Healing, Mesmerize, Mind Exchange

Sanity Loss: 0/1D6 Sanity points to see a serpent-man.

Area 3-2 – Dead Ends:

Read or paraphrase the following:

This metal corridor quickly gives way to a massive pile of rocks and boulders, some of which appear to weigh several tons. The pile of rubble appears to be impassible, as it fills the corridor from floor to ceiling.


The rubble blocks off passage to other parts of the underground fortress. A long-ago explosion caused this particular passage to collapse, while all of the serpent-men (save for Cyathothys) were in a state of hibernation. The blocked passage currently limits the resources of the serpent-men, who have not yet had time to try and clear the rubble.

Without heavy machinery specifically designed for digging (which is not present in the fortress or at the ruins), the investigators cannot clear out the rubble by themselves.

Area 3-3 – The Lost Treasure Of The Llanganatis:

Read or paraphrase the following:

The corridor opens into an immense circular chamber, filled with gold and silver treasures almost beyond comprehension. Coins, necklaces, jeweled masks, rings, statuettes,



and a myriad of other fantastic ornaments wrought from precious metals literally cover the entire floor of this alien place, and in some places, are almost piled to the ceiling. Your minds can scarcely conceive of such a vast treasure – without a shadow of a doubt, you have indeed discovered the lost Treasure of the Llanganatis!

Though the room is painfully bright from the light reflecting off all of these wondrous treasures, you still see something in here that is somewhat unsettling. Two skeletons in tattered garb lie several yards away from the entrance, sprawled over a mound of gold and silver coins.

Investigators that carefully examine the skeletons (**Archaeology** roll) note that they are probably the remains of Incan natives. Their bones are badly broken, indicating (**Medicine** roll) that they were probably beaten to death. In truth, the degenerate serpent-man Cyathothys murdered them long ago out for his own vicious pleasure.

Fortunately for the investigators, Cyathothys also inadvertently dropped an electricity projector near the bodies of the natives, which is now partially hidden by the surrounding treasure. A successful **Spot Hidden** roll near the skeletons uncovers it. The projector has 5 charges left, and functions exactly like the projectors used by the other serpent-men in this scene.

Investigators taking the vast treasures from the chamber quickly discover a significant problem: *weight*. The precious metals that comprise the treasure in the chamber are both heavy and unwieldy. It is not easy carrying around things like statuettes and crowns, particularly lots of them. The vast Treasure of the Llanganatis was originally brought to the fortress by scores of Incan natives over a period of weeks; the investigators have but minutes to take what they can.

On average, each pound of treasure that an investigator carries is worth approximately \$300. For purposes of lifting any carrying treasure, the Keeper should assume that every 5 pounds of treasure has a **SIZ** of 1; the ability to lift would be the investigator's **STR** vs. the treasure's **SIZ** on the **Resistance Table**. Carrying a **SIZ** of treasure more than the investigator's **STR** also means that the investigator's **Move** is halved. (For combat purposes, the Keeper may also rule that "arms full of treasure" probably means that an investigator "can't reach for weapons" either).

Investigators may attempt to scour the piles of treasure for items they deem to be more valuable with an **Archaeology** roll, but this takes an additional five minutes of time. A successful roll means that an item of treasure worth three times the standard amount can be taken.

Even if the investigators manage to sneak into the treasure chamber without causing too much of a commotion, they have a maximum of ten minutes in the chamber before the serpent-men eventually catch on to their presence. If the serpent-men get the slightest indication that their ill-gotten treasure hoard may be taken from them by human intruders, they do whatever is in their power to stop and kill the investigators, even if that ultimately means destroying the treasure (as noted in the section "**When Things Go Boom**").

Area 3-4 – The Chamber of Fear:

Read or paraphrase the following:


A loud drone thunders through the air as you approach this chamber, nearly deafening you. Fortunately, it also serves to protect you. Four serpent-men stand in this room, watching a brightly-lit glass cylinder, which sits between a pair of consoles. A man – in fact, a man you recognize as Duncan Edwards – writhes in agony inside the cylinder, pain etched across his face. His eyes are vacant and the color of blood.

Steel cables run from the base of the cylinder to a pair of stone sarcophaguses, one at each end of the chamber. Each sarcophagus is etched with runes depicting serpent-men falling in battle, ascending to the heavens, and then returning back to the battles where they had perished. As the thunderous droning sound grows louder and louder, crimson beams of light begin to pour forth from beneath the lids of each sarcophagus.

For many centuries, the serpent-men remained in suspended animation, sleeping in stone suspension compartments (the sarcophaguses in this area and in **Area 3-5**). The revival compartments in this area bring them back to the world of the living. The revival process requires a special sort of energy – the fear generated by a sentient mind. The serpent-men prefer to use the minds of human beings, as they generate the most fear and the most energy.

The investigators have about a minute to stop the process before Professor Edwards dies. If they succeed in stopping the fear generation process and getting Professor Edwards out of the cylinder before then, they find that the mind of their old friend is completely gone, and that he is only a sad, broken shell of his former self, barely capable of uttering a coherent thought.

Stopping the process is simple; stopping the process *safely* is anything but simple. All that is needed to stop the process is to destroy the cylinder – one solid blow from a heavy object or a single bullet will shatter the glass and disperse the fear energy. However, with that dispersal the fear energy fills the room. Any investigators in the room must immediately make a **Sanity** check (**Sanity** loss 1/1D6); the



serpent-men remain unaffected by the fear, and instead heal 1D6 hit points if they are injured (hit points cannot go over their normal maximum). Stopping the process safely either involves shutting down the cylinder by operating the consoles (either a **Electrical Repair (-20%)**, **Mechanical Repair (-20%)**, or **Physics** roll (-20%) does the job), or simply destroying the consoles by dealing 20 hit points worth of damage to each of them.

If Professor Edwards dies while still held in the fear machine, the two sarcophagi open. A pair of serpent-men, freshly revived, step out of each sarcophagus, doubling the number of serpent-men in the room. Though it will not save Professor Edwards, the investigators can stop the revival process before he dies by disconnecting the steel cables leading to each sarcophagus. This can be accomplished by destroying the cables (each one has 15 hit points) or by pulling them out of the wall (the cables have a **SIZ** of 10; pulling out the cables would set the investigator's **STR** vs. the cables' **SIZ** on the **Resistance Table**).

If any investigators are captured by the serpent-men, they are thrown into the cylinder (if it is not destroyed) to help revive additional serpent-men from **Area 3-5**. If more than one investigator is captured, one randomly goes first to the cylinder, while others are sent to the cell in **Area 3-6** to await their doom at a later time. One of the serpent-men in this chamber has in his possession several doses of a domination serum; this serum is given first to any humans placed inside the chamber so that they are pacified. Once in the chamber, victims must make **Sanity** checks each minute (1/1D10) until removed from the chamber or until they reach 0 SAN; once they reach 0 SAN in the chamber, they let out a blood-curdling scream and die.

Stats for the serpent-men (either four or eight) are the same as for those in **Area 3-1**.

Area 3-5 – The Chamber Of Sleep:

Read or paraphrase the following:

This large, barren chamber is mostly filled with cobwebs and dust. Dozens of footprints cross through the dust, and lead to three large stone sarcophaguses. Faint bluish-green light pulses out softly from beneath their stone lids. The sides of each sarcophagus are etched with detailed runes.

A pair of consoles, covered with switches and blinking lights, stand near the entrance.

The remaining serpent-men held in a state of suspended animation lie in these suspension compartments. Five serpent-men are in each compartment. When they are to be revived, the other serpent men open the stone suspension compartments and bring them to the revival compartments

in **Area 3-4**. The lids of the suspension compartments are quite heavy, and are considered **SIZ** 20 because of their vast weight. Investigators that wish to open the compartments must make a **STR** check on the **Resistance Table** to do so. Once opened, the dormant serpent-men can easily be slain without resistance, if the investigators wish to destroy the vile creatures.

The investigators also can be sealed in their suspension compartments by destroying the consoles in the chamber. Each console has 20 hit points; destroying both of the consoles permanently seals the serpent-men inside their compartments forever. They also can be shut down permanently by operating them in the same manner the consoles in **Area 3-4** are operated.

Clues: If the investigators examine the runes on the three stone suspension compartments (**Archaeology** or **History** roll), they gain an understanding of the abbreviated history of the serpent-men, as detailed in the Introduction and the **Keeper Information** sections. If they examine the compartment along the southern wall, they find a hidden hatch (**Spot Hidden** -10%) at its base. Behind the hatch lies a vial of containing 3 doses of the domination serum.

Stats for any serpent-men awoken in this area are the same as for those in **Area 3-1**.

Area 3-6 – The Fallen God-King:

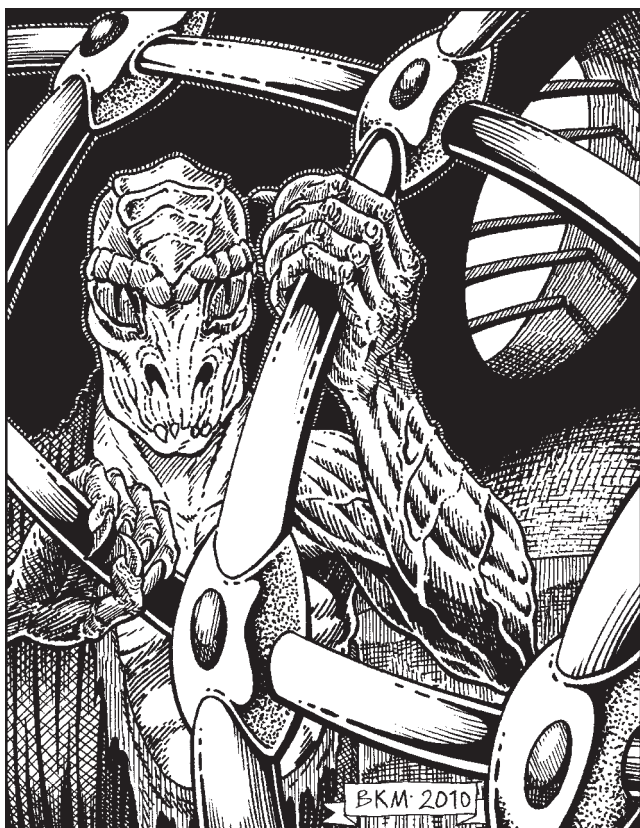
Read or paraphrase the following:

Most of this chamber lies barren and empty. A small console is visible at the entrance. At the far end of the chamber, away from the entrance, is a series of slender metal bars, reaching from floor to ceiling. Although there is no way visible to you to gain access behind those bars, it is clear that they are either meant to be a cage... or a prison cell.

A short, foul-smelling serpent-man dressed in rags, shorter and uglier than the others like him who you have seen, sits on a simple bench inside this cell. Its reddish eyes widen as it sees you, and its tongue flickers out. The creature stands.

"Humans," it says in a guttural rasp. "I can give you treasures beyond your wildest dreams. Free me, and I shall make sure no harm comes to you. I can show you the secrets of this place... I can make you kings and queens of all your kind!"

This creature is Cyathothys, a degenerate serpent-man used in centuries past as servant and slave by his more powerful brethren. Ages ago, Cyathothys placed the other serpent-men in their suspension compartments, and then entered a chemically-induced sleep himself. Computers in the underground fortress were supposed to wake him up at a predetermined time centuries later so that he could revive his masters.



When the Incan natives inadvertently entered the fortress to hide the Treasure of the Llanganatis, they awoke Cyathothys. Having no love for his cruel brothers, Cyathothys decided not to awaken them, and chose to rule over the natives instead. However, since Professor Edwards and his expedition team inadvertently awoke the rest of the serpent-men, Cyathothys has been returned to his former status of being a slave beneath contempt, and was imprisoned by the serpent-men. Once they are all revived, they intend to torture and kill him for his insolent behavior.

Cyathothys tells the investigators none of this though. Instead, he tells a wild story about how the evil serpent-men threw him in the cell for helping the natives and the humans in Professor Edwards's expedition, and all he wants to do is "help humans." According to him, he wants to see the other serpent-men destroyed. He is a terrible liar though, and essentially says whatever he thinks the investigators want to hear, even if it contradicts what he has already said.

If the investigators free him, Cyathothys immediately leads them to the other serpent-men and sells them out in a desperate attempt to prove his loyalty. If they do not free him, the investigators might be able to pry information away from him (how the consoles work, how many serpent-men

there are in the fortress, where the Treasure is located, and so) with a **Fast Talk** roll. Cyathothys is not particularly clever, and thinks that human beings are all incredibly dumb, which together does not make for a good combination.

To open the cell, the console must be used to get the bars to slide upwards into the ceiling. They are incredibly strong – for all practical purposes, they cannot be bent or damaged. Figuring out how the console operates works the same way as in **Areas 3-4** and **3-5**; however, Cyathothys eagerly explains exactly how it works if it appears that the investigators will release him. (Give the investigators a +10% bonus to their rolls if they attempt to figure out other consoles after Cyathothys gives his explanation.) If the console is smashed (it has 20 hit points), the bars stay permanently fixed in whatever position they are in – open or closed.

If the serpent-men from other areas manage to capture more than one investigator, they send one investigator to the fear extraction cylinder in **Area 3-4**, and those remaining into the cell with Cyathothys.

Cyathothys

STR	CON	SIZ	INT	POW	DEX	HP
08	08	10	16	13	13	09

Move: 8

Damage Bonus: +0

Damage: Bite 30%, damage 1D8

Armor: 1-point scales

Spells: Deflect Harm, Healing, Mesmerize, Mind Exchange

Sanity Loss: 0/1D6 Sanity points to see a serpent-man.



Conclusion

The adventure ends in one of two ways: with the death of the investigators or with their escape from the ruins. If they are lucky, they manage to escape with some of the members of Edwards's expedition and some of the items from the Treasure of Llanganatis, in addition to their own lives.

If the investigators fail, read or paraphrase the following:

You feel your sanity – and your lives – slipping away, both taken from you by the vile serpent-men. You tried your best, but your efforts were to no avail. As you breathe your last, you are left with the horrible thought that this is just the beginning for the serpent-men – they intend to unleash their horror onto an unsuspecting world, and there is nothing that you can do...

If the investigators manage to survive their ordeal, though, they are heroes! Should the investigators succeed, they receive 1D6 **Sanity** points for their courage and bravery. Additionally, read or paraphrase the following:

Though your struggle was great, you emerge from the jungle victorious! Few will ever know or understand the strange and terrible horrors that you faced, but it is no matter. You know that you faced an unspeakable evil – and won – and the world is all the better for your bravery.

You just wonder if that's the last you've seen of the serpent-men...

Appendix I: Pregenerated Characters And A Note On Skills

Success in *Abominations of the Amazon* can hinge on a few key skills. While it is not essential all of the investigators have all of these skills, it is recommended that the team, as a whole, have the following selection of most of these skills:

Archaeology, Climb, Electrical Repair, Fast Talk, Hide, History, Jump, Pilot Boat, Mechanical Repair, Medicine, Physics, Swim, Occult, Persuade, Sneak, Spot Hidden, and Swim.

Finally, while violence should always be an investigator's last resort, it never hurts to know one's way around a pistol or rifle.



Handout A

My esteemed colleagues -

If you are reading this, forgive my absence. I had hoped to wait for your arrival in Iquitos, but I made the most extraordinary discovery! I learned of the true location of the Treasure of the Inlanganatis. It is roughly where I believed it would be, in the jungles north and east of here, but I now know the precise site of the ruins.

Many have tried to decrypt Valverde's Derrotero, a curious document thought to reveal the treasure's location. I know I've spent many long nights poring over the text, trying to figure it out. However, by chance I came into possession of the original document. It seems that when held to the light of a candle, an inscription appeared, hidden in a secret ink! It told of the location, and showed a map! (It also talked of serpent beasts, but that is just superstitious folly, of that I am sure.) A copy of the map should be with this note.

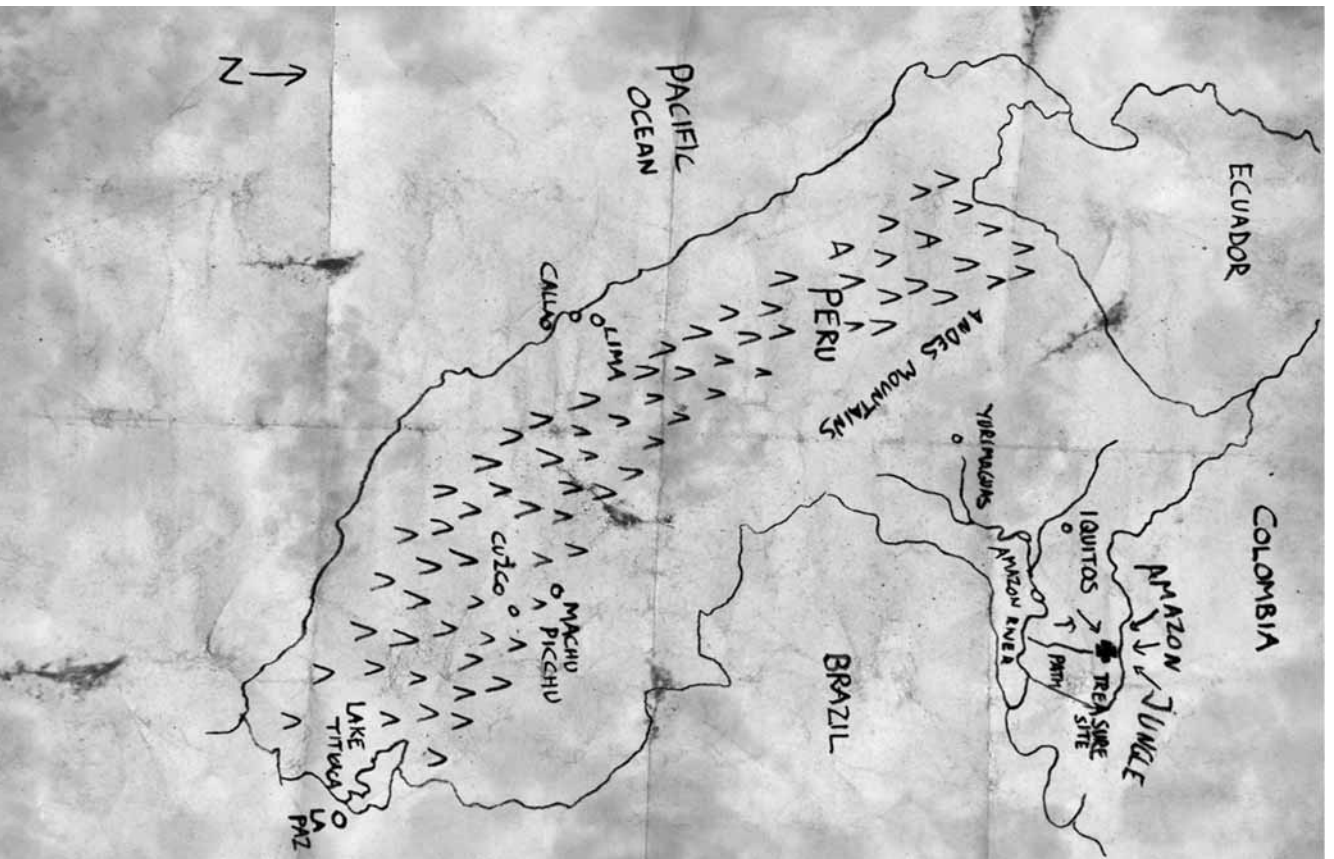
Needless to say, those of us already here decided to head immediately to the site. We hope to be waiting for you when you arrive with more wonderful news, and perhaps treasure to inspect! If not, fear not - look instead for our guide, a man called Ramon Rojo, near the docks. He will be expecting you, and will take you to the ruins to join myself and the rest of the expedition!

I look forward to seeing you!

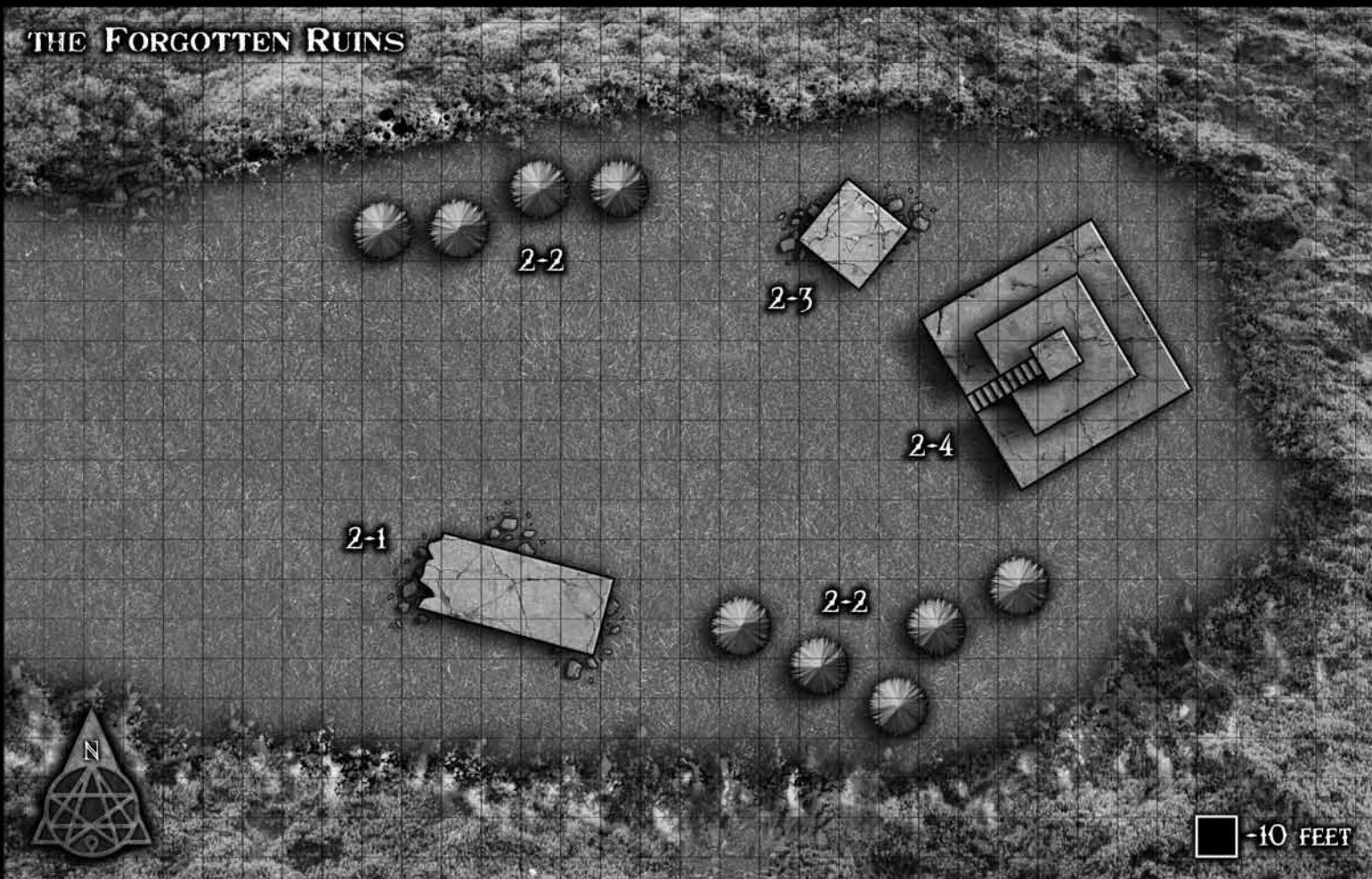
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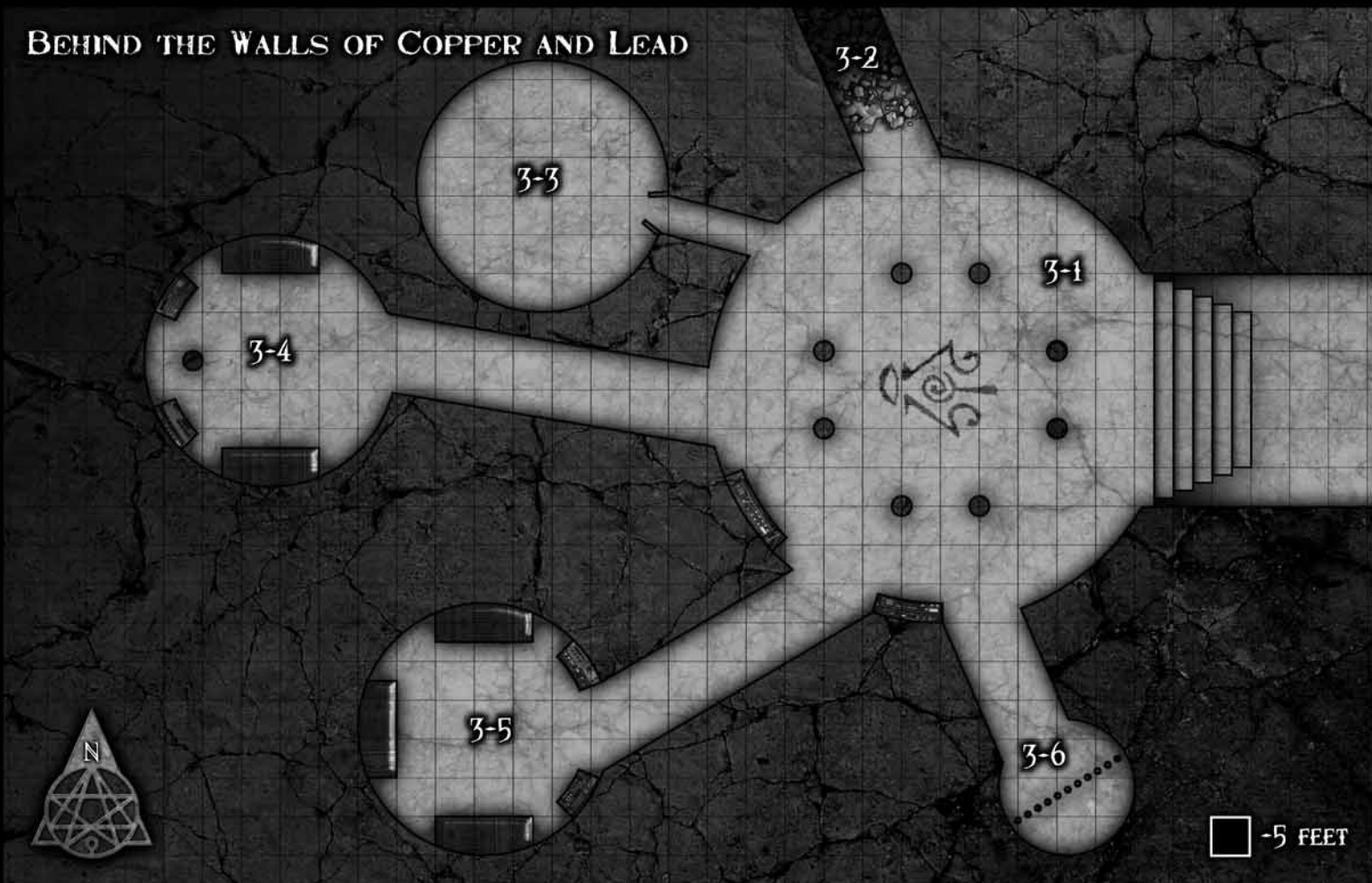
Handout B



THE FORGOTTEN RUINS



BEHIND THE WALLS OF COPPER AND LEAD



Name: Sam McCoy

Occupation: Private Investigator

Sex: Male **Age:** 41

Marks, Scars, Mental Disorders: _____

STR: 17 **DEX:** 9 **INT:** 14 **Idea Roll:** 70%

CON: 12 **APP:** 13 **POW:** 13 **Luck Roll:** 65%

SIZ: 17 **SAN:** 65 **EDU:** 19 **Know Roll:** 95%

Damage Bonus: 1D6 **Hit Points:** 15 **Income:** \$7,500

Weapons: Fist/Punch 55%; Handgun (.32 Revolver) 40%, 1D8; Rifle (.30 Level Action Carbine) 40%, 2D6



Skills

Bargain	35%	Dodge	18%
Fast Talk	65%	Law	45%
Locksmith	40%	Mechanical Repair	30%
Navigate	35%	Other Language (<i>Spanish</i>)	21%
Own Language (<i>English</i>)	99%	Photography	30%
Pilot (<i>Boat</i>)	30%	Psychology	35%
Sneak	45%	Spot Hidden	41%
Swim	45%		

History

A former Navy man in the Great War, you've made a name for yourself as a no-nonsense, hardnosed detective who will do whatever it takes to get to the bottom of a mystery.

Name: Jenny McMillan

Occupation: Journalist

Sex: Female **Age:** 30

Marks, Scars, Mental Disorders: _____

STR: 10 **DEX:** 15 **INT:** 16 **Idea Roll:** 80%

CON: 9 **APP:** 14 **POW:** 11 **Luck Roll:** 55%

SIZ: 9 **SAN:** 55 **EDU:** 16 **Know Roll:** 80%

Damage Bonus: None **Hit Points:** 9 **Income:** \$20,000

Weapons: Fist/Punch 55%; Handgun (.25 Derringer) 30%, 1D6



Skills

Dodge	30%	Drive Auto	30%
Fast Talk	70%	Library Use	60%
Listen	55%	Occult	30%
Own Language (<i>English</i>)	80%	Persuade	50%
Photography	65%	Psychology	55%
Sneak	55%	Spot Hidden	45%
Throw	30%		

History

Some call you determined. Others call you pushy. Whatever the case may be, you're the one who always winds up with the scoop, can see a story from every angle, and winds up with her name on the byline on the front page of the newspaper.

Name: Professor Victor Stanton

Occupation: Professor of Anthropology, Miskatonic University

Sex: Male **Age:** 56

Marks, Scars, Mental Disorders: _____

STR: 8 **DEX:** 15 **INT:** 17 **Idea Roll:** 85%

CON: 10 **APP:** 11 **POW:** 10 **Luck Roll:** 50%

SIZ: 13 **SAN:** 50 **EDU:** 21 **Know Roll:** 99%

Damage Bonus: None **Hit Points:** 12 **Income:** \$2,500

Weapons: Fist/Punch 50%; Handgun (.32 Revolver) 25%, 1D8



Skills

Anthropology	65%	Archaeology	90%
Bargain	20%	Credit Rating	50%
Dodge	35%	Drive Auto	30%
Electrical Repair	35%	First Aid	35%
History	50%	Library Use	60%
Listen	45%	Mechanical Repair	25%
Medicine	25%	Occult	20%
Other Language (German)	40%	Other Language (Indonesian)	30%
Other Language (Spanish)	40%	Other Language (Tibetan)	30%
Own Language (English)	99%	Persuade	36%
Psychology	45%	Spot Hidden	40%

History

Known as one of the “old lions” of the University, you still have an insatiable curiosity, and a longing to discover the unknown. You consider nothing trivial – everything to you is fascinating in its own way. And now, you no longer wish to merely read about the things that interest you, but to travel throughout the world and see them with your own eyes.

Name: Floyd Irwin

Occupation: Criminal Income

Sex: Male **Age:** 28

Marks, Scars, Mental Disorders: _____

STR: 14 **DEX:** 12 **INT:** 13 **Idea Roll:** 65%

CON: 15 **APP:** 9 **POW:** 12 **Luck Roll:** 60%

SIZ: 12 **SAN:** 60 **EDU:** 13 **Know Roll:** 65%

Damage Bonus: 1D4 **Hit Points:** 14 **Income:** \$2,000

Weapons: Fist/Punch 55%; Handgun (.45 Revolver) 55%, 1D10+2



Skills

Bargain	35%	Climb	50%
Conceal	40%	Dodge	29%
Fast Talk	50%	Hide	40%
Jump	35%	Listen	50%
Locksmith	60%	Own Language (<i>English</i>)	65%
Sneak	70%	Spot Hidden	65%
Swim	35%		

History

You are a man who knows how to get things, especially when those things belong to others. Though your early days of larceny led you to a few unfortunate years in prison, you have discovered a new career – stealing strange, wondrous, and often terrible items on the behalf of strange, rich, and often terrible clients.

Name: Clive Lanchester

Occupation: Antiquarian

Sex: Male **Age:** 35

Marks, Scars, Mental Disorders: _____

STR: 11 **DEX:** 17 **INT:** 18 **Idea Roll:** 90%

CON: 14 **APP:** 10 **POW:** 8 **Luck Roll:** 40%

SIZ: 12 **SAN:** 40 **EDU:** 16 **Know Roll:** 80%

Damage Bonus: None **Hit Points:** 13 **Income:** \$3,500

Weapons: Fist/Punch 50%; Grapple 40%; Handgun (.38 Revolver) 40%, 1D10



Skills

Art (<i>Sculpture</i>)	50%	Astronomy	30%
Bargain	55%	Conceal	30%
Dodge	35%	Fast Talk	30%
Hide	35%	History	55%
Law	35%	Library Use	50%
Listen	50%	Natural History	35%
Occult	25%	Other Language (<i>German</i>)	26%
Own Language (<i>English</i>)	80%	Sneak	40%
Persuade	36%	Spot Hidden	50%

History

Long fascinated by stories of the past, you have made it your life's work to collect rare and extraordinary objects from the past. Though your specialties lie in ancient sculptures and ancient civilizations, you have a knack for finding all sorts of antiquities, and getting them into the hands of those who seek them.

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