

# The Vanishing CONJURER & The Statue of The SORCERER



## THE STATUE OF THE SORCERER

An exciting investigative adventure set in San Francisco during 1925. A seemingly innocuous death in the seedier side of town draws the investigators into a complex web of intrigue and presents them with a series of enigmatic puzzles. Is San Francisco threatened by the Elder Gods?

## THE VANISHING CONJURER

London in the '20s and scandal is threatening to rock the entertainment world. Something is lurking at the heart of the Inner Brotherhood of Magic, the select club for stage magicians. Can the investigators impress the examiners with their tricks to infiltrate the Brotherhood, and finally discover what really happened when the conjurer vanished?

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**H. P. LOVECRAFT**

**1890-1937**



## INTRODUCTION

*The Vanishing Conjurer* is an introductory level investigation set in London in the early 1920s. The investigators are called upon to investigate the puzzling disappearance of a young stage magician, only to find themselves drawn ever tighter into a web of intrigue surrounding a mysterious conjurer's club!

If you are intending to play both of the adventures in this book with the same characters, we recommend that you run *The Vanishing Conjurer* first. It is a lighter adventure than *The Statue Of The Sorcerer*, and inexperienced players will be better equipped to cope with it.

Investigators tackling this adventure will not require any special skills, though the usual complement of Spot Hiddens and Library Uses will come in as handy as always. Please also note the new skill, Conjuring, which will be useful too. This adventure may be run with the greenest, most inexperienced group of investigators, though a group with a few minor investigations under their belts may need less prodding. With careful refereeing and the boosting in strength of a few of the villains, *The Vanishing Conjurer* can also be run with a far more experienced group, if you so desire.

### Campaign Play

*The Vanishing Conjurer* is ideally suited for insertion into a British-based game, or for an intermission in the English section of a world-spanning campaign (such as *Masks Of Nyarlathotep*). It requires no precursors in the form of clues, and need only have after-effects if you wish it, so it could prove to be a very 'pleasant' interlude for your players.

If your campaign is set in the United States you will find that few problems arise in converting the adventure to a New York or Californian location. Alternatively, you could bring your investigators over to London for a time; they may enjoy the change of scenery, and it will allow you a chance to try out all those other British-based scenarios that are around. In this instance you should perhaps make Howard Horne an American citizen too - and keep him as an old acquaintance of one or more of the team.

You will also find that *The Vanishing Conjurer* can convert to a different time-frame with a minimum of fuss. *Cthulhu By Gaslight* players will find little difficulty in moving the adventure back thirty years; if anything, stage musicians and the popular theatre were even more popular than they were during the Twenties. Bringing the adventure up to date will also prove very easy for a keeper with a modicum of common sense, though the initials of the Inner Brotherhood of Magicians may have to be changed because of their close resemblance to those of a certain computer company!

### New Skill

**Conjuring:** Base skill 15%. This is a measure of the character's ability to perform conjuring tricks, card magic and sleight-of-hand illusions. The base chance allows only simple card tricks and the like.

### Preparations

Before you run this scenario there are a number of tasks you should perform. Firstly, read the entire scenario (not *The Statue Of The Sorcerer* too, unless you fancy a good read), and make sure you understand the gist of what is happening - or will happen. Remove the various hand-outs from the centre of this book, and keep them close at hand for use during play. Read the scenario again, this time visualising how things might turn out, and how you will play the roles of the major NPCs during play.

The investigation is divided up into a number of small sections, in each of which there are sub-headings covering further research, extra clues, background information and asides. You should be flexible enough to allow your investigators to continue some of their research while the plot advances - especially if they are being slow in solving the mystery.

And now you should be ready to play. Have fun!

## PLAYER'S INTRODUCTION

It is a pleasant weekday in the latter half of the month of June, 192—. In London, one of the investigators is contacted by an old friend, Howard Horne, who is a theatrical agent working in London's West End. Horne sends the investigator four tickets for a conjuring show taking place that evening at a small theatre off Drury Lane. A small note scribbled on Horne's business card attached to the tickets gives no more details about what the investigators might expect, but Horne appears to require their help in a matter of some urgency.

## KEEPER'S INFORMATION

### Howard Horne

You should give the players Handouts A and B at this point. The first is a sample of the ticket for the show; the second is Horne's note. Horne is a small-time agent dealing with a wide range of artistes. Like many similar agents he tends to discover young talent and nurture it into maturity, until it is stolen away from him by one of the new management agencies. Horne himself, though, believes all the acts he handles to be the best in London. He is in many ways a stereotypical theatrical agent, his speech being peppered with talk of deals and fees, percentages and packages. He operates out of a tiny, untidy office off Long Acre, close to Covent Garden and Drury Lane, though it is very unlikely that his investigator friend will ever have visited him there.

Howard Horne is a thin, nervy sort of chap, with a narrow face and eyes that appear positively shifty. He has a tendency to pump peoples' hands with an enthusiastic handshake whenever he can, and to smoke cheap cigarettes. His day dress is usually slovenly and stained with sweat and coffee, though when he makes the rounds of the theatres to see his artistes he always makes the effort to look like what some would call 'a proper dapper gent'. How well he succeeds in this depends upon how one would define the term 'good taste'.


How the investigator knows Horne is very much up to you and your campaign. If one of your players is a journalist it is possible that he or she would have run into Horne, who is always knocking on editor's doors in search of more free publicity for his acts. Alternatively, one of the investigators could be a patron of the theatre, or even an artiste themselves. However you handle this, though, Horne's note should be sufficient to attract their curiosity and to persuade them to visit the Chancellor's Theatre on the night in question.

### "The Greatest Magic Show In The West End!"

The show starts at 7.30, and lasts for around two hours. There are maybe two hundred people in the audience, half-filling the theatre. Outside the theatre a bill-board declared the show to be "*The Greatest Magic Show In The West End!*", but it



Chancellor's Theatre	<b>Chancellor's Theatre</b> DRURY LANE	
Row DD Seat 15		Row DD Seat 15
June 22nd 7.30 p.m.	June 22nd 7.30 p.m.	



Howard Horne, esq  
Theatrical Impressario

249 Pierpoint Buildings,  
Long Acre,  
London.

*Do try and come, & bring your friends, as I am in need of your help & advice*

*H.H.*

- Horne starts talking in earnest. Indeed, it may be difficult to get him to stop...

*"As my old friend here has probably told you all, I'm an agent, working the West End, and a very successful one at that, though I do say so meself! I've got most of the leading actors and actresses on me books, and a good batch of the more specialised and talented music hall acts too.*

*"Anyway, I've got a problem. One of my artistes is a young magician, Philip Leclair, who calls 'imself Leclair the Great professionally. He's a good lad, and I reckon he'll go far if he's handled right. He's got this knack, see, of making even the oldest trick in the book look new. Even better, though, he's inventing his own tricks too - good ones at that, with all this new apparatus and the patter and everytbing! Now that's got to be worth half a bob of anyone's money to see, hasn't it?"*

*"End of last month, young Philip came down to the office to see me. Plum excited he was, said he had a great new trick. He showed me all these plans of his new apparatus which he said was going to give a whole new meaning to what we call 'The Vanish', the most famous trick in the book - you know, making a chap disappear into thin air! The lad was having a few problems with his apparatus, though, and he said he needed some help and advice to sort it all out. Now, me, I'm a simple chap, and I don't know much about magicians and conjuring save that it gets backsides on seats, if you'll pardon my expression!"*

*"So, anyway, I suggested he approach this new magic club, who call themselves something like the Inside Brotherhood of Magic. They'd sent me a letter to recommend themselves to me and my clients, and I reckoned they might know a bit about the old conjuring game, so I sent the lad along to see them.*

*"Young Leclair took my advice, because he's a good lad, and he joined the club, and things seemed to be going great with this new trick. When he popped into the office just a couple of weeks back he was right excited, all jumpy and smiling all the time. He kept telling me he was on the verge of a great discovery, said he was on the verge of finding a method that would, how did he put it exactly, that would revolutionise stage magic as we know it! He even showed me some diagrams of his new apparatus for this 'Vanish' trick of his. The way he was talking I reckon he really was on to something big, but what he actually found is a mystery to me. You see, ladies & gentlemen, that was the last I ever saw of the lad. It's quite ironic, I guess - Philip Leclair has vanished off the face of the Earth!"*

After this explanation, Horne goes on to explain that he has contacted the police over the matter, but that they have been unable to trace Leclair. Horne himself had thought that was that, he says, until a couple of days ago. He was checking out a possible new client at rehearsals for the show they've all just seen, when he caught The Amazing Karl rehearsing his act. It wasn't that unusual, or that good, but the apparatus he used for his act bore such a strong resemblance to the diagrams Leclair had shown him the last time he saw him. Horne produces a crumpled piece of paper, which shows the apparatus in question (give out Handout C at this point). Horne is convinced the young German is connected to Philip's disappearance in some way, but he is unable to provide any evidence to take to the police.

Therefore, he asks the party to help him, for he's heard they've been involved in a few mysteries in the past. If they could either find Leclair or obtain enough to point the finger at The Amazing Karl he would be satisfied and his troubled conscience would be clear.

is very likely that the investigators will not agree with this. It is a rather tiresome affair, as none of the participants are especially entertaining or outstanding practitioners of their art. Come the second interval, it is likely that some of the investigators will be wondering whether to bother staying any longer, but it is at that moment that Horne joins them.

He greets them loudly, and introduces himself to the members of the party he has not previously encountered. He is bright and breezy, and rather overbearing in his enthusiasm for the show. He asks them all whether they are enjoying it, and quite obviously expects to be praised to high heaven - though the investigators may find this a difficult task. Horne makes no mention of the problem he referred to in his note; instead he requests that they continue watching the show, paying special attention to The Amazing Karl, one of the closing performers.

The third part of the show drags its weary way towards the finale, and The Amazing Karl makes his appearance. He's a tall, rather stout young German, with wild curly hair and a bushy beard, his face creased with concentration throughout his act. He performs a number of card and sleight-of-hand tricks, before closing his act by making several ducks appear from an apparently empty tub. He appears no worse - but not much better - than many of the other magicians who share the bill with him.

Once the show is over, Horne invites the party to join him for a meal and a drink at a nearby eating house. His brisk, bustling manner doesn't allow anyone space to refuse his invitation.

### The Vanished Conjurer

Once the investigators are settled in the restaurant - a plain, rather old-fashioned place which serves average English fare



Horne can attempt to answer any questions the investigators have (providing some of the information in the following sections). When there are no more questions, Howard Horne gets up to leave, though before he goes he deals out his card to everyone and asks them to get in touch as soon as they have any news, or if they need any more information.

### PHILIP LECLAIR

If the investigators wish to know any more about Philip Leclair, the young stage magician, their best source is Howard Horne again. If they think about such things before they finish their meal they can ask him about Leclair then; if not they will have to visit him at his office during the daytime.

Horne does not know too much about Philip Leclair's personal life. The young man was 24 years old, and lived in a small lodging house in Balham, in south London. Despite his name he was English, though Horne believes he once mentioned that his father was French. He had been on Horne's books for about ten months now, and had shown a great deal of promise as a first-on-the-bill support in many middle-range shows across the West End. After working for six months he felt his act was becoming stale, and Horne agreed to pay him enough to live on while he developed a whole new act ready for a relaunch of his career in the Autumn.

Horne knows little about the man beyond that. He describes him, though: as a thin man of average height, with straight blonde hair and blue - no, brown - eyes. He didn't smoke (unlike so many stage magicians, it seems), and kept himself very much to himself. He didn't mention any girlfriend, and seemed to spend most of his time practicing his stage routines.

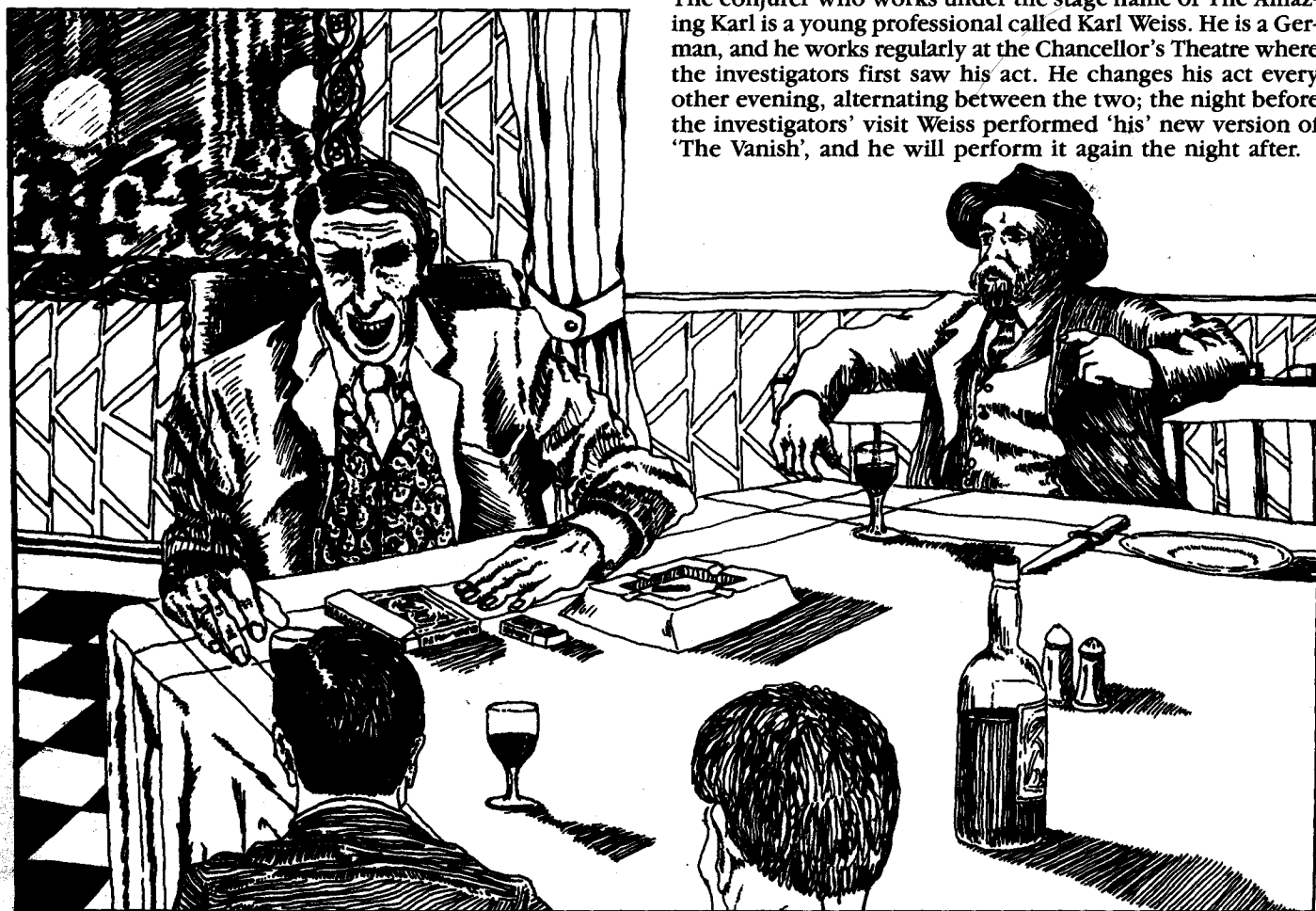
A trip to his lodgings, at 43, Rowfant Road, in Balham, will reveal very little. The landlady, a Mrs May Drinkwater, is perfectly happy to show the investigators around Leclair's room, which she has kept just as it was the last time he was seen, for his rent is paid up three months in advance. There is nothing sinister in this; Mrs Drinkwater insists upon such a practice for all her tenants. His room is tidy and clean (she saw to that) and has no clues to his whereabouts. She tells them that the police called a few days after he was last seen, and went through the room, but took nothing away with them. There are several magician's props on the shelves, and a few books on stage magic on the table. If the investigator's go through the small room they will find his stage clothes, cane and top hat in the wardrobe, and a small suitcase full of props under his bed. Neither of them will provide any clues to his disappearance. Mrs Drinkwater can confirm Horne's description of him, and that he had no social life to speak of.

Here the trail ends. The investigators will not be able to discover much more about Leclair, though they may care to call in at Balham police station to talk about the case. They will find the police are baffled by the case, but not especially concerned by it. He has no known relatives pressing them, so they have just filed his name along with all the others who disappear in the capital every year. The officer in charge of the case will gladly discuss everything he knows with the team. This consists of most of the above - and nothing more.

### THE AMAZING KARL

Once Leclair's trail goes cold on them, the investigators may decide to find out more about The Amazing Karl, who Howard Horne believes has stolen Leclair's new 'Vanish'. Horne can provide them with most of the following information, which can also be learnt from discrete enquiries at the Chancellor's Theatre.

The conjurer who works under the stage name of The Amazing Karl is a young professional called Karl Weiss. He is a German, and he works regularly at the Chancellor's Theatre where the investigators first saw his act. He changes his act every other evening, alternating between the two; the night before the investigators' visit Weiss performed 'his' new version of 'The Vanish', and he will perform it again the night after.





What has really happened between Leclair and Weiss is detailed here; how much of this is learnt by the investigators depends on how well they fare in questioning Weiss (that is covered after the following section).

Karl Weiss met Philip Leclair at the Inner Brotherhood of Magic, where Weiss has been a second level member for the last six months. He shared a number of interests with Leclair, in the use of complex apparatus for illusions and the study of old 'magic' books. Weiss also saw Leclair as a possible source of new ideas for tricks to borrow from, and offered to help him with 'his' new 'Vanish' trick. Leclair readily agreed to this, and the two of them worked on the idea - though most of the inspiration came from Leclair.

Eighteen days before Horne contacted the investigators, Leclair came to Weiss in a state of great excitement. He had with him an old book, which he said he had found in the library at the Brotherhood. Weiss recognised it as one he had seen in the study of the Brotherhood's leader, Ching Lung Soo, while taking lessons with the magician. Weiss felt that this was a good opportunity to ingratiate himself with Lung Soo, and so he told the Oriental about the book. Ching Lung Soo thanked him, and assured him that he had done the correct thing by informing him. That was the last day that Weiss saw Leclair alive.

The police have questioned a few members of the Inner Brotherhood of Magic, and Weiss is now painfully aware that Leclair is now missing. Although he has no evidence that Ching Lung Soo has anything to do with the man's disappearance, he feels it is very likely, and is afraid that he himself will be implicated. He has been performing a prototype version of 'The Vanish' as part of his act (without Leclair's knowledge) - though he is considering dropping it from his act, replacing it by performing the bird trick at every show.

If the investigators go to the Chancellor's Theatre and approach Weiss directly, and enquire about Leclair, he will deny ever having met or seen the man, though he has heard his name in a professional capacity. Weiss will not answer many of the team's questions about Leclair, or the Brotherhood, and he will deny that he has any connections with the conjurer's club. If pressed on the matter, he will become abusive, and have the questioners removed from his dressing room by the management.

If the investigators wait for Karl after the performance, they are able to discover that he takes a taxi, telling the driver to go to Surbiton (a quiet suburb in the extreme south-west of London). Following the taxi is a shrewd move, for it leads the investigators to a large and impressive house in the residential part of Surbiton - Ching Lung Soo's house. Weiss pays the taxi, and then raps on the front door (there doesn't appear to be a bell). After a short delay, it is opened by an oriental-looking man in a plain uniform, and Weiss slips inside.

The door closes, and is locked with an audible 'clunk!'. If any of the investigators approach the house they will be able to read a small polished metal plaque affixed to one side of the door, which bears the legend:

### CHING LUNG SOO THE INNER BROTHERHOOD OF MAGICIANS

The door itself is solid and looks likely to be resistant to physical attack; the windows are covered by heavy shutters. If the investigators attempt to follow the same route as Weiss, and knock on the door, they will find themselves confronted





by the same servant. He will ask their business, and refuse to admit them once they reveal that they are not members of the club, and do not have any legitimate business within the building. If the investigators attempt to simply push their way past the servant they will cause a disturbance, and be met in the hall by a smartly dressed policeman. This is Inspector Long, who is a first level member of the club. Long politely but firmly insists that they leave the premises at once. Overzealous investigators should be deterred from storming the premises, not least by the fairly formidable defences, and by the large number of residential houses which overlook the property.

## THE INNER BROTHERHOOD OF MAGICIANS

### The Society

The Brotherhood is an increasingly well-known minor magicians' society/club, which exists to promote the image of conjuring and conjurers, and to serve as a meeting place for amateurs and professionals alike. The club was set up by the famous and popular Ching Lung Soo, on his return from the Far East almost three years ago. The Brotherhood is open to anyone who can show an interest in, and some talent for, stage magic. Members must also be above suspicion and capable of being trusted to keep secret the many tricks and devices which the club makes available to its them.

When a new member wishes to join the Brotherhood, he must prove his interest and talent by performing a small trick or illusion for the selection committee. The club is very strict on this matter, and will not even waive this rule for its noble patrons. Only men are admitted to the Brotherhood.

Once a conjurer has passed the selection procedure, he becomes a 'first level' member of the club. This grants him access to the first level library, and use of the practice rooms provided within the club. To become a 'second level' member, he must pass a further series of tests, and prove himself a capable magician of professional standard (having a Conjuring skill of 60% or more). Once this level has been attained,

he is allowed access to the second level library and private tuition from the great Ching Lung Soo himself.

The membership of the Inner Brotherhood of Magicians consists mostly of first level members, keen amateurs who like to while away their time practising conjuring tricks, and who use the club more like a social club than as a professional institution. The few second level members are either professional stage magicians (such as Weiss himself) or are very keen and moneyed amateurs who pursue the art for its own sake.

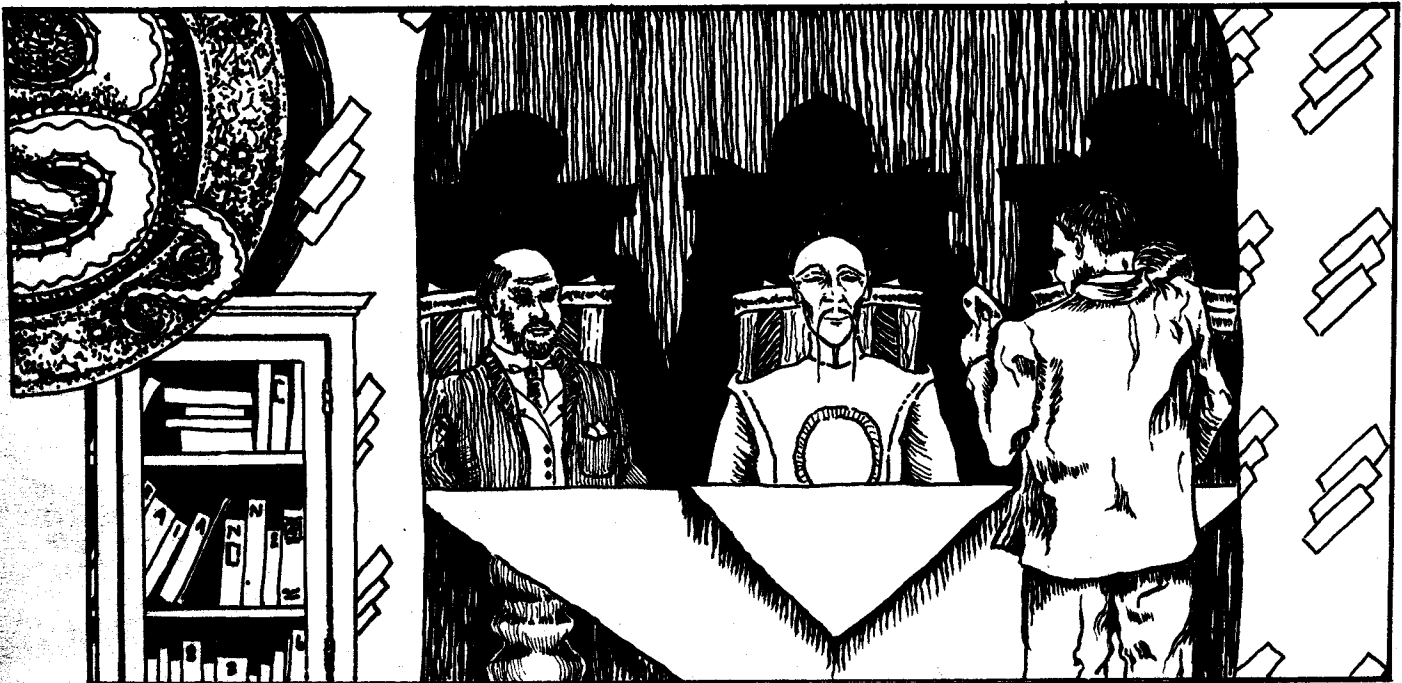
### The Charity Show

Each year, the Brotherhood performs one special show for the general public, with all the money it raises being donated to children's charities. The show gives its members a chance to show off their talents, and for new tricks to be revealed. This year's show is to be held on Midsummer's Eve, the 28th of June, and is bigger than previous years, as it will be attended by a number of members of the royalty and the government, a sign that the Brotherhood has acquired a good measure of respect from important members of society.

Outside the Inner Brotherhood, little is known about its activities other than how one can join, and that several 'prominent people' are numbered among its members or patrons. The investigators will be able to ascertain all the general knowledge about the society from newspaper cuttings, which report the founding and the annual charity shows in some detail, or from its regular adverts in *The Magician*, the monthly journal for conjurers.

### Joining The Brotherhood

In order to become a member of the Inner Brotherhood of Magicians, the investigators will have to approach the club posing as interested amateur conjurers. Providing they have not made a nuisance of themselves around the club already, a letter of enquiry will produce a welcoming reply from Ching Lung Soo, who asks them to attend a selection meeting the following day, where they will have a chance to show off their talents. He also makes a veiled reference to the fact that ladies are not permitted to join. If the investigators do not have any



natural abilities for card tricks or whatever, Howard Horne will be able to put them in touch with a professional magician via a fellow agent, who will teach them a simple but impressive trick for a small fee that very day. (The trick will add 10% to a character's base percentage at Conjuring, but will add only 5% if they already have some Conjuring skill.)

The investigators' selection takes place at eleven o'clock in the morning, at Lung Soo's house in Surbiton. They will be met at the door and shown inside by an oriental servant (not the one they may have seen admit Weiss), who asks that they sign the visitor's books, and then leads them directly to a reception room on the ground floor, where a motley group of six prospective members are already waiting. After they have been left for a few minutes, Ching Lung Soo joins them, introduces himself, and explains the club's background structure. He then tells a servant to ask a couple of the second level magicians to join him. These two will act as the selection committee for the prospective members; the investigators and their fellow newcomers are then asked to perform their tricks (roll against their Conjuring skill to pass and be selected).

*(Option: It is suggested, to add a touch of atmosphere and flavour to your game, that each of the players involved in the selection process should actually learn a magic trick for his or her character to perform. The keeper can then judge the player's success on how well they perform the trick. A number of example tricks are given in the Appendix to this adventure.)*

After the selection process is complete, Ching Lung Soo reads out the names of those who are successful. The remainder are thanked, and bade farewell with the hope that they will return soon when have practiced a little harder. The new members are given membership cards and a brief talk of their limitations as first level members, and are shown around the ground floor of the building. Ching Lung Soo also strongly emphasises that first level members are not allowed into the second level library upstairs. He then wishes them luck and leaves them to their own devices, heading up the forbidden stairs himself.

Once at least some of the investigators are admitted as members, they are able to come and go as they please between the hours of 11am and 9pm. They are able to use all the facilities of the club, but will notice that all the doors they are not allowed to enter have one of the inscrutable oriental servants standing by them. Anyone attempting to gain admittance to a forbidden place will be met by one of the orientals, who politely reminds the offender that 'The room is only open to second level members, sir.' No one, surely, will be such a cad as to force the issue; if they do, however, the servant will restrain them with an unbreakable grip. Anyone making a nuisance of themselves in this manner will quickly find themselves barred from the club and their membership withdrawn.

## THE BROTHERHOOD'S HOUSE

### The Ground Floor

**1) The Entrance Hall:** The heavy front door opens to reveal a long, carpeted hallway. The walls on either side bear the portraits of famous stage magicians of the past and present. The portrait at the end of the hall is of a middle-aged Chinaman dressed in full stage regalia (long, flowing and highly-decorated silk robes) - Ching Lung Soo. The hallway also contains a small

desk, which holds the visitors' book (which all guests must sign when they enter the building), and the booking ledger for the practice rooms.

**2) Reception Room:** The investigators are led here when they first arrive for their membership selection. This room is used for guests of the members, and as a waiting area for visitors. It is fairly plushly furnished, with a number of armchairs gathered in a wide circle around a large open fire at one end of the room. A number of classical Chinese vases and decorations stand around the room, matched by the dragon motif woven into the carpet. This oriental feel is repeated throughout the other rooms of the building.

**3) Kitchen:** The kitchen is staffed by two Chinese cooks, and it is used during the day to provide simple snacks and light luncheon for the club members. In the evening, they prepare meals for Ching Lung Soo and any guests he may have for dinner.

**4) The Pantry:** A small walk-in cupboard which contains various foodstuffs.

**5) The Members' Lounge:** This room holds a large number of armchairs, tables, current issues of magic journals and newspapers. It resembles nothing quite so much as the smoking room of a gentleman's club, and indeed the lounge is used as such by most members. During the day, there will be 3 to 12 (3d4) members present in this room, reading, playing cards, discussing politics - perhaps even talking about magic occasionally!

**6) Practice Room:** The practice rooms serve as a quiet area where members can perfect their conjuring skills. This room is set aside for card magic, and the cupboards around the walls contain packs of normal cards, magic tricks, etc. There is a 25% chance that a member will be using this room.

**7) First Level Library:** This library contains a very comprehensive range of basic texts on stage magic and conjuring. The books available are not particularly unusual, and indeed they could be obtained from any reputable bookseller with little difficulty. The advantages of this library are the sheer range of books it contains, and the back numbers of periodicals such as *The Magician*, *Abracadabra*, *Practical Conjuring*, etc. Members are allowed to consult any of the books, but are not allowed to remove them from the premises - any member found doing so will have his membership terminated.

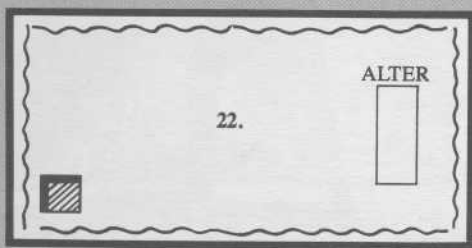
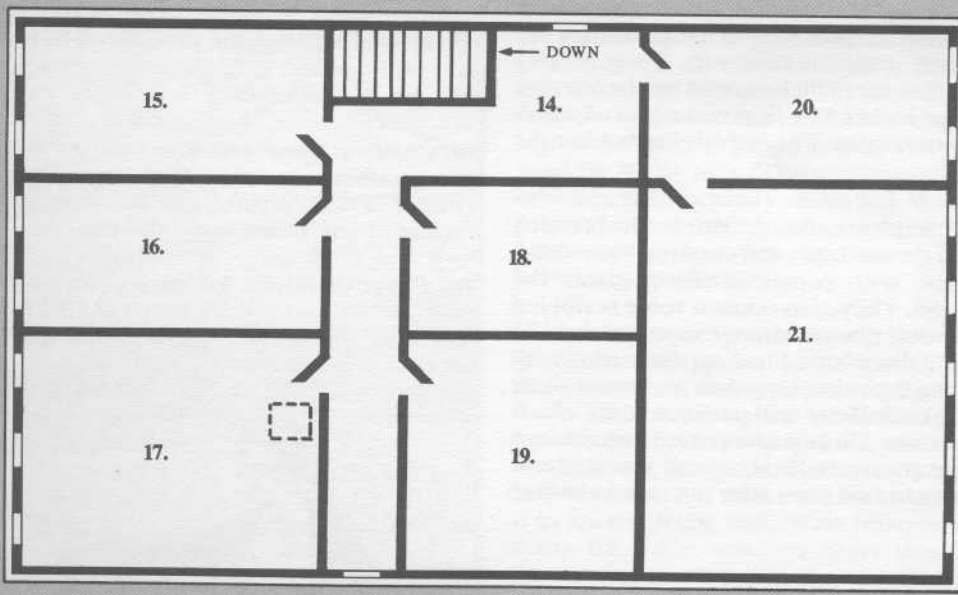
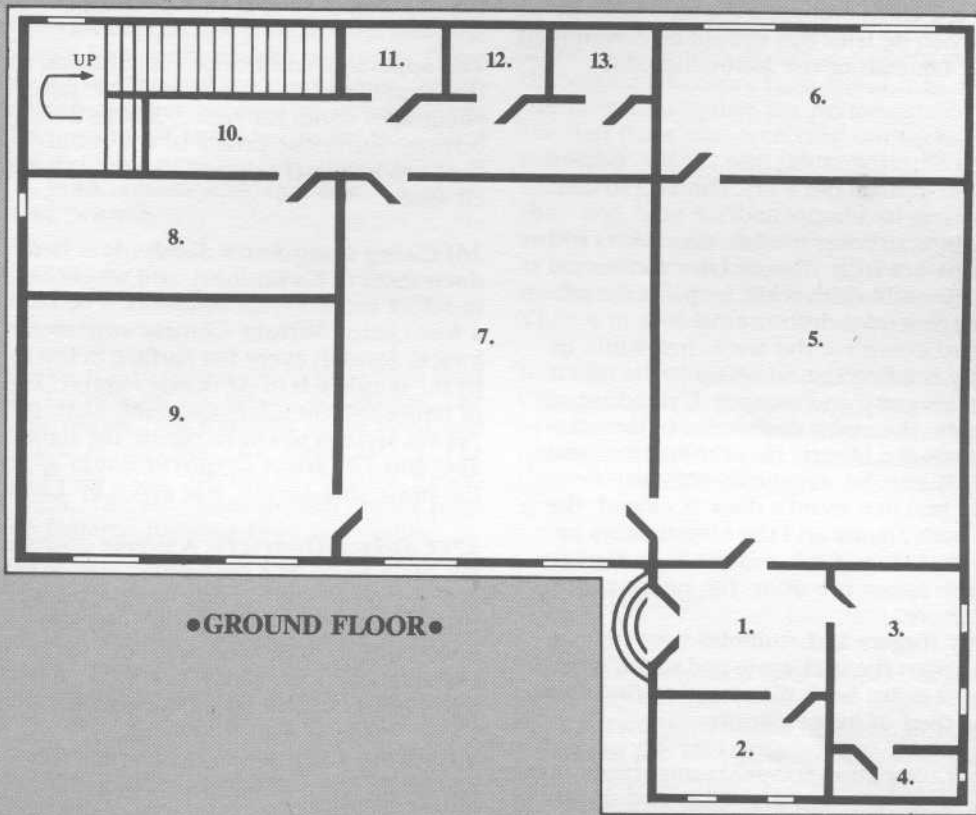
**8) Toilets:** A fairly small w.c. with a barred window overlooking a side alley.

**9) Practice Room 2:** This practice room is set aside for the practitioners of sleight-of-hand illusions. The cupboards and shelves around the wall hold all manner of apparatus, from collapsible flowers to Russian Doll sets. There is a 25% chance that a member will be using this room, at any time during the day. On their first visit to this room the investigators will meet Danny Paul, a novice member who is practicing the classic Appearing Rabbit illusion.

### Danny Paul's Rabbit Trick

Danny 'Mister Magic' Paul is wearing a top hat and standing behind a magician's table. His rabbit is squashed into a heavy cloth bag which is concealed hanging from a hook on the back of the table. He starts his trick by showing the top hat to be empty, and then places it upside down on top of the table. After delivering a few words of his patter he attempts to turn the hat upright and secretly slip the rabbit into the hat. If this





**Map 1**

THE INNER BROTHERHOOD OF MAGICIANS

- WINDOW
- DOOR
- TRAPDOOR (IN CEILING)
- TRAPDOOR (IN FLOOR)
- CURTAINS

works, he covers the hat with a silk cloth, waves his magic wand, reaches under the cloth and pulls the rabbit out by its ears. What happens when he tries this should be determined by rolling a d100 and consulting the following table:

**Roll Result**

- 01-20 As Paul secretly slips the rabbit into the hat, it bites him on the hand. He lets out a cry, but tries to continue as if nothing had happened.
- 21-40 Just as Paul is about to cover the hat, the rabbit - still in its bag - hops out of it. Danny tries to conceal the bag behind the silk cloth while he picks the rabbit up and forces it back into the hat.
- 41-95 Paul manages to complete the trick, but while he is triumphantly holding the rabbit up by its ears it wriggles from his grasp and escapes. If the door of the room is open, the rabbit dashes out of the practice room, across the library, into the hallway and up the stairs. It can be caught in the first floor hallway. If the practice room's door is closed, the rabbit evades both Danny and the investigators until the former decides to fetch a carrot from the kitchen. As Danny opens the door, the rabbit makes its escape as above.
- 96-00 Paul repeatedly forgets and stumbles over his patter, and has to restart the trick again and again. When he finally gets it right, he is distressed to find that the rabbit has died of asphyxiation.

**10) Hallway:** One of Ching Lung Soo's servants stands at the bottom of the stairs. To be allowed past him, and up to the second level library, a member must show his membership card to indicate that he is a second level member of the Brotherhood.

**11-13) Cupboards:** These are provided by Lung Soo for the members to deposit their personal effects in. These mainly consist of tricks and illusions which belong to the various members, but a search of locker 12 will reveal a locked document case bearing the monogram PBL, which holds a bundle of papers.

These papers are in Leclair's hand, as Horne or Leclair's landlady (or Will Crowther - see later) will confirm. They detail his new vanishing trick, with copies of the diagrams the players have already seen. They also contain some scribbled notes in which Leclair describes a 'strange new concept' in magic, and mentions a 'a discussion I had on the matter with my friend Weiss'. Among the other diagrams and notes there is a rough sketch of the trick Weiss will perform at the charity show in a few days' time. These papers should be enough to convince the police to arrest Weiss as an accessory to Leclair's kidnap, if they can find him, after the case has come out into the open.

**The First Floor**

**14) Hallway:** Another of Ching Lung Soo's servants normally stands at the top of the flight of stairs, preventing any members from entering the locked room or Lung Soo's quarters.

**15) The Locked Room:** This room is nominally being used by Weiss, but actually contains the strange apparatus which Ching Lung Soo is working on. If the investigators are able to break into the room before the charity show (a very unlikely event which you should try and discourage, though it might be useful to have one of them take a very small peek inside before someone disturbs them) they will discover an unusual

arch-like apparatus, which is partially contained in three packing cases in the corner of the room.

The apparatus will not be there during the afternoon before the show, and the door will be unlocked. There is one peculiarity about the room - a large burn mark on the ceiling, directly above the centre of the room. Even stranger is that the burn is vaguely shaped like the silhouette of a spreadeagled man...

**16) Ching Lung Soo's Study:** It is here that Lung Soo conducts most of his business, and where he gives private lessons to select second level members. The study holds a desk and a few chairs. Various Chinese ornaments, tricks and knick-knacks festoon every flat surface in the room. The bookshelf by the window is of particular interest, as it contains a number of rather ancient tomes and pamphlets. It would require a successful Mythos roll to recognise the significance of *The R'lyeh Text* and *The Seven Cryptical Books of Hsan*. The latter was the book that Leclair was given by Crowther (see below).

**17) Cultists' Quarters:** A simple dormitory, which contains ten plain beds. The only other feature is a small trapdoor in one corner of the ceiling, like the entrance to a loft or attic. This is fairly well-concealed, and will only be noticed by a Spot Hidden roll. The trapdoor leads up to the cultists' ceremonial room. There is a 30% chance that there will be 1d6 cultists in this room during club hours.

**18) Ching Lung Soo's Quarters:** This is a very simple furnished bedroom, which is furnished with a bed, washing facilities, a wardrobe and a single armchair. Hanging on the back of the door is a set of oriental robes, bearing Chinese characters. These are Ching Lung Soo's stage robes, which he will wear at the charity show for his performance. The symbols may be recognised by a declared expert on the oriental occult after a successful Occult roll as having some connection with ancient Chinese magic, though their exact nature will not be identifiable.

**19) Cultists' Quarters:** Very similarly furnished to Room 17, this chamber contains ten beds and simple washing facilities. There is a 25% chance that the room will be home to 1d6 cultists at any time during the day.

**20) Practice Room 3:** The second level practice area, this room is devoted to tricks which require manipulation of large apparatus. The room is currently occupied by the equipment for the trick illustrated here.





**21) Second Level Library:** This library is similar to the first level library in layout, with tables and chairs to study at. The books are more advanced than the first level library, and contain a number of rare texts on stage magic and conjuring. Ching Lung Soo has spent a lot of time and money building up this collection, and members are not allowed to remove these books from the library. Although these books are rare, none of them are of an occult nature, and the investigators will be unable to find any book resembling the one Crowther describes to them (see below).

### The Attic

**22) Ceremonial Room:** It is here that the cultists hold their meetings each week, praying for the return of Lan-Shi. The room is only accessible through the trapdoor in the floor, and a small retractable ladder is built onto the trapdoor sill. The walls of the room are completely covered by curtains, blocking out any natural light. The only illumination comes from a number of Chinese lanterns hanging from the ceiling.

The floor is carpeted with a thick rug embroidered with the Chinese dragon motif which appears throughout the house and is repeated on the ceiling and coverings of the lanterns. There is a small cupboard to one side of the room, which contains the cultists' ceremonial robes, and a small number of candles. These will be used on stage during the summoning attempt.



Dominating the far end of the room is a large altar, which bears the Chinese dragon motif and a grotesque mural showing an emaciated man, tied to the altar and being drained of blood by a creature or creatures unseen.

### FURTHER INVESTIGATIONS

If the investigators continue to keep tabs on Weiss, they will discover a few more facts about him. He attends the club in the mornings before his performances, using the library on the first floor, and receiving tuition from Ching Lung Soo in his study. He is not particularly liked by the rest of the membership, and if the investigators discretely ask about him they will hear various stories about how he has apparently stolen tricks and ideas from other magicians. He is regarded as a professional conjurer of the worst type - in it for the money rather than for the love and appreciation of the art. They will also hear various rumours (see below).

If Weiss has already encountered the investigators (in the Chancellor's Theatre, perhaps), he will attempt to avoid them as much as possible, spending all his time upstairs. While enquiring about Weiss, though, the investigators will meet Will Crowther, another stage magician, who has no love for Weiss at all.

### Will Crowther

Crowther is a second level member of the Inner Brotherhood, and a very talented stage magician. He has been a member for the last two years, since he came to London from his native Boston in the USA. His attitude towards the investigators is quite open and friendly, and he is happy to answer any of their questions and generally help them feel at home in the club. He nurtures a strong dislike for Weiss, though, which is not just the result of professional rivalry.

Crowther is aware that Weiss is not above stealing other people's tricks and passing them off as his own invention, although Crowther has no real evidence of this. He is sure that Weiss is going to use someone else's trick at the forthcoming charity show. He mentions the locked and 'guarded' room at the top of the stairs as proof of this. The room is officially being used by Weiss to work on a revolutionary new trick to be unveiled at the charity show. But Weiss hardly ever uses the room - indeed, he is hardly ever at the club except for a few hours around lunchtime - so where is he going to produce this brand new trick from?

If Leclair's name is mentioned, Crowther inquires how his friend is, and appears very shocked if he is told that he has disappeared. Will Crowther met Leclair when he first came to the club, and watched over his selection. Leclair joined as a normal member, and did not attempt to enter the second level at first, though he could easily have done so. Crowther helped Leclair out with some ideas for his new trick (Crowther is a card magician, and felt no personal rivalry with the young man). Crowther was also aware that Leclair and Weiss had done some work together, and is not surprised to hear that Weiss is using a variation of Leclair's 'Vanish'.

As Leclair was not allowed access to the second level library, Crowther lent him a couple of books, one of which was a dusty old tome which Crowther didn't really understand and wasn't very interested in. He only borrowed the book because he knew Leclair was interested in the roots and history of his craft, and in all old things. Leclair couldn't make much of the book either, since most of its contents were actually in Chinese, and many of the words it used were not in the Chinese phrase-book he used to read it with, though certain key references in it convinced him that it could help with his new 'Vanish'. He told Crowther that he was going to ask Karl Weiss about the book, as the latter was said to have a similar interest in ancient things. That was at their last meeting;

Crowther had assumed that the young man had found what he needed, and was furiously practicing his new trick at his lodgings, too busy to socialise at the club.

Will Crowther is unaware of the cult's existence or its dealings within the club, though he has a natural wariness of the oriental servants. He has had few dealings with Ching Lung Soo, and knows nothing more about him than is already common knowledge. If asked, he can tell the investigators that the servants appeared just over a year ago, a present - Ching Lung Soo declared at the time - from an old acquaintance in China.

### Rumours Within The Brotherhood

Apart from the various other scraps of information which the investigators may have been able to pick up, there are a number of rumours which can be passed on to them, at your discretion. Use one or more of the following, or add your own. (F) indicates that the rumour is false; bear in mind that many members will believe all of them to be ludicrous, though few will refrain from passing them on anyway.

1- Ching Lung Soo is an imposter; the real magician was killed out in China and has been posing as him ever since! (F)

2- Karl Weiss has stolen someone's trick, and is planning to use it at the charity show.

3- The Brotherhood building is obviously the cover for a secret Chinese Tong - the oriental servants and Lung Soo are proof of this! (F)

4- Philip Leclair has skipped off to America, as there's a lot more money to be made there. (F)

5- Ching Lung Soo seems able to perform tricks which are physically impossible by normal sleight-of-hand, and no-one knows how he does them.

6- Strange lights have been seen at the club in the early hours of the morning. They were apparently seen at the far end of the upstairs corridor, near to the doors of rooms (17) and (19). They were green and blue, and were most mysterious. (Who actually saw them, and how they came to be present in the club so early in the morning, has been lost in the constant whispered retelling of the story. They actually emanated from the cultists' ceremonial room, and were the result of Ching Lung Soo's initial confrontation with the cult members.)

### CHING LUNG SOO

There is much more to the leader of The Brotherhood than the simple impression of the pleasant oriental gentleman he conveys. Ching Lung Soo is a very well-known stage magician, who made a name for himself in the London music halls and theatres before WWI with his Chinese-flavoured card magic. He disappeared from London during the Great War, and was generally believed to have returned to his native China. He reappeared on the London scene just three years ago, explaining that he had returned East to visit his family and to research more of his special oriental magic.

In fact, though, Ching Lung Soo fled Britain in 1915 to avoid being called up for military service, and travelled in disguise to China via a very roundabout route. Once there, he had hoped to learn more oriental stage magic from old texts, which is where most of his act originated. But deep in the ruins of

ancient China he found much more - the secrets of a strange religious cult and the powers of true magic that they wielded in the service of a deity called Lan-Shi!

Returning with the books and scrolls that he had found, Lung Soo was soon able to use many of the minor spells in his stage act. These unexplainable tricks swiftly enhanced his reputation as a master of illusion, and he is now known as one of the best magicians in all of Europe. At first he was content with this, with the magic supplementing his own considerable skills at conjuring; he did not wish to become involved with the more powerful magic and the strange rites described in the books, which had terrified him. However, the cult whose store he had inadvertently plundered still existed, and several of its members set out on Ching Lung Soo's trail. When the oriental began using the spells, first in China and later across Europe and finally to Britain, he left behind him a trail of magical energy, from which the cultists were able to track him down like hounds after a fox.

Two years after Ching Lung Soo returned to Britain the members of the cult made themselves known to him, arriving at the house on dark night to demand the return of their books. By this time, the conjurer had formed The Inner Brotherhood, and he realised that the loss of the spells would now ruin his career as a master stage magician. The continued use of the spells had damaged his sanity, and he was now hungry to experiment with the major spells and incantations in the books. He proposed that the cult establish themselves in London, under his patronage, and with him as its new leader. There was some dissent, but Ching Lung Soo quickly showed his true powers by blasting one of the cultists into his component atoms. The plan was accepted, and the Inner Brotherhood of Magicians became a cover for the cult of Lan-Shi.

That was one year ago, and the cult has grown in size, with various members scattered throughout the city. While Ching Lung Soo is the nominal leader, and has managed to direct its operations so far, the cult members are becoming restless. Now that the books and relics have been recovered, they feel that Lan-Shi should be summoned to Earth at the earliest opportunity. Ching Lung Soo has reluctantly agreed to this, unsure whether he can actually control a star vampire, but seeing the creature as a great source of personal power for himself. Now his plans are finalised - the charity show is to act as cover for the summoning attempt, with the entire audience being used as a lure to bring the creature through a gate onto this plane.

The locked door on the upper floor of Ching Lung Soo's house does not conceal the work of Weiss, who has already prepared his own apparatus, but the summoning mechanisms to be used at the charity show. Lung Soo asked Weiss to say that he is using the room as a favour, on the pretext of preparing a surprising new trick that he doesn't want the rest of the club to know about. Weiss has agreed, as he is still afraid of the Chinaman after Leclair's disappearance.

### THE CULT OF LAN-SHI

#### History

In the ancient days of the Chinese Empire, there lived a powerful magician, Cho Shek, who experimented with many forms of magic. While delving into scrolls and spells, he unearthed a number of strange manuscripts and books which detailed a being known as Lan-Shi.





is the Chinese dragon motif, which is present on all the cult's possessions, and the mural showing blood-draining.

Both of these facts are recorded in the journals of a minor oriental explorer called Harold Amersham, who came across the history of the cult during his travels in China in the 1870s. The journals of his explorations are referred to in several bibliographies in the British Library under various headings, including 'Chinese occult', 'Chinese magic' and 'dragon motifs' (Library Use roll to spot), and are actually held in the collection of the British Geographical Society (require another Library Use roll to gain access and find the appropriate references). They read as follows:

*"...while in Tao An I saw a most peculiar fellow working in the paddy fields. He was old and leathery-skinned, like so many of the peasant farmers of the area, but upon his back was tattooed a most delightful dragon motif, which I will try and sketch below. When I pointed it out to my guide, however, he virtually spat out the words 'Lan Shee!' and rode on.*



*"I had all but forgotten the strange incident but the next evening, as we relaxed in my rooms in yet another delightful roadside tavern, Shaylin brought me a battered history book which he said detailed the history of the region. Of course I could not read a word of the thing, and Shaylin was somewhat reluctant to translate it for some reason, but the pictures were plain enough. They were painted in quite delightful style and colouration as always, but what scenes!*

*"The first showed a priest dressed up in the finery of a mandarin, standing at an altar with a dirk the size of an elephant's tusk poised over some poor smiling peasant. May the grace of God preserve me, but I swear it was a human sacrifice! The next showed some sort of decoration on a tapestry or something similar. It was of an emaciated man, thin and white as if something had sucked the very blood out of him. The last picture showed that bellish priest again, but this time dying at the hands of hundreds of righteous men who were plainly razing the unboly temple. I have heard tales before now of China's pagan past, but this 'Lan Shee' lot have been quite the worst I have ever heard of. May I never look at an old peasant's tattoos again!..."*

## THE CHARITY SHOW

The charity show is being staged at the famous Mermaid Theatre, just off Shaftesbury Avenue in the heart of London's West End. Due to a number of recent attacks by anarchists, and the current climate of unrest in Ireland, the

theatre has a light guard and is being searched before the performance as the presence of royalty and politicians makes the event a possible target.

The police presence is not overly heavy, but it is careful and experienced, and only those magicians with bulky apparatus for their acts will be able to enter the theatre before the evening of the show. The investigators will not be able to enter the theatre, no matter who they are, before the performance. (Indeed, it is important that they do not enter the theatre and examine the apparatus before the evening.)

If the investigators maintain a watch on the theatre during the afternoon of the show, they will see Ching Lung Soo arrive at around 2 o'clock with a small lorry driven and accompanied by all of his oriental servants. The servants then procede to manhandle three large packing cases from the back of the lorry and into the storage area of the theatre. Ching Lung Soo then remains at the theatre until 5pm, checking the final details of the show with the theatre's management. He returns to his house at around 6pm, to change and prepare for the evening performance. While he is away, the investigators have an opportunity to search the upper levels of the Brotherhood house.

Karl Weiss arrives at the theatre at 4pm in a small car holding a single packing case containing the apparatus for his trick. Ching Lung Soo's servants carry this into the theatre, and Weiss returns to the house.

## The Evening

The Inner Brotherhood members are allowed into the theatre at 7pm, to prepare the final details of their acts. The investigators are expected to be among them - the first level members do not perform, but they will appear on the stage as part of the finale of the show, as the entire Brotherhood is to be presented to the audience. This will give them ample opportunity to explore the area under the stage, on the pretext of changing into suitable stage clothes.

## THE MERMAID THEATRE

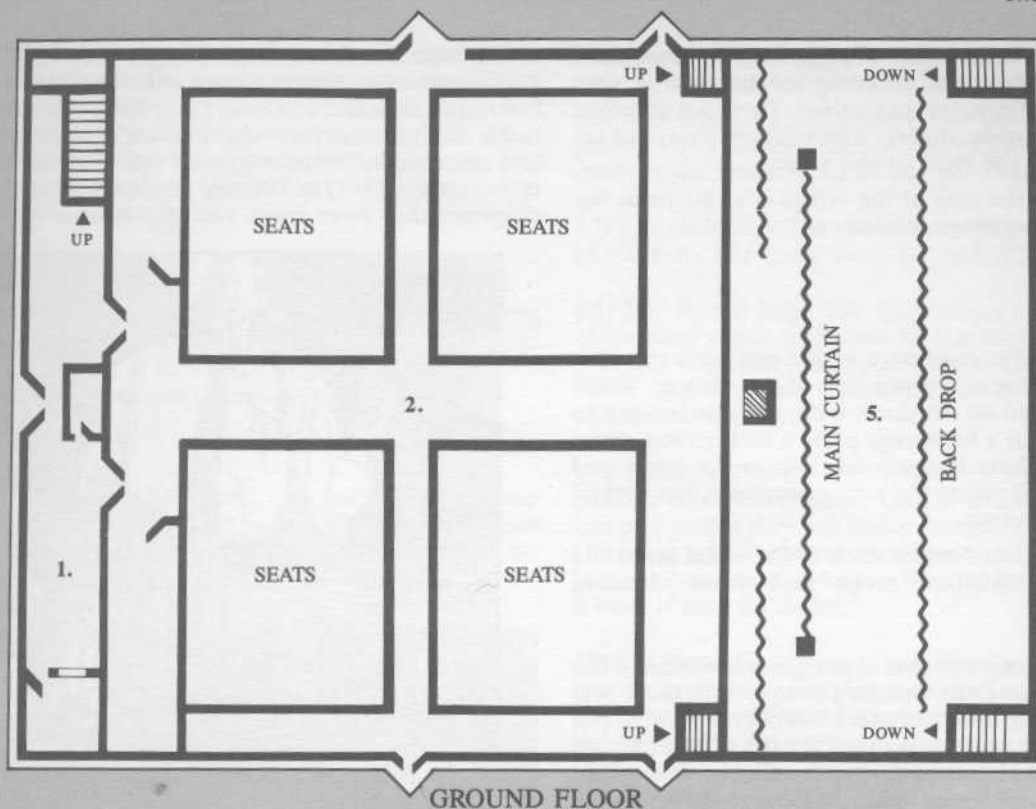
### The Ground Floor

**1) Entrance Foyer:** There are two discretely-armed policemen standing by the entrance to the stalls, and the stairs to the circle. Everybody entering the theatre is politely searched for weapons of any sort. Investigators in the audience will not be permitted to carry any guns into the theatre with them - indeed, they run the severe risk of being arrested if they attempt to carry one into the performance! Tickets for the show have all but sold out, but the investigators will be able to obtain some cancellations at the box office on the night, at a price of 5 guineas for circle seats, 2 guineas for the stalls, with all proceeds going to charity. There is a cloakroom for hats, coats, capes and the like, which can be left at a charge of 6d.

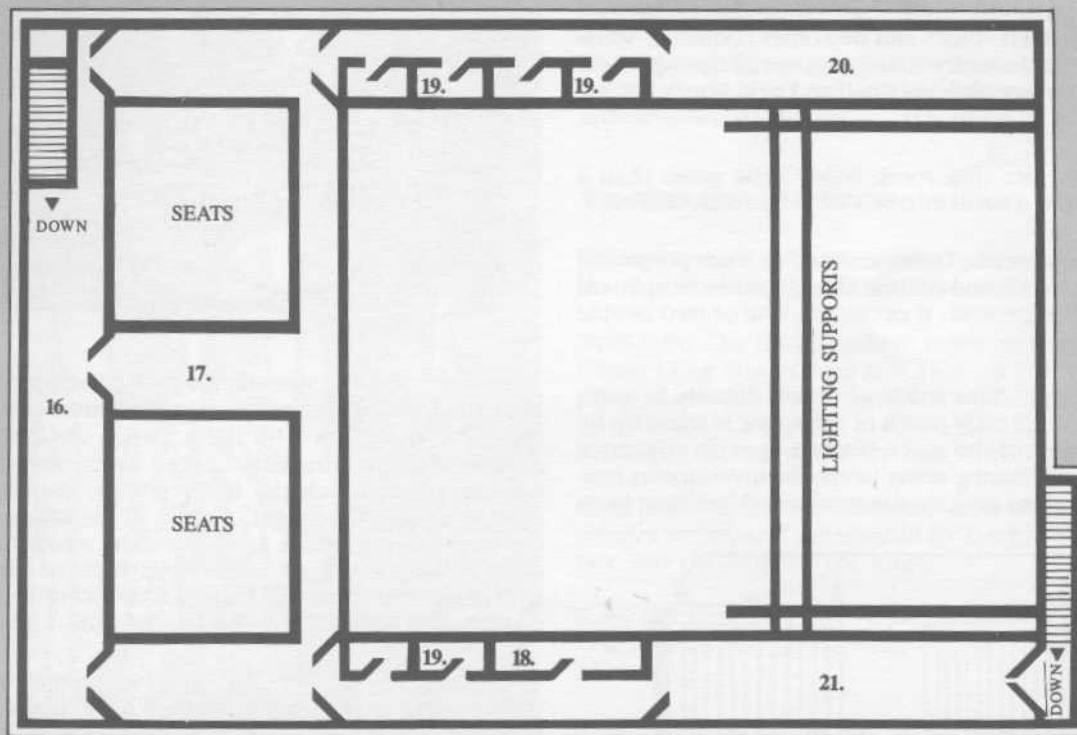
**2) The Stalls:** Seats are arranged in four blocks of ten rows, each with twenty seats, providing seating for 800 people all together. There are also several boxes - see (18) and (19). The exit doors to the sides of the stalls are stewarded by policemen in full evening dress - a Spot Hidden will reveal their real occupation!

**3 & 4) Toilets:** Standard, though extremely clean, w.c.s, lit by small, barred windows.

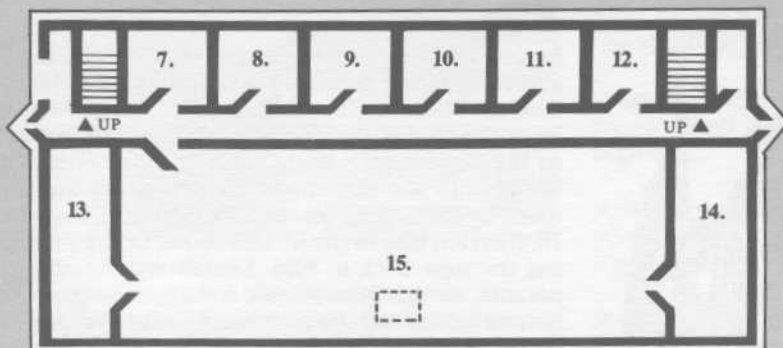




GROUND FLOOR







FIRST FLOOR



BASEMENT

**Map 2**

**THE MERMAID  
THEATRE**

-  DOOR
-  TRAPDOOR (IN CEILING)
-  TRAPDOOR (IN FLOOR)
-  CURTAINS

**5) The Stage:** Two short flights of steps lead up from each side to the wooden stage. The backdrop for the show is plain black, as are the stage curtains themselves. There is a trapdoor in the middle of the stage, slightly towards the front, and activated by a lever to the right of the stage.

Two sets of stairs at the rear of the wings lead down to the changing rooms and storage rooms.

### Below The Stage

**6) Stage Corridor:** The stage door at one end leads out onto a side alley which runs down the side of the theatre. There is an armed policeman on the door, with strict orders not to admit anyone without a backstage pass, which allows entry after half past six. There is a second door at the other end of the corridor, usually open for safety purposes, but locked for tonight's performance.

There is a small cupboard under each of the stairs up to the stage, which hold brushes, mops and other cleaning equipment.

**7-12) Dressing Rooms:** For this evening's performance the magicians are forced to share dressing rooms, with three acts to each dressing room. Will Crowther has been allocated (7), and he will wait here until he is due to perform (after Ching Lung Soo near the very end of the performance). Weiss also spends the time before his act in his dressing room (9), along with his assistant, the "lovely Carla" - a Cockney girl with an irritatingly high nasal voice - and two other conjurers. Weiss spends all of his time heatedly attempting to run through their new act, which Weiss only explained to Carla hours before. Ching Lung Soo is in room (11).

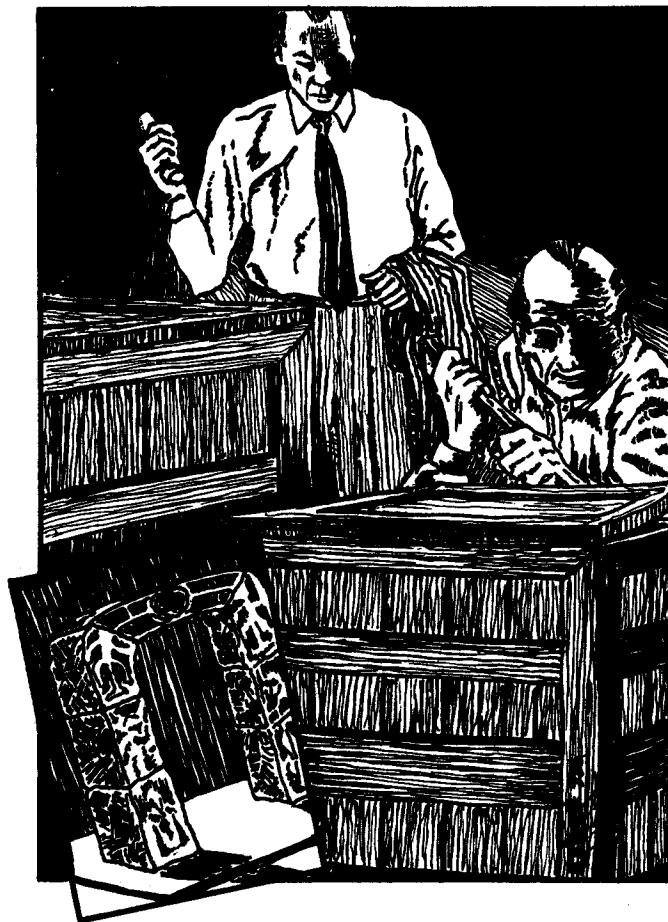
Each whitewashed dressing room holds little more than a single dressing table, a small mirror, chairs and a clothes rack.

**13-14) Store Cupboards:** These are used to store props and costumes from previous and current shows. Neither cupboard is particularly full at present; if necessary, one or two people could hide in each.

**15) Under the Stage:** This is a large room, directly beneath the stage, and consequently much of the space is taken up by support beams. Most of the space is taken up with apparatus and props for shows; among many items, the investigators may well recognise the three packing cases unloaded by Ching Lung Soo's men earlier.



If they examine them, they will find a case which bears Karl Weiss' name, and three stamped with the Chinese dragon symbol found throughout Ching Lung Soo's house. The first case holds the apparatus for Weiss' new trick, and it is easily opened and examined. The investigators will find that the apparatus is nothing like 'The Vanish' which was depicted in the diagrams they have seen! The apparatus is detailed here.



The three packing cases stamped with a dragon are also easily opened, providing the investigators have a crowbar or some other prising object with them. Inside are the parts for the summoning gate (illustrated here). As the investigators open the cases, and touch the items within, they feel a distinct change in the air, a slight cooling of the atmosphere. Then, drifting towards them as if from the cases themselves or materialising in the air, is the apparition of a burning man! Everyone present should make a SAN roll or lose 1d4 points; a successful roll delivers the loss of only 1 point.

This 'ghost' is Philip Leclair, who has been awoken from his current state by the investigators. What actually happened to him is explained here - though the investigators will only discover most of this if Leclair emerges from tonight's performance alive.

Leclair left Will Crowther in the library of Lung Soo's house, and went to see Weiss to consult him about his trick and the Chinese book, as Crowther revealed. After Weiss reported the loss of the book to Ching Lung Soo, Leclair was asked to come to the Chinaman's study for a 'private consultation'. Once there, lung Soo questioned Leclair to try and find out how much he knew about the cult - which turned out to be nothing. He then led him to the locked room, or the pretext of explaining the new trick to him. Leclair was fascinated by the apparatus, though quite unable to fathom its purpose. It is while he was examining the arch that he was overpowered by three cultists and taken to be imprisoned in the attic.

That evening, he was taken to the locked room once more, where he was placed within the gate apparatus as an offering to Lan-Shi. It was operated by Ching Lung Soo, who was delighted at being able to test his calculations and the ritual before the big night. Leclair disappeared through the gate, and is there still. He is currently suspended in a state of limbo between two planes of existence.

Leclair's manifestation lasts around thirty seconds, during which time he attempts to warn the investigators and tell them what they must do. He is obviously in great agony, but between gasps of pain manages to say:

*"...the pain ... you must help me ... get me back from this accursed place ... you must get me back ... stop the Chinaman ... but open the gate ... open the gate for pity's sake!!..."*



Then, as suddenly as it appeared, the apparition fades and the investigators find themselves alone again. After a few seconds the temperature in the room reverts to its previous level.

## The First Floor

**16) The Balcony Corridor:** The top of the stairs are also guarded by a plain-clothes policeman, who is simply there to observe the movements of the patrons.

**17) The Balcony:** The seating here is arranged into two blocks of ten rows of twenty seats, providing room for 400 people.

**18) The Royal Box:** The door to the box is guarded by one of the King's own detectives. He is armed, and will be extremely suspicious of anyone passing down the corridor during the show. The King and Queen are guarded in the royal box by two more detectives.

**19) Theatre Boxes:** The boxes are all reserved by regular patrons of the theatre, and the investigators will be unable to use one unless they are lucky enough to know one of them. (There is a 10% chance that Howard Horne will be able to locate a box owner who is willing to let the investigators use a box, if they so desire.)

**20-21) Stage Gantries:** It is from here that the lighting and movement of the curtains is controlled. There will be 1d3 stage-hands in either of the two gantries at any time during the show. The fire escape at the back of (21) can be lowered to the ground behind the theatre, but is currently guarded by a policeman who will prevent people leaving the theatre through this exit, except in the case of a genuine fire alarm.

The lighting rig is supported on a series of ropes and pulleys which allows it to be raised and lowered or moved back and forwards across the stage.

## Timeline For The Show

If Ching Lung Soo is not interrupted in his proposed plan, the timeline for the charity show runs as follows:

**7.00-8.00** The IBM members arrive and set up apparatus. Ching Lung Soo arrives at 7.15 with cult members who place themselves near the front of the stage.

**8.00** The theatre gradually fills with the audience.

**8.20** The Prime Minister and various members of the cabinet arrive, and are seated by Lung Soo near the royal box and the front of the stage.

**8.26** The royal party arrive, and are seated in the royal box. Ching Lung Soo greets King George V and Queen Mary himself.

**8.30** The curtain rises, and Ching Lung Soo introduces the show with a few small illusions and sleights-of-hand, promising the audience "a magical experience like nothing you have ever seen before!!". The first act takes the stage and the show begins in earnest.

**9.20** Karl Weiss takes the stage for his act, which goes extremely well. His new 'Ducks And Tub' trick is a particular highlight.

**9.30** Interval. The cultists move Ching Lung Soo's apparatus up onto the stage, and assemble the arch-shaped summoning device.

**9.45** The curtain rises again, revealing the complex apparatus of the summoning gate. Ching Lung Soo starts his



act with a few minor tricks (and spells!) to get the audience's complete attention.

**10.00** Ching Lung Soo announces that he is about to undertake a brand new trick, never before performed anywhere in the world. He will require complete silence from the audience. The Chinaman begins his patter, telling a story of how, back home in his native China, the people of the village used to gather... etc. The cultists - each dressed in identical robes decorated with the Chinese dragon motif - join him on the stage, and stand in a circle around the apparatus. Ching Lung Soo himself stands in the centre of the circle, in front of the gate.

**10.01** The cultists begin a low, hypnotic chanting in a barely audible, indistinguishable tongue. Ching Lung Soo begins to intone the summoning spell, calling on Lan-Shi. (If the investigators know the name of Lan-Shi they will recognise it from Lung Soo's chant immediately.)

**10.02** There is a bang of displaced air, and Leclair appears suspended above the apparatus. Screaming in agony, and with wisps of smoke drifting from his clothes, Leclair just hangs there, with no visible means of support. Some of the audience begin to applaud, in the mistaken belief that the act is over. Other members of the watching crowd mutter uncertainly, and cross themselves.

**10.03** The wisps of smoke become small, flickering flames, and within seconds Leclair's body is aflame! The gate apparatus is flickering with an eerie, unearthly blue light.

**10.04** Most of the audience are frozen in their seats, hypnotised by the rhythmic chanting of the cultists, as the thick, greasy smoke from Leclair's blazing corpse begins to obscure the stage. Those capable of action begin to crowd to the exits at the back of the theatre. The police start to move hesitantly forward - even they have noticed that there is something wrong!

**10.05** The flickering light briefly coalesces into a nightmarish form, and the cultists throw themselves to the floor. Ching Lung Soo intones a greeting in a high-pitched fanatical voice.

**10.06** Lan-Shi completes his transfer to this plane. The first the audience are aware of his presence is when a young policeman is snatched from the front of the stage, and the outline of the star vampire begins to fill with its victim's blood. Everyone makes a SAN roll. Chaos sets in as the audience go wild with fear and panic. The star vampire reaches out for another victim...

If this timeline runs to completion, the investigators will find it difficult to form any coherent plan due to the panic within the theatre. The audience are fighting amongst themselves to escape from the building and the nightmare creature behind them. The police are unable to fire on the creature or the cultists for fear of hitting a member of the audience. The royal party are swiftly spirited out of the building, but the Prime Minister and the other politicians are too near the front of the stage to stand much of a chance of escape.

### Stopping The Summoning

You should stress to the investigators that their first priority should be to rescue Leclair (the task they were asked to perform by Horne). When they discover the apparatus beneath the stage, and Leclair appears to warn them, they must be dissuaded from simply destroying the apparatus as this will



trap Leclair in his limbo forever. They must let the act go ahead, so that Leclair can use the gate to return to Earth.

Once Leclair has appeared, the investigators will have to act quickly to interrupt the summoning spell, before Leclair is completely consumed by the flames. This could be done in a number of ways, the desired result being to distract the attention of Ching Lung Soo and the cultists long enough to break the spell. If they achieve this, Leclair will fall heavily to the stage, badly burnt but still alive. There are plenty of fire-buckets of water or sand around back-stage which can be used to douse his flames.

Once the spell is broken, Ching Lung Soo will realise that his chance of summoning Lan-Shi has gone, and he will attempt to make good his escape. In the confusion, hampered by the police and the audience, the investigators will probably have a difficult job stopping him, unless they have set guards outside the theatre for this express purpose. The cultists will initially attempt to continue the summoning, until they realise that Ching Lung Soo has fled, when they themselves will scatter and attempt to leave the theatre.

Ching Lung Soo will return to the house in Surbiton by taxi, quickly gather up his personal effects and books, and flee again, heading for a bolt-hole in Limehouse. If he can be caught before he leaves the Brotherhood's house the investigators will have a chance of catching him; if not he will never be seen again. The cultists will head in various directions, and will not be caught if they get outside the theatre.

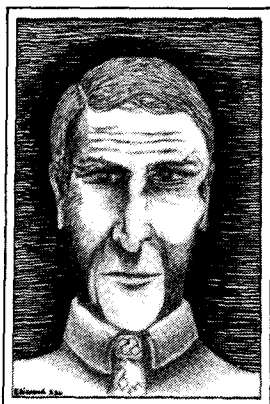
### NOTES ON RUNNING THE VANISHING CONJURER

For this adventure to work successfully, the investigators must be led to believe that Karl Weiss has copied Leclair's complete trick, and that evidence for this will be found at the theatre. The first time that the investigators will realise that 'The Vanish' is not being used is when they open the packing cases beneath the stage and discover the Ducks And Tub trick. The investigators will be suspicious of Ching Lung Soo and the sinister orientals, but will have few firm details of what the Chinaman plans until they are able to search the Brotherhood building just before the show, and when Leclair appears to them at the theatre.

It is vital that the investigators form some coherent plan of action before the show starts, and don't just potter around and improvise a solution, as time is very short indeed. You should be prepared to guide them slightly if they appear lost, or uncertain of what action to take, or they will be quite unprepared for what happens at the summoning.

### CAST OF CHARACTERS

The following profiles are of the main characters. Only those skills vaguely useful in the context of the adventure are listed.



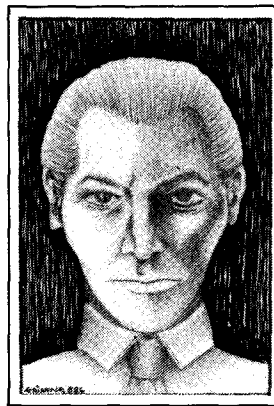
#### Howard Horne

Theatrical Agent. A thin, nervous sort of man with a narrow face and postively shifty eyes. Howard is one of those people who eventually manages to bring any conversation around to money and how good he is at making it, or to his marvellous acts and how good they are at making it for him. In reality, though, Howard works extremely hard for relatively little in-

come, and is invariably short of money. He also has an ulcer which is slowly beginning to make its presence felt. Undeterred by the truth, he always believes himself to be on a temporary rough run before he makes it big.

STR 8    CON 9    SIZ 6    INT 10    POW 10  
DEX 11    APP 8    SAN 45    EDU 5    Hit Pts 7

**Skills:** Bargain 85%, Fast Talk 75%, Oratory 60%



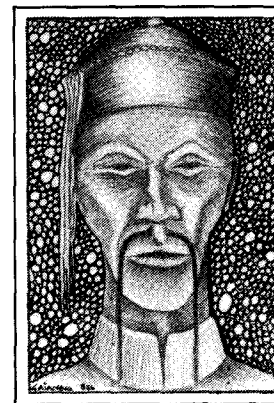
#### Philip Leclair

Illusionist & Stage Magician (first level member of the Inner Brotherhood of Magicians). With his thin, slight figure, stern face and greased back blond hair, Leclair always generates a feeling of intensity which is not altogether accurate. He is an accomplished conjurer who nevertheless takes as much pride in simple tricks as in large set pieces.

STR 6    CON 13    SIZ 11    INT 16    POW 16  
DEX 15    APP 10    SAN 12    EDU 17    Hit Pts 12

**Skills:** Conjuring 80%; Cthulhu Mythos 3%; Read Chinese 30%

**Notes:** Due to the experiences Leclair has undergone, he is temporarily suffering from Barophobia, a fear of loss of gravity. If rescued he will hug the ground very closely!



#### Ching Lung Soo

Chinese Stage Conjuror, founder of the Inner Brotherhood of Magicians and occultist leader of the cult of Lan-Shi. A wily Chinese man with a worn face and exceptionally deep-set black eyes. He is immediately recognisable by his ornate gowns and hats bought during his travels in the East.

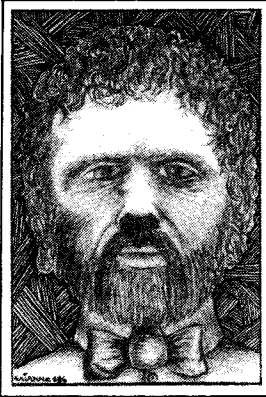
STR 6    CON 13    SIZ 11    INT 16    POW 16  
DEX 15    APP 10    SAN 12    EDU 17    Hit Pts 12

**Skills:** Cthulhu Mythos 68%, Conjuring 90%, Occult 50%, Oratory 60%, Speak English 60%, Speak Chinese 90%

**Weapons:** Knife 25%

**Spells:** Summon Star Vampire, Bind Star Vampire, Create Gate, Shrivelling

**Notes:** Ching Lung Soo is very close to total insanity. He suffers from strong megalomaniacal tendencies; hence his determination to summon and bind Lan-Shi.

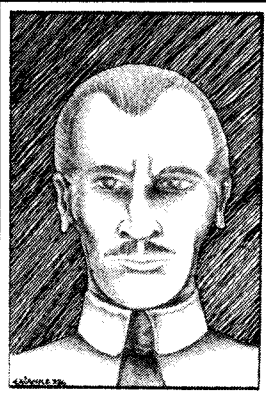


**Karl Weiss**

German Stage Magician, and second level member of the Brotherhood. A formidable man by any standards, standing well over six feet tall and filling his large suits with ease, he has curly black hair and a bushy beard. He has a very slight German accent, but he will exaggerate it and degrade his English when on stage or if questioned by the investigators.

STR 16 CON 13 SIZ 17 INT 11 POW 9  
DEX 12 APP 10 SAN 45 EDU 12 Hit Pts 15

**Skills:** Conjuring 75%, Speak English 70%, Speak German 85%



**Will Crowther**

Card Magician, and second level member of the Brotherhood. A proud, well-dressed American gentleman with short, greased-back brown hair. He has a strong accent, having only lived in Britain for the last two years. Although he is an amiable chap, he does have a tendency to be somewhat over-nationalistic, defending all that is American with fervour.

STR 10 CON 12 SIZ 14 INT 15 POW 6  
DEX 13 APP 17 SAN 30 EDU 10 Hit Pts 13

**Skills:** Conjuring 45%

**Cultist Servants**

To the Westerner these Chinese cultists all look very much the same, with crew-cut black hair and dark eyes. The cultists will not answer any of the investigators' questions, speaking to non-cultists only when absolutely necessary. Ching Lung Soo has told them to be servile, and as long as no club rules are broken they will be. All of them are competent martial artists in the style of their cult. They use unarmed techniques as a first resort, and if necessary weapons to back these defences up.

STR 12 CON 12 SIZ 9 INT 7 POW 10  
DEX 14 APP 10 SAN 35 EDU 7 Hit Pts 10

**Skills:** Cthulhu Mythos 20%, Occult 20%, Speak English 10%, Speak Chinese 80%

**Spells:** Shrivelling

**Lan-Shi, Star Vampire**

STR 32 CON 18 SIZ 22 INT 9 POW 16  
DEX 10 Hit Pts 20

**Weapons:** Talons 40%, Damage 3d6

'Bite' 80%, Damage 1d6 STR drain/round

**Note:** For further details see the *Call of Cthulhu* rulebook.

**APPENDIX**

There now follows several card tricks, which your players may wish to attempt to learn to simulate the initiation of their characters into the Brotherhood of Magicians.

**Three's Company**

**Effect:** The conjurer deals the top eight cards face down in a row. Someone is asked to take one of the cards and lay it aside - still face down. The remaining cards are then gathered into the pack, and the conjurer starts to deal the cards one by one onto a single pile. He tells the spectator that he will stop whenever they ask him to, which he does.

The spectator then turns up the card he has picked, and the conjurer picks up the cards dealt from the pack. These cards are then dealt into three separate piles. The conjurer then turns over the top card of each of these piles, which are revealed to be the same denomination card as the spectator's chosen card.

**Method:** The pack is prepared beforehand, with the top four cards being the 3s and the next four being 4s. When you deal the eight cards out, ask someone on the left to select a card. This should ensure that they select a three. The remaining cards are then gathered up in the order that you put them down in (ie, keeping the remaining 3s on the top of the pack). Start to deal the cards into a single pile, but don't ask the spectator to stop you until you have dealt the first seven cards. Once stopped, turn over the selected card and deal the cards into three piles. Explaining that you are dealing as many piles as the value of the card, if it is a three.

The one hitch with this trick is if the spectator selects a four. In this case, gather up the remaining seven cards with the fours on top and simply deal the cards into three piles without explanation when their chosen four is exposed.

**Packet Prediction**

**Effect:** The conjurer deals out three small piles of cards and asks the spectator to pick one of them. Just as he is about to do so, but before he does, the conjurer tells the spectator that he has written a prediction of the pack chosen on a slip of paper within a sealed envelope.

The spectator chooses one of the packs, and the conjurer opens the envelope to reveal that the note inside does indeed predict the pack the spectator has picked.

**Method:** The pack is prepared beforehand, with three sevens being placed on top of the pack. The cards are then dealt out into a pile of three, a pile of four and a pile of seven cards. The envelope contains a note saying:

**You will choose  
the  
SEVEN  
packet!**

When the spectator selects his pack, the envelope is opened and the note revealed. If the three card pack has been selected, the cards are turned over and shown to be all sevens. If the seven card pack is selected, it is shown that the pack has seven cards in it. The middle pack is a little trickier, and requires a little sleight-of-hand. When the note is taken from the envelope, hold it so that your thumb obscures the S of SEVEN, thus making the note read: 'You will choose the EVEN packet!'. The middle pack is then revealed to have four cards, while the other two packs have an odd number of cards!



### Colour Count

**Effect:** The conjurer takes a normal pack of fifty-two cards and starts to deal them to the spectator. He asks to be told when to stop dealing, at which point he hands the dealt pack to the spectator, keeping the rest for himself. He then asks, without looking at a card, which colour the spectator would prefer - red or black?

Let's suppose the spectator says 'black'; the conjurer weighs the cards in his hand, and tells the spectator, 'Sorry, you have picked the wrong colour. I have five more reds than you have blacks!'

With that, he counts his red cards face up, showing that he has thirteen. When the other person counts his black cards, he finds that he has only eight.

This then goes on, with each pack being thoroughly shuffled, and the conjurer then continues to deal cards from his pack to the spectator's pack until he is asked to stop. Again he can choose red or black. Suppose that this time the spectator chooses 'red'. Both packs are still face down when he makes his choice. The conjurer tells him that he is improving, and that this time he has more reds than the conjurer has blacks - three more, in fact. The cards are counted face up again, and the spectator finds that he has eighteen reds, while the conjurer has just fifteen blacks. This principle can continue, with the spectator being allowed to choose either pack for his own.

**Method:** the hidden principle behind this trick is quite simple. If you deal the pack into two piles of twenty-six cards, you can safely say that you have just as many reds as the spectator has blacks, or - if you prefer - you have just as many blacks as he has reds. Either way, the statement is true.

If you have twenty-five reds and only one black, the other pack has twenty-five blacks and only one red. Usually you don't run to such extremes, of course. You are far more likely to hold, say, nine reds and seventeen blacks as your hand, which immediately gives the other person nine blacks and seventeen reds as his own hand.

If you work with equal size packs, someone might catch on, so it is best to use differing size packs. For example:

Having shuffled the cards, you start dealing them one at a time. Once you have reached fifteen you ask the spectator to stop you at any time. Keep counting the cards to yourself until he asks you to stop. Now, if you have thirty-one cards, this is five more than the halfway point of twenty-six, and thus you have five more cards of the colour opposite to the one the spectator chooses. That is, if he picks red, you have five more black cards than he has reds!

If the number of cards you have is *less* than twenty-six, you simply state your card difference as being less than that of the spectator - five reds less than he has blacks.

### Royal Weddings

**Effect:** The conjurer fans out eight cards consisting of the kings and queens of the pack. These appear to be mixed together in a random order with the kings separated from the queens of the same suit. The conjurer squares the cards into a pack, and places it face down in front of the spectator. He then asks the spectator to cut the pack as many times as he wishes.

The conjurer places the cards behind his back, without looking at them, and proceeds to pull out the paired kings and queens of each suit.

**Method:** The eight cards are set up in the following order: Queen of Hearts, King of Spades, Queen of Diamonds, King of Clubs, King of Hearts, Queen of Spades, King of Diamonds and Queen of Clubs.

The secret of the trick lies in the fact that cutting a pack of cards does not destroy the sequence of them. Thus the pack can be cut as many times as the spectator desires, without altering the order of the cards one bit. Once the cards have been cut, place them behind your back and count off the top four cards into a separate pile. Now pull out the top card of each of the two packs, and reveal them to the spectator - they will be a paired king and queen of the same suit!





# The Statue of The SORCERER & The Vanishing CONJURER



CALL of  
CTHULHU  
ADVENTURE

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Any new rules presented in this adventure should not be regarded as official additions to the Call of Cthulhu rules.

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## INTRODUCTION

*The Statue Of The Sorcerer* is a complex adventure set around the San Francisco area of California in mid-1925. Called in to help explain a mysterious death the investigators chance upon a sinister cult led by a charismatic occultist, who is secretly plotting to return the Old Ones to this planet by sacrificing the whole city in another cataclysmic earthquake!

Investigators tackling this investigation will benefit from having high abilities in History, Library Use and Occult skills. Although it is most suitable for investigators of medium to high experience, careful refereeing will allow it to be used with most groups. One player should preferably start as a graduate student in Paleolinguistics (ancient languages) at the University of San Francisco, or some similar post. They will have a range of skills appropriate to such a position such as Read/Write/Speak Other Language, Library Use, Occult or History. This position could just about be filled by a non-player acquaintance of the investigators, depending upon the nature and location of your campaign.

### Modifications

Because of the historical background to this scenario, it has to take place in San Francisco during the period in question. Keepers with campaigns located in other parts of the USA, or overseas, will need to find a way of bringing the investigators to the city, perhaps via the university.

### Preparations

In preparing to run this scenario, there are a number of tasks which you, the keeper, should perform. Firstly, read the entire scenario — including the Timeline for *Worldsman* — and make sure you understand the basic thread of the plot, if nothing else. Separate the various handouts from the section in the middle of this book, keeping them in the right order, and have them close at hand for use in play. Read the scenario again, this time visualising how things might turn out, and how you might play the roles of the major NPCs, in the adventure to come.

We've divided the investigation up into a number of sections, generally tied to specific dates. Basically, there are a number of events which will take place on certain dates regardless of the actions of the investigators. In between these dates, they may carry out their own research or investigations, before the next set event comes around. So you will find that the adventure is divided between these set dates, and the periods in between which contain data which could be found during further research carried out at any time. Don't worry if the investigators don't do everything in the order it's laid out in here; you should know by now that investigators sometimes work in very peculiar ways! As long as you keep track of the date, you'll be perfectly alright. We have included a calendar for 1925 to help you do just that.

Unlike some adventures, we haven't saved profiles of the characters for the end of the book. Instead, we have included them where they are relevant, to make them easier to refer to during play. The only character to be wary of is Lilith Hopkirk, who we have quite deliberately left obscure. During this adventure she appears to be little more than a devoted acolyte of *Worldsman*, and we have described her as such. The implications of her real nature are not truly relevant to this investigation, and the investigators will only start suspecting her of being more than she seemed well after the climax of the whole affair, by which time she will be long gone. Let her be an enigma, and your players will remain puzzled and worried for a long time to come.

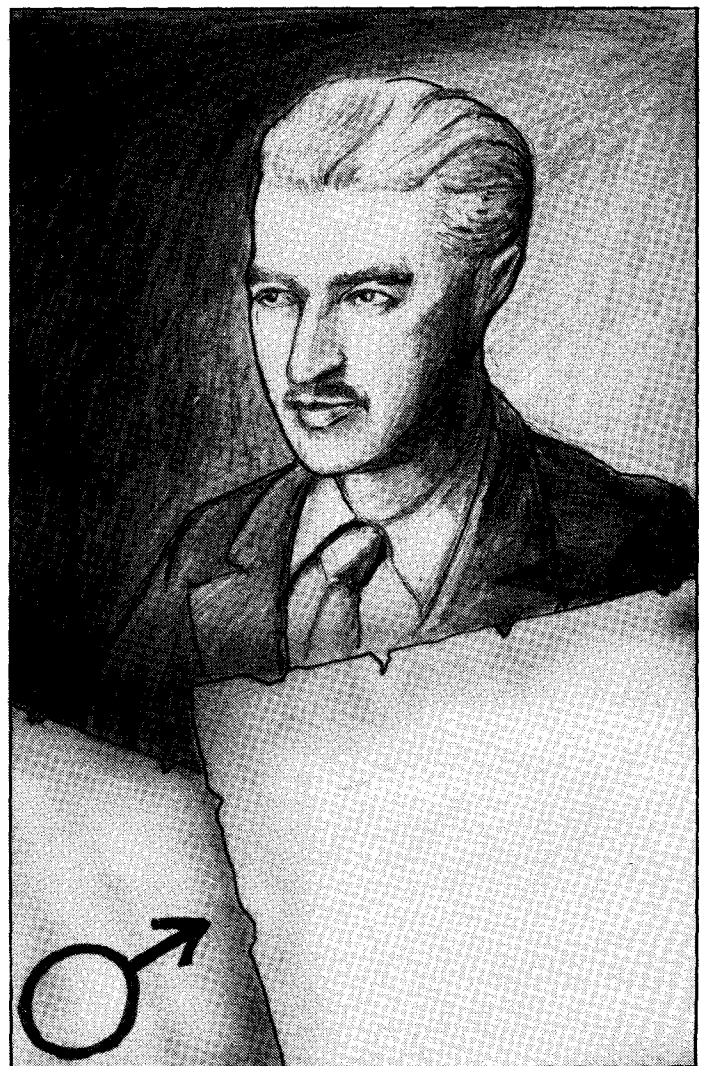
There is one further point which we must stress here. There are no statistics presented with this adventure. We aren't leaving them up to you to decide, however; they just aren't needed, so we haven't included any. The only character likely to present any threat to the investigators can't actually be harmed by normal means, so we feel there isn't any point giving him stats, and your players should not need to come to blows with anyone else, especially if they are working within the boundaries of the law. If you feel lost without them, by all means feel free to assign stats to anyone you feel like, but we prefer to think it's very unlikely you'll be needing them. Oh, and incidentally, if your players start asking silly questions like "Where did the statue come into it then?", refer them back to the article by Professor John Niall in *Niveus Nanus* which started the whole affair. The 'statue' in question isn't what most people would consider a statue, but then the portrait of Dorian Grey wasn't a typical oil painting either. About the identity of the sorcerer, however, there should be no doubt.

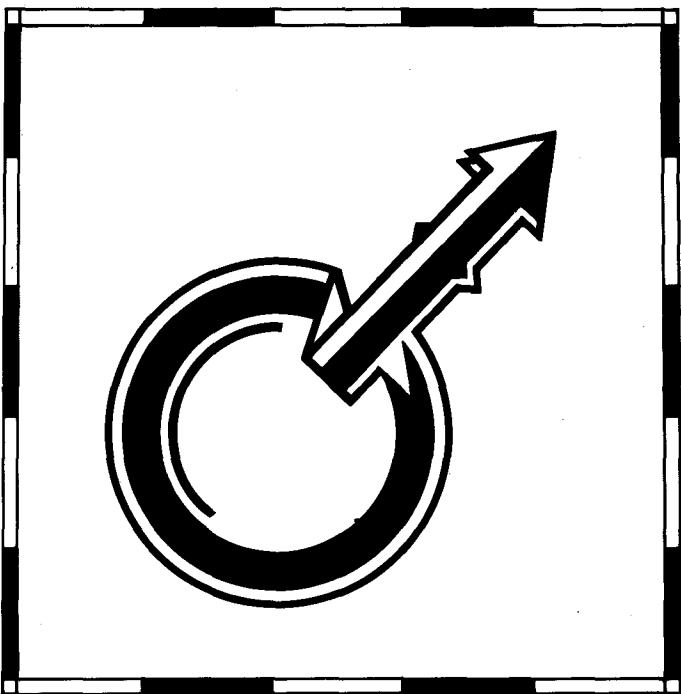
Have fun!

## Monday, June 8th

### STARTING THE ADVENTURE

This investigation starts with just one character, who is approached by someone with a problem in the course of their daily work. It will then be up to the investigator to call in the





(Back)

11	24	7	20	3
4	12	25	8	16
17	5	13	21	9
10	18	1	14	22
23	6	19	2	15

(Front)

### THE MAGIC SQUARE

rest of the team as and when they see fit. The starting character is (preferably) a graduate student in Paleolinguistics at the University of San Francisco, or some similar post, as was explained in the Introduction. Although there is only one character physically present at the start of the adventure, you needn't send the other players out of the room or pass secretive notes about — there is nothing to be gained by hiding Hammett's initial approach from them.

### PLAYERS' INTRODUCTION

It is a rather tired Monday morning in June, and you are struggling with a volume of the *Zeitschrift Für Celtische Philologie*. When you are interrupted by a phone call from a colleague in the Mathematics Department, it comes as a welcome break, but you are also intrigued by his request.

*"Brad Thurwell here. I have a Mr Hammett with me, who is trying to discover the significance of some numbers and a symbol on a piece of parchment. I've had to admit that I can't make any sense out of the symbol, though the numbers make a magic square, and it occurred to me that they may be some sort of a code or formula. Do you think you could take a look at it if I sent him along to you?"*

Naturally you accept ...

### THE MAGIC SQUARE

Following his phone call, Brad Thurwell brings his visitor up to the Archaeology Department, and then leaves. Mr Hammett is a tall, slim, good-looking man in his early thirties, with a moustache and prematurely grey hair. He shakes hands firmly, and introduces himself.

*"Hammett, Dasbiell Hammett. Thanks for seeing me, Mr (or Mrs) — Your colleague Mr Thurwell was most helpful, but couldn't throw much light on my problem. Before I give you the background, can you tell me what you make of this?"*

He passes over a square of parchment, with a series of numbers on one side and a symbol on the other. There is a dark stain on one corner. (Give out handout A at this point).

This, as Brad Thurwell has already worked out and told Mr Hammett, is a 'magic' square. It adds up to 65 in all directions, including corners and middle, and the four opposite numbers on the sides and the middle number. The symbol on the other side can be interpreted in a number of ways. In biology, it is the sign for the male sex; in alchemy, the symbol for iron. It is also the astrological sign for the planet Mars, and on a successful Occult roll, the investigator will recognise the formula as the Square of Mars, used as a charm in spells of vengeance and attack. A successful Spot Hidden roll will also identify the stain on the corner as dried blood, and the parchment of recent manufacture. When this information has been given to Hammett, he will continue his story. At this point it is a good idea for the player to suggest that before anything goes any further, he or she really ought to call up a few friends (*"some colleagues who have assisted me with my researches in the past"*), and postpone the meeting until that evening or next morning. If the player doesn't call them up here, he or she will have to think of a good excuse to call them in a little later on.



If the Occult roll is failed, Hammett will agree to leave the parchment, and return the next morning to hear what the investigator has managed to discover about it. That afternoon, the player at the University (possibly assisted by the other investigators) can go through the library and discover the information on the Square of Mars listed under 'Further Research' below, Hammett will return, hear what has been discovered, and will continue his story, in much the same way as if the original roll had been successful.

*"Until a couple of years ago, I used to work for the Agency, Pinkerton's that is. Had to give it up and turn to writing instead, because I've had bum lungs ever since I caught Spanish Flu after the war, and this city's climate isn't easy on that sort of thing.*

*"A few weeks ago, I got a letter from Phil Geaque, the Resident Superintendent here. He'd had a case cabled through from New York, and put one of his men on it, an op called Louis Schwartzvogel. I knew Louis a bit; he was a steady sort of guy; no intellectual, but he could usually find some way to get the dope on a case. This one was pretty weird, but certainly didn't look as if it was going to turn rough. See for yourself ..."*

*"Anyhow, Phil put Louis on the case, and the next thing he knows there's a call from the City Morgue saying that Louis had come in DOA. He'd been struck by lightning, and if that hadn't killed him, the .38 in his pocket had exploded and taken half his side away as well.*

*"There wasn't much in his other pockets: loose change, a billfold with a few dollars in it, his diary, that square of parchment, and this ..."*

Hammett passes over a sheet of paper, apparently torn from a library index. (Give out handout E at this point).

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- Giffard, George. **Dialogue Concerning Witches** (Eng.) 1603
  - James I, King. **Dæmonologie**(Eng) 1597
  - Leontov, Sergei Ivanovich. **Horses For The Holy War** (Trans) 1904
  - Leontov, Sergei Ivanovich. **Amid Siberian Forests** (Trans) 1904
  - Levi, Eliphas. **The Doctrine And Ritual Of Magic** (Fr) 2 vols, 1855-6
  - Maternus, Firmicus. **On The Dark Errors Of Heathen Cults** (Trans) 1795
  - Mather, Rev Cotton. **The Devil Discovered** (Eng) 1692
  - Mather, Rev Cotton. **Discourse On The Wonders Of The Invisible World** (Eng) 1692
  - Notre-Dame, Michel de. **Centuries** (Fr) 1555
  - Perkins, William. **Damned Art Of Witchcraft** (Eng) 1608
  - Sprenger, Jacobus & Kramer, Heinrich. **Malleus Maleficarum** (Lat) 1486
- 

The sheet was torn from the Index to the library at Worlsmen's town house, by Schwartzvogel, who was disturbed while looking for an entry along the lines of '*Magistri Draconi, De*'. All of the books except two are classic works on witchcraft and magic; rare and in some cases almost priceless, but not unexpected in the library of a wealthy occultist. The exceptions (and they will be glaring ones to anyone who makes an Oc-

cult roll) are the two books by Leontov. Their significance is explained in the section below on 'Further Research'.

*"There's nothing to say where it can from, but Louis's diary had an entry for the night he died — 'W place, lecture and meeting'. It's a fair bet that W stood for this Worlsmen, and that the page is from an index to his library. Perhaps Louis was looking for an entry for that magazine; I don't know.*

*"That still left the paper, which Phil couldn't make head nor tail of, and he was starting to feel out of his depth. He knew I did a lot of reading in the Civic Center Library, and even though I'd resigned some time ago he asked me to take a look at the case. It was easy enough to find out that something called the Theologosophical Society of San Francisco meets at Worlsmen's apartment on the second Thursday of every month, and that there was a meeting on May 14th, the night Louis died.*

*"Now you tell me this parchment thing is a curse. I don't know if that means Louis was murdered, or if he was ... what on that index was worth killing him for, but I do know I'm starting to feel out of my depth. I know it's asking a lot, but would you be prepared to go to the next meeting? They're open to the public — I checked — and if you just keep your eyes and ears open and don't take anything, you should be safe. Poor old Louis must have stood out like a sore thumb, and I wouldn't be any better, but you know enough about this sort of stuff to make it look like you're interested. Well, what do you say?"*

Assuming the investigators wish to accept the case, this leaves them three days until the next meeting, on June 11th. During this time they can take the opportunity to do some research, which is covered in the section which follows. Some of the information there is connected with later parts of the scenario, but we have included it all here for ease of reference. If they're really thorough, your investigators may just uncover it all in the time allowed anyway!

## Tuesday, June 9th Onwards

### FURTHER RESEARCH

Hammett's story and the associated evidence has given the investigators a number of leads which they may decide to follow up before the meeting of the Theologosophical Society on Thursday. The material given below should be used as a basis for providing them with clues and further leads, according to how successful their Library Use and Fast Talk rolls are. As you will notice, there is far more information included here than the investigators are likely to discover in the short time before the meeting. However, when they have more free time they may return to their researches, and glean more of it.

The sections following cover these topics: Louis Schwartzvogel and his death, Magic Squares, The Pinkerton Bureau and Dashiell Hammett, The Supmet Press and *Niveus Nanus*, Professor John Niall, the various libraries and their data on the books on the Index page, and Public & Civil Records on Mr Claud R Worlsmen.



## Louis Schwartzvogel

The best people to obtain more information about Louis from are Phil Geaque, the Resident Superintendent at Pinkertons, or Dashiell Hammett himself. Both can be contacted through the Pinkertons office, which is located in Room 314, 3rd Floor, James Flood Building, 870 Market Street. They are also on the telephone, if anyone is bright enough to save themselves a trip. See the section on Pinkertons later for more information about the Agency and Hammett himself. Either source will be able to offer some or all of the following information about Louis, if asked the right questions.

Louis Frederick Schwartzvogel was a regular sort of guy, who had worked for the Agency for seven years. Aged 36, he had previously spent time in the Navy (a period of his life he was apparently loathe to talk about unless he was very drunk), as a security guard at a bank, and — in his earlier years — as bar teller in numerous dives around the city. He was of average height and build, with receding brown hair and a thin moustache. Hardly a new Sherlock Holmes, Louis nevertheless managed to solve the majority of the cases he was put on with little difficulty, often through the help of an extensive network of contacts built up over a lifetime living and working on the seedier side of 'Frisco. His speciality was divorce and infidelity cases, and he had developed quite a skill at following people without their noticing him. Louis lived in a small, badly decorated apartment in the oldest part of the city, though he typically only returned there to sleep or fix up a change of clothing. It was rumoured that he once has a wife, but she was long gone by the time he landed his job at Pinkertons. His personal effects were collected by a sister no one had known about, who had returned with them to San Diego. Phil Geaque helped sort them out, and can confirm that there was nothing unusual among his possessions.

Louis' death was witnessed by several people, and in particular two local characters, Edward 'Teddy' Wood and 'Russian' Mike Kozinsky. The Public Records office can supply a copy of the Coroner's report of the case, as well as two copies of the *San Francisco Examiner*, dated 15th and 22nd May respectively, which refer to the case. The newspaper simply reports Schwartzvogel's death from being struck by lightning, and follows it up a week later by a small mention of the inquest, which gives 'Accidental Death' as the cause of Louis' demise. The Coroner's Report itself says the same thing, though it takes six pages to do so, and queries the unusual circumstances of a bolt of lightning coming out of an almost cloudless sky. Appended to the Coroner's Report is an eye-witness account provided at the inquest by Edward Wood, which runs as follows:

*"So anyway, we're standing there, right? Onna corner of Columbus 'n' Broadway, me and Russian Mike that is, waitin' fer Henry the Bat so we could go downtown an' catch a little action, if y'get m'drift bub? Yeh, well, OK, I just get myseff a dog from the stall there, an' as I turn around I see that sonova — I mean the deceased, and that is one guy I don' wanna see, on account of last time I see him he tells me if I'm shooting him a line I ain't gonna be able t'reach my teeth to pick 'em no more, an I was. That is, not exac'ly levellin' with him at the time. An' then the godamndest, I mean the strangest thing I ever seen, he's walking across the road, hasn't seen me yet, an' BLAMM!!, this sonova — great big bolt of lightnin' comes outa clear sky, stars in it, there's a helluva bang, an' he's onna deck. I'm the first guy over, with th'Russian close behind, but when I see what's left of him all of a sudden I don't feel like no hot dog no more ...!"*

If the investigators are feeling very thorough, and don't mind putting in some leg-work on the seamier side of the city, they will be able to track down Teddy Wood and Russian Mike in one of the many sleazy speakeasies they are known to inhabit almost continuously. However, the only reward for their efforts will be a virtual repeat of the above report, though it will require much longer (and the provision of a lot of illicit beers!) to obtain.

Attempts at retracing Louis' steps on the evening of the 14th of May are doomed to failure. Most of those who saw him wouldn't remember doing so five minutes after he'd gone by. Those that do remember back to that night four weeks ago are typically so entrenched in the tight-lipped lifestyle of the district they wouldn't know how to give a truthful answer to a question even if they wanted to. Even the most diligent of efforts by the most streetwise of investigators will come to naught, though only after a good deal of effort has been wasted, of course.

### Magic Squares

Researches at the University Library will obviously give little difficulty to at least one investigator, maybe more. It will take a single Library Use roll to discover all of the following details, with about two hours' effort. The Civic Center Library will be able to provide selected facts from the following, but will require a Library Use roll for each one.

Magic Squares have been familiar items to occultists and spellcasters since at least the time of the Ancient Egyptians. As with other astrological and numerological devices, each planet of the Solar System had its own Magic Square, which was also identified with the planet's associated metal, plant, colour, day of the week, part of the body, and so on. Magic Squares were mostly prepared as talismans for protection or luck, though some were used for more offensive magic.

The Square of Mars (as used by Worlsmen) was inscribed on hand-made parchment using a special ink containing iron and silver, during a particular phase of the planet, as part of a ritual of vengeance. Since the heavens could not have been in the right configuration on the night Louis Schwartzvogel visited the Theologosophical Society, it is clear that Worlsmen must have prepared the Square well in advance and kept it safe in case he ever needed to use it. It is likely that Worlsmen used a ritual that was not quite complete, and which required a final 'key' to activate the Square, rather like pulling the pin on a hand grenade.

The investigators will not be able to do more than guess at the following final details. In fact, on the night in question, Worlsmen discovered the theft of the page from his index book only a few minutes after Schwartzvogel left. He quickly completed the final stage of the ritual which activated the Square, and sent one of his servants after the man. The Square, was slipped into Louis' coat pocket as he was buying a beer in a crowded speakeasy, and took effect an hour later, whereupon poor Louis Schwartzvogel was struck by lightning which appeared to come from out of a cloudless sky.

### The Pinkerton Bureau

If your investigators are especially thorough (or just incredibly paranoid), they may want to check out Hammett's story; they may also need to contact the agency to get some background information on Louis Schwartzvogel, as detailed earlier. The Bureau's San Francisco branch is located in Room 314, 3rd Floor, James Flood Building, 870 Market Street. Phil Geaque, the Resident Superintendent, is a small, shrewd man; he has

already been tipped off by Hammett that the investigators may enquire after him. Geaque can confirm that Hammett worked for Pinkerton's for some time, before resigning on the grounds of ill health in February 1922, and that he is indeed currently involved with the Niall case.

Geaque himself is unable to add any more to what the investigators were told by Hammett about the case. If asked for practical help, he refuses to become involved, except through Hammett, but he may agree payment of small expenses as a form of consultancy fee, on Hammett's behalf. Geaque may also be able to offer help in checking or obtaining information via branches elsewhere in the US, but not with burglary, obtaining black market weapons, or similar criminal acts (Pinkertons are not *that* sort of organisation!).

### The Supmet Press and *Niveus Nanus*

The offices of the Supmet Press are located at 800 Geary Street, on two floors of a modest and relatively new office building. The building also houses a cork wholesalers (desperately trying to find new outlets now that the Californian wine industry has sharply contracted); a firm of accountants; and an insurance brokers. All three are exactly what they seem to be, and have only one connection with Worlsmen — he is their landlord. This fact can be gleaned by examining the latest accounts of any of the businesses at the Companies' Register in the Civic Center, or by a judicious Fast Talk roll while talking to an employee. The accounts will show payments for rent to Worlsmen Estates Inc, and further investigation will show that a controlling interest in Supmet Press is held by the same company.

Supmet Press is a money-spinner for Worlsmen, especially through its series of best-selling Psychic Science Sourcebooks. These popularise, trivialise and cheapen 'acceptable' aspects of the occult, such as astral travel, dream analysis, theories of Atlantis and an almost innumerable variety of mancies or techniques of divination. All their titles are on prominent display in the reception area. Also on display is the current issue of *Niveus Nanus*, together with copies of some of its many translated editions. These include *Le Bianchenano* (Italian), *Enano Palido* (Spanish), *Bialy Karzel* (Polish), and *Sbiro Kobito* (Japanese).

The staff of Supmet Press are friendly and cooperative, but know little of 'Mister Worlsmen' except that he is a liberal employer, has written all but a handful of Psychic Science Sourcebooks himself, and is a frequent contributor to *Niveus Nanus*. A visit to the back issues collection will confirm this, and also allow the investigators to see the article which Professor Niall claims plagiarised his work (don't let the players get too involved with Supmet Press, as it is not concealing any dark secrets; if they are following other leads at the same time, they will find them more productive). If anyone thinks to check, they will find that each issue of *Niveus Nanus* carries a large advertisement for the Theologosophical Society, inviting 'seekers after enlightenment' to attend its open meetings.

### Professor John Niall

It shouldn't be too long before someone thinks of consulting Professor John Niall himself. However, in practice, this turns out to be more difficult than it seems. A telephone call takes five frustrating hours to connect all the way

through to Providence, and is answered by a tired-sounding woman. She informs the caller that Professor Niall has given strict instructions not to be disturbed, and it would be much better if all enquiries were directed by letter.

Unless it is worded very carefully (see below), a telegram produces a different reply — after six days — in the form of a very brusque letter from Niall. In it, the Professor sharply demands to know what on God's earth the investigators think they are doing on the case he assigned to the Pinkerton Agency? It will require a very clever letter (and a very successful Fast Talk roll) to calm him down and explain the situation.

A letter is the investigators' best bet, but it will need to be phrased just so to receive the correct reply from Niall. They should have gathered sufficient clues from the letters to Eumenides to realise that they need to fawn and grovel a bit! A letter phrased in the correct way (one using terms like "called onto case to provide specialist help ... clearly not in same league as yourself ... value your esteemed help and advice ..." and so on) will produce a reply from the professor after only three days, in which he informs the investigators at great length of Worlsmen's crimes.

Briefly, Niall is furious that an article of his on the use of homunculi as scapegoats, inspired by a passage in Sprenger & Kramer's *Malleus Maleficarum*, has been plagiarised by Worlsmen to form the basis of an article in *Niveus Nanus*. Worlsmen's article is a catalogue of medieval homunculi types (as a successful Occult roll — or a Library Use roll later — will reveal, an homunculus is a living being, usually human in form, created by magical means. Traditionally, they do not reach more than a foot in height, and must be kept in sealed glass vessels).

What especially annoys Niall is that an important and original piece of research, linking homunculi proper with other magical practices — such as voodoo dolls and the transferring of curses to inanimate objects — has not only been turned into a boringly literal list of different varieties of homunculi and their properties, but — more importantly — has received wide circulation in *Niveus Nanus* and all its translations.

If asked by the investigators for a sight of *De Magistri Draconi*, he refuses unless he can be persuaded that Worlsmen has a more sinister motive than mere plagiarism, and that it is necessary for the investigators to know the contents of the original. It is very unlikely that the investigators will express such sentiments in their letter of enquiry. As *De Magistri Draconi* is privately printed and circulated, John Niall is the only person they will be able to trace who could make a copy available to them.

## Libraries

An obvious line of research is to check out the books on the library index which apparently cost Louis Schwartzvogel his life. There are a couple of collections which can be consulted, and which the investigators are likely to be aware of already. These are the University Library, and the Civic Center Library, San Francisco's main library. A successful Occult roll will mean that an investigator is also aware of the Zebulon Pharr collection (see the *Call of Cibulhu* rulebook, page 93), though they may also be aware of the difficulties involved in gaining access to it. The investigators should also know of the Whittier Collection, San Francisco's own archive, but since they will not need to use it yet, its importance should not be stressed here.

**THE UNIVERSITY LIBRARY:** At least one of the investigators will already know their way around this library. Indeed, on a successful Occult roll they will know some of the books on the index list, and may have consulted them in the past. All the works on the list, with the exception of the two books by Leontov, may be found in the University Library by a successful Library Use roll, though they are all later editions or translations, rather than the originals. The investigators will not find any mention of the Leontov books at all, no matter how hard or how long they look.

**THE CIVIC CENTER LIBRARY:** A Library Use roll will reveal that recent reprints of the works by Levi, Mather (both titles), Perkins, and Sprenger & Kramer are kept here. More importantly though, it will also show that copies of both books by the mysterious Leontov are held in reserve stock. So far, so easy; however, when the investigators request them, a check reveals them to be missing! Worlsmen will be the obvious suspect, at least to the investigators, but why should he want to steal them? Further library research reveals nothing further by, or about, Leontov. At some point the investigators should think of contacting the publishers, but if they don't you should have the librarian suggest it.

Both books were translations from the original Russian, published in 1904 by Lewis & Marsh, a local firm with an extensive catalogue of biographies, autobiographies, and travel books (unless the investigators are struggling, they should make successful Library Use rolls to discover this). A letter to Lewis & Marsh brings a reply in four days time, apologising that they are unfortunately unable to supply copies, as the book is out of print, and the manuscript was destroyed with their old offices in the Great Fire of 1906. They have, however, sent a copy of their catalogue of that time, which lists the books and gives a brief synopsis. (Give out handout F at this point).

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Leontov, Sergei Ivanovich. *Horses For The Holy War*. 430pp 8vo, cloth bound.

A novel based on Colonel Leontov's service during the Russo-Turkish War of 1828-29. Little information on the main campaign, as this officer was attached to a supply unit buying horses in Moldavia, but many colourful anecdotes about his companions and Moldavian customs.

Leontov, Sergei Ivanovich. *Amid Siberian Forests*. 512pp 8vo, cloth bound.

Novel inspired by the author's part in pioneering expeditions to exploit the wealth of the Siberian wilderness. A full-blooded tale of adventure and prospecting, with much information about the cults and customs of the Siberian natives.

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Obligingly, Lewis & Marsh have also carried out an index search of their current Russian catalogue, and have found references to Leontov in *The Journals of Mrs Barbara Prescott Taylor*. The entry in their current catalogue records Mrs Taylor as being the wife of the prominent industrialist Wendall Taylor, who had extensive fur trade and mining interests in Russia before the Revolution. Mrs Taylor travelled with her husband to Russia in 1832-33. The *Journals*



are based upon her diaries of the time, and currently retail for (an extortionate) \$5.25, including packaging and carriage. If the investigators order a copy (and you should surreptitiously encourage them to do so!) it will arrive after a further two days. The index has a number of references to 'Leontov, Sergei Ivanovich', and the relevant passages are quoted below. (Give out handout G).

"...On Wednesday to a grand ball at the house of Prince Golitsin, the Governor of Moscow, where I once again met Taryya Narishkin. I twitted her about having to hide her risqué novel in her wrap again, but she laughingly told me that tonight's affair would not prove so dull, and she had not brought it. How right she was to prove! Wurtzman was again present, and halfway through the evening was the centre of an almighty fracas. A handsome young man in hussars' uniform, who had been talking to W for some time, with voices on both sides being raised, finally hurled a torrent of Russian at him before storming from the house. According to Taryya, this was none other than the author of 'Horses For the Holy War' himself, Sergei Leontov, and the cause of the contretemps his sister, with whom W is widely rumored to have formed a liaison. Taryya expressed the opinion that it was as well I did not speak Russian, as L's language would have made a Cossack blush, but he apparently demanded that all contact between Wurtzman and his sister should cease immediately, and would brook no attempt at explanation..."

"...I had been due today to call upon Princess Waldemar, but as I was preparing to leave, a note was delivered from Mme Aprarian asking me to defer my visit for some days. I was at a loss to know why, until Wendall returned from seeing Prince Kyril Narishkin, the Grand Marechal of the Court. Apparently all Moscow is stunned by the tragedy that has struck Count Ivan Leontov. His daughter Olga and a maid left the house in stealth the night before last, and none saw them go. Yesterday at dawn the servants were roused by a knocking at the front door, to find a huddled figure on the steps. It was none other than Olga, but the poor child's reason was quite gone, and she can only babble nonsense about seeing someone without their veil "when the way was opened" or some such. She has also developed a morbid fear of what lies behind doors, and exhibits pitiful terror at the sight of a key..."

"...Still unwell, and unable to attend the Stroganoff's ball. On Wendall's return, he told me of an astonishing scene that took place there. In front of all present Leontov struck Wurtzman, and called him out. It is an open secret that for some reason he holds W responsible for what has happened to his sister..."

"...L'affair Leontov, as all here are calling it, has taken another, most tragic twist. As he was passing along a crowded street yesterday, he was jostled by a group of ruffians, and fell to the ground. When passers-by went to assist him to his feet, they found him dead, a dagger buried in his side! His murderers had by then made good their escape, and witnesses describe them only as swarthy Mongol or Tartar types. The dagger was apparently of Siberian pattern. Although there is no proof, popular opinion holds Wurtzman responsible, as many of his personal servants returned with him from there after his prospecting expedition..."

"...Following Leontov's death, the outcry against Wurtzman grew. For a while, his protectors among the court were able to shield him, but the mob stoned his house, calling him murderer and devil worshipper, and there were rumors that the Metropolitan had threatened to pronounce anathema against Wurtzman if Czar Nicholas did not act. Before anything could be done, however, he disappeared. It is widely stated that he has taken ship for the whaling station called Fuerto Russo by the Mexicans, on the Pacific coast. At least there he should be no further trouble to anyone..."

After reading these passages, the investigators should hopefully want to check for other references to Wurtzman. There is only one, which comes before the passages already quoted. (Give out handout H at this point).

"...A ball at the Stroganoff's. I had been told by Madame Stroganoff to seek out Count Narishkin's daughter, and found her in a side salon. My approach clearly startled her, as she dropped a book she had been reading whilst trying to conceal it beneath her wrap. I could not help laughing, and within minutes we were chatting like old friends. She confessed that she had brought a book as the Stroganoff's soirees were so infernally dull, but that the novel in question, a certain 'Horses for the Holy War' would have caused eyebrows to be raised if she had been seen reading it. Set during the war against the Turks, it is based on the exploits of a unit engaged in buying remounts in Moldavia. The central character is widely reckoned to be Klaus Wurtzman, with whom the author served in just such a unit, and whose name I had already heard banded about. The novel fed Wurtzman's reputation in society as an enfant terrible, being a gothick concoction involving a liaison with a deathless countess descended from the bloodthirsty tyrant Vlad Tepes, and from the terrible Elizabeth Bathory, and the theft by Wurtzman of her secret. Apparently another novel from the same pen has recently been published, based on a prospecting trip made by Wurtzman and the author to the Siberian territories. This has swiftly achieved great notoriety, being full of purple passages about diabolic rites by tribal shamans, and the worship of hideous idols. It also caused something of a rift between the former comrades. Taryya later pointed out Wurtzman to me, and I must confess I could not share the immortal countess's attraction to him, although his uniform was that of the Pavlograd Hussars and fine enough, and he himself tall, with piercing blue eyes, and sporting a fine beard.

If the investigators fail to check for this further reference to Wurtzman, the passage in question will still be found by anyone who reads the book from cover to cover.

By this time, the investigators should be making the connection between Wurtzman and Worlzman, and wondering where 'Fuerto Russo' was. No more information will be forthcoming at the Civic Center Library. To find out any more, they need to consult the Whittier Collection. If they do not think of this, the ever-helpful librarian can suggest it to them.

Incidentally, in the absence of an inter-library loan service, acquiring copies of the Leontov books from other libraries will take too long to be of any use. A visit or official request to the Library of Congress is feasible, but will result in the investigators chancing upon some detail they would probably rather not know. Someone with a sharp knife has neatly but extensively mutilated the single copies present, removing critical sections. The last person to have requested them was a Miss Magda Bathory, but the address given is the site of a demolished tenement building, and the references given for her tickets are forged.

**THE WHITTIER COLLECTION:** Housed in a superb Victorian mansion, this library is probably the single most important source of information about the early history of the whole area. The investigators' first line of approach should be to look for references to Fuerto Russo. Regardless of Library Use rolls, they will uncover the following details.

Fuerto Russo (Spanish for 'Russian Fort', obviously) was a military outpost set up by the Russians to protect their fur trade and whaling interests, and to challenge the extensive Spanish domination of the area. Established in 1811, it was bounded to the north by what is now known as the Russian River, and extended close to the modern city of San Francisco. Farms and vineyards were also established, and the settlement was not abandoned, in fact, until 1841. Four years later, the Mexican-American War of 1845-48 ended with the United States acquiring a large tract of territory which included California. In 1850 California achieved statehood, a fact which all local investigators will know.

What of Worlsmen? A thorough index search will reveal secondary references not to him, but to Wurtzman, linking him with one Johann August Sutter. Sutter, a Swiss, was prevented by bad weather and hostile natives from taking the overland route to California in 1838. Instead, he took ship from Vancouver to Honolulu and thence to California. He was granted substantial territories on the American River by the Mexican authorities, and within a year had 500 head of cattle and 75 horses. Although overland immigrants began to arrive in 1841, shortages of labour was a problem. Sutter devised a plan to bring Kanaka labourers from Hawaii to work the settlement, and was assisted in this by one Klaus Wurtzman, who had arrived with the Russians and stayed behind to breed horses and grow vines when they left. In 1847, Sutter erected a sawmill on the southern fork of the American River, and in the course of this his partner James Wilson Marshall struck gold. This was the beginning of what was to become the 1849 Gold Rush, but both men had their livelihoods ruined, and failed to make their fortunes prospecting. References to Wurtzman cease in 1845, at the outbreak of the Mexican-American War.

That is the sum total of relevant information which the Whittier Collection is able to provide on either Worlsmen or Wurtzman. At present it does little more than confirm what the investigators have already discovered from *The Journals of Mrs Barbara Prescott Taylor*, but once they have paid a visit to the Public Records Office they should be able to construct most of the Worlsmen family's past, and maybe even start making some rather disturbing assumptions about Klaus and Claud.

**THE ZEBULON PHARR COLLECTION:** The world's great collections of occult lore and artefacts, especially those in private hands, do not go out of their way to attract visitors, and the legacy of Zebulon Pharr is no exception. Investigators making an additional successful Library Use roll during their research into the occult books on the index page will remember spotting references to Zebulon Pharr, or to the collection itself, in footnotes or lists of sources. Those with Occult skill will, on a successful roll, have heard of Pharr, and known some of the following (this could also be learnt by a long conversation with the head of the Archaeology or History Departments at the University, or some similar local sage).

Zebulon Pharr was the only son of the wealthy East Coast family of that name, and inherited his father's shipping and manufacturing empire. This he sold, and invested the income to allow him to pursue his twin passions of anthropology and philology. After postgraduate research at Harvard into Slavonic dialects, he travelled in 1852 to the West Coast to follow up his theory of a cultural link between native American races and the Asian continent. Although his brilliant insight was con-

firmed by later scholars, it was ahead of its time, and his dedication to research in the field meant that he published little, and was relatively unknown in academic circles. His travels in Western and Central America and Micronesia, however, provided a matchless collection of artefacts, and copious notes on Amerindian and Polynesian history and customs. In later years, his interest in the religions of these areas became an obsession, and developed in the years before his death into a morbid fascination for the occult. It was during this time that he corresponded with many of the leading occultists of his day, and acquired a superb library of occult sources to supplement the material he had himself collected. He died unmarried and childless, and his estate became a trust maintaining the collection to which he gave his name.

So much for the background; gaining access to the collection is another matter. If the investigators enquire at the Civic Center Library, or at an appropriate department of the University again, they are told that access to the Zebulon Pharr Collection is controlled by the founder's lawyers, and that in spite of the potential importance of the material, they are extremely unwilling to grant access. Only written applications are considered, and these must be supported by 'an appropriate referee'. No further guidance is given, and most libraries and scholars, having been rebuffed by the trust in spite of impeccable references, have given up trying to use it.

Given the occult connection, the investigators should realise that conventional referees are useless, and that what is needed is someone who will vouch for their fitness to learn things best kept secret from the general public. There is only one person the players know of who could be likely to fit the bill — Professor John Niall (an Idea roll may help them reach this decision!). If they wish to try someone else, by all means let them, but the result in all cases will be the same; a polite letter from the firm of Coutts and Winthrop stating that as trustees of the Pharr Estate they regret that the references supplied do not meet the terms of the late Mr. Pharr's last will and testament, and that they are therefore unable to grant access to the collection. They remain ... etc.

In order for Niall to provide references for them, the investigators must convince him that they have already uncovered things best left hidden, and can therefore be trusted to deal responsibly with the secrets of the collection (to which Niall himself has had access in the past — the terms of Pharr's will are that only previous users of the collection can act as referees). The information the team has at this stage is not enough. The main function of the collection will be to allow them to confirm or disprove hypotheses about Worlsmen and his activities once they are in a position to make them. This use of the Zebulon Pharr Collection, and of Professor John Niall, will be covered later, when it is appropriate.

## Public & Civic Records

The Public Records Office in the Civic Center is a standard source of information about Births, Marriages and Deaths, as well as local newspapers and other trivia. Depending upon where else they have been, the investigators may be looking for information about Wurtzman, Worlsmen, or both.

Nothing at all can be found for Klaus Wurtzman, not even a death certificate, though a Library Use roll and two hours will be needed to find this out.

Another successful Library Use roll, and a further three hours, will produce the following data about Worlman and his ancestors. The first record of a Worlman is in 1858, when Clement Rupert Worlman, of El Profando Ranch, Sutter County, California, married Felicity Todd, of San Francisco. In 1859 there is a birth certificate for their son, Charles Ronald Worlman. The next record is of the marriage in 1886 of Charles to one Elizabeth Anne Gray. The groom's address is the same as that on Clement's marriage licence. In 1888 a son, Claud Randolph, was born to them. The death certificate of Clement and Charles from 1885 and 1919 respectively, both coincidentally from *'Natural causes — heart failure'* can be traced in the files too.

Are they genuine or forged? One of the doctors involved is dead; the other, one Jonathan Blanchard of Petaluma, can be traced and questioned, either face to face or over the telephone. He can only remember having been called in by the estate staff to examine the corpse of a well-preserved man, who but for his grey hair could have been taken for under forty, and who he knew as being Charles Worlman. The pallor and coldness of the body, together with the absence of pulse, led to a verdict of heart failure. There was no autopsy, and the body was placed in the Worlman family vault on the ranch.

Especially thorough investigatos may also locate the death certificates for Felicity Todd — in 1866, of a seizure — and of Elizabeth Gray, in 1890, from heart failure. All of this is fairly mundane, but if the investigators comb the archives of the *San Francisco Examiner* they will discover several references to Wurtzman and the Worlman family which are more unusual.

In 1857, a story headlined 'HEIR CLAIMS RANCH' records the arrival in San Francisco of a certain Clement Worlman, who produced what he claimed to be the last will and testament of Klaus Wurtzman, bequeathing him the El Profando Ranch and all pertaining thereto. Since Wurtzman's disappearance around 1845, the estate and vineyards had been managed by a Russian manservant who had originally accompanied him from Moscow as his groom, and a motley collection of Kanaka labourers from Hawaii. Worlman claimed to be a distant European relative who had met Wurtzman while prospecting in Alaska, and had been given the will shortly before Wurtzman died of typhoid. Those who remembered Wurtzman agreed on the striking family resemblance of the younger man, and since the will was unquestionably in Wurtzman's handwriting, the claim was not contested.

The 'Obituaries' column of the paper for the date of Worlman's death in 1885 records his passing after a brief illness, notes the unusual circumstances of his arrival, comments approvingly on his business acumen, and observes that he is succeeded by his son, Charles. The latter, who had been sent East to complete his education ten years ago, had tragically arrived just too late to take his leave of his father.

The final record is comparatively recent. The obituary of Charles Worlman, in 1919, speaks of him as one of the area's most progressive winemakers, in spite of the ill health which had made him a reclusive invalid for a number of years, and expresses the hope that his son Claud, recently returned from an extended sojourn in Europe, would be able to adjust the family business to the demands of the recently-passed Volstead Act.

It is not essential for the investigators to have discovered all this information before they attend the meeting of the Theologosophical Society on June 11th, and they can continue

to carry out research during the remainder of the scenario. As the end draws close, however, they should have uncovered enough to suspect that they may have chanced upon something much deeper than a simple case of academic plagiarism.

## Thursday, June 11th

Worlman's town-house, at 206 Hyde, is a relatively new building (like most in that area), having been built since the earthquake and fire of 1906. At the entrance to the building, which comes directly off the street, there is a brass plaque which bears the legend *'Claud R Worlman'*, and under it a smaller one with the inscription *'Theologosophical Society of San Francisco — Meetings 2nd Thursday of each month 7.30 p.m. Please ring and wait.'*

If the investigators visit the house *before* the meeting, there is only a 20% chance of finding Worlman at home. If he is, the investigators will be greeted in a small drawing room, where he will allow them to question him (see below for a full description of Worlman). He denies knowing Schwartzvogel by name, but does remember seeing a man fitting his description at one or two recent meetings. Worlman appears to be very busy, bustling agitatedly around the room while he is talking to the investigators, and after only a few minutes he excuses himself, saying he has some very important work to finish, but if they are truly interested in the Society they should attend its next meeting, where they will be made very welcome.

If Worlman is out, the servants politely but firmly ask callers to leave their card and write, or to attend the next meeting of the Society. Letters receive the same answer; Worlman is not on the telephone. Any attempt at forcible entry or burglary, whether by day or night, results in the police being summoned by the servants. Don't have the investigators arrested unless you feel it is necessary, but make it very clear to them that the answer to the mystery will not be found here. If you feel it will help, allow them to search through the house until they find the study on the first floor (see below), and give them long enough to establish that they are wasting their time.

If they question any of Worlman's neighbours, they may receive a few derisive comments about the 'crackpots' who attend his meetings, but they'll otherwise find him a model resident, if less sociable than some.

## THE MEETING

Come the evening of June 11th, the investigators should find themselves outside the large brown door of 206 Hyde, where they should follow the instructions on the brass plaque. They are admitted by a servant and taken along a sparsely-decorated hallway and up a wide flight of stairs, to a large drawing room on the first floor, where thirty or so chairs are arranged for a meeting. The room is tidily decorated, though rather featureless apart from a pair of large aspidistras on stands in two corners. Several people are already in the room, and by the time the meeting starts there are about twenty people present. Most of them are middle aged or elderly, with the air of intense dottiness common to such groups, and with the odd real fruitcake here and there. If engaged in conversation, they appear to know no more about Worlman than is public knowledge (which isn't very much) but talk at great length about their own pet theories, astral travel, dowsing, peculiar dreams or whatever.

Investigators need to make a successful Fast Talk roll to interrupt and break away, or be trapped until the meeting starts.

A blackboard upon an easel at the front of the room announces that the Secretary of the Society, Miss Lilith Hopkirk, will give a lecture tonight on 'PAN-CHROMATIC IMAGERY AND SYMBOLISM IN DREAMS, AND ITS CONNECTION WITH THEMES IN CERTAIN RECENTLY COMMUNICATED FRAGMENTS OF ATLANTEAN LITERATURE AND POETRY'. Lilith Hopkirk lives up to her name, being a statuesque brunette with waist-length hair, kohl-rimmed eyes, and wearing a floor length black velvet robe. The talk, moreover, also lives up to its name, being excruciatingly boring. Investigators must make a Listen roll to avoid showing their boredom. If unsuccessful, they are unable to concentrate, and if they miss their roll badly enough may fall asleep on the shoulder of the person next to them, and even start snoring. A successful roll means that they are able to understand the gist of Lilith's lecture in spite of its long-windedness and the appalling chanting of Atlantean verse with which she punctuates it.

Contrary to popular belief, she tells the meeting, not all the inhabitants of Atlantis perished with the lost continent. Some survived by using their immense occult knowledge to project themselves to a dimension *outside* time, from where they keep a benevolent watch on humanity. They have become increasingly alarmed recently that the same forces that overthrew Atlantis are working to prevent humanity from rediscovering the knowledge of the Atlanteans and achieving a new Golden Age. The recent World War was an unsuccessful attempt to reduce humanity to barbarism, but it will not be the last. In a desperate attempt to prevent this, the Ancient Magi of the lost continent are contacting the most psychically and morally advanced of humanity to pass on the knowledge which alone can save mankind (astute players may start to make connections between 'Ancient Magi' and 'Great Old Ones', but their characters would not; however, it'll give the players something to worry about).

Contact between the planes is made most easily during sleep, when the barriers of the conscious mind are lowered, but unless they are correctly interpreted, the messages will remain a collection of vivid images which hover on the brink of understanding. Advanced students of the occult (such as Lilith), however, are able to receive coherent fragments of an-

cient wisdom, the sacred literature and poetry of Atlantis. The purpose of the talk is to pass on such of this knowledge a less-advanced students are ready to receive, to help them sensitise themselves to the dream messages of the Ancient Magi

At the end of the lecture questions are invited, and the investigators should take this as their cue to probe Lilith a little further. Any investigator making a successful Occult roll will impress her with the perceptiveness of their questions, and will be asked to stay behind after the meeting to discuss the point more fully (if some of the party do not possess Occult skill, or if the roll is failed, the same result can be achieved by the application of other skills; for example "Doesn't recent geological/archaeological/history evidence suggest that..." — however it is worked, you should aim to have most of the investigators remain behind afterwards, if not all).

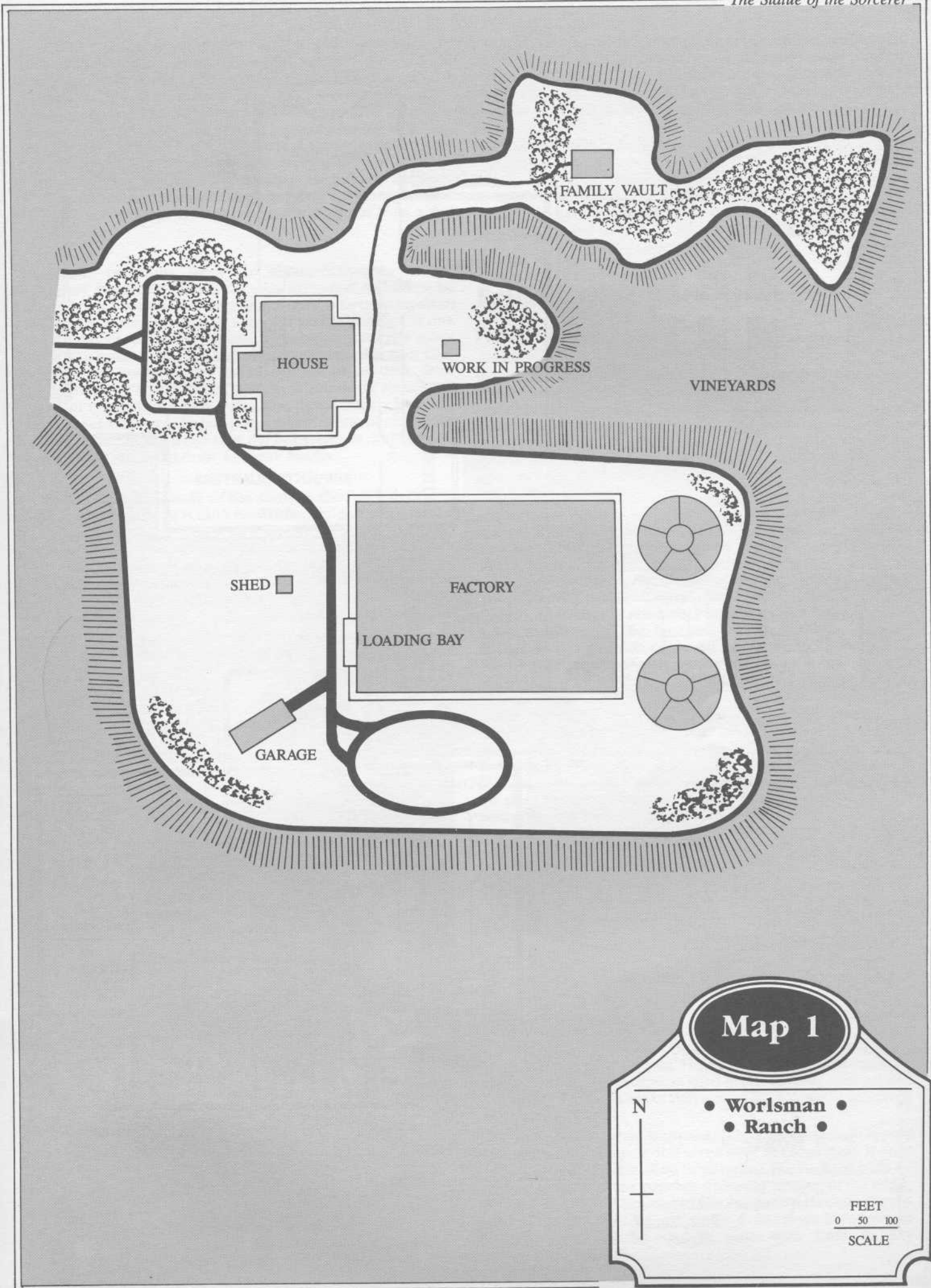
### MR. CLAUD R. WORLSMAN

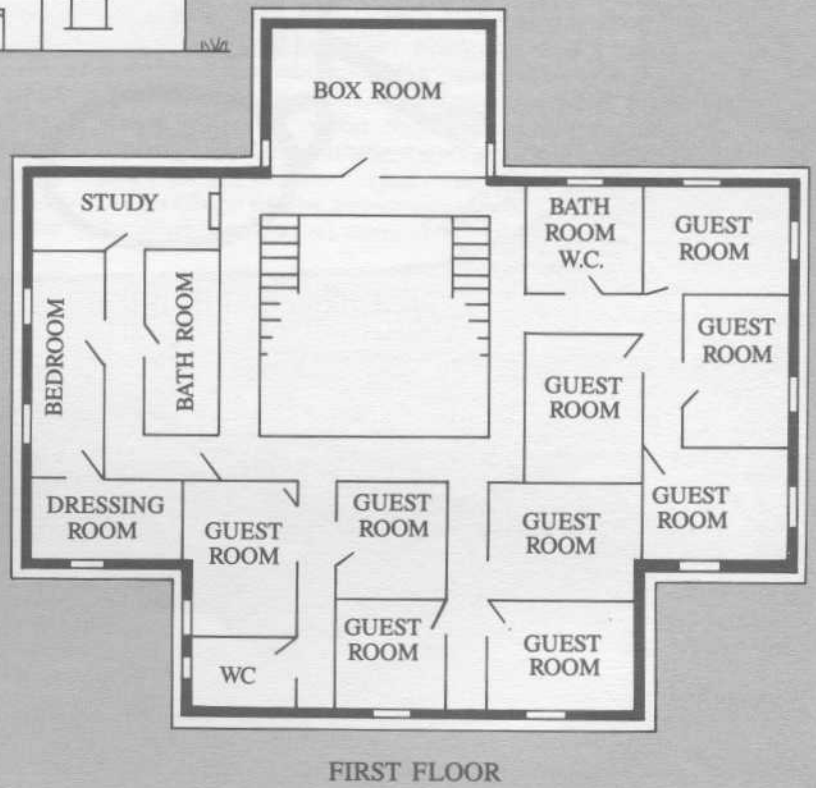
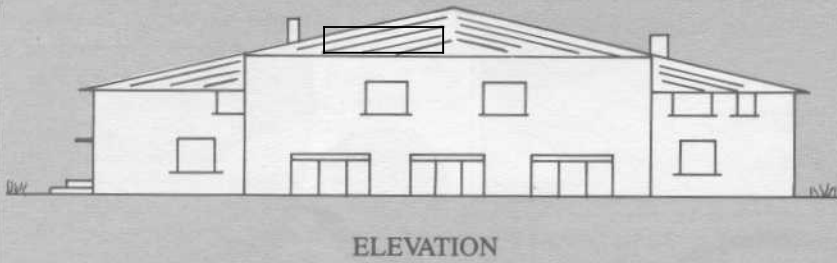
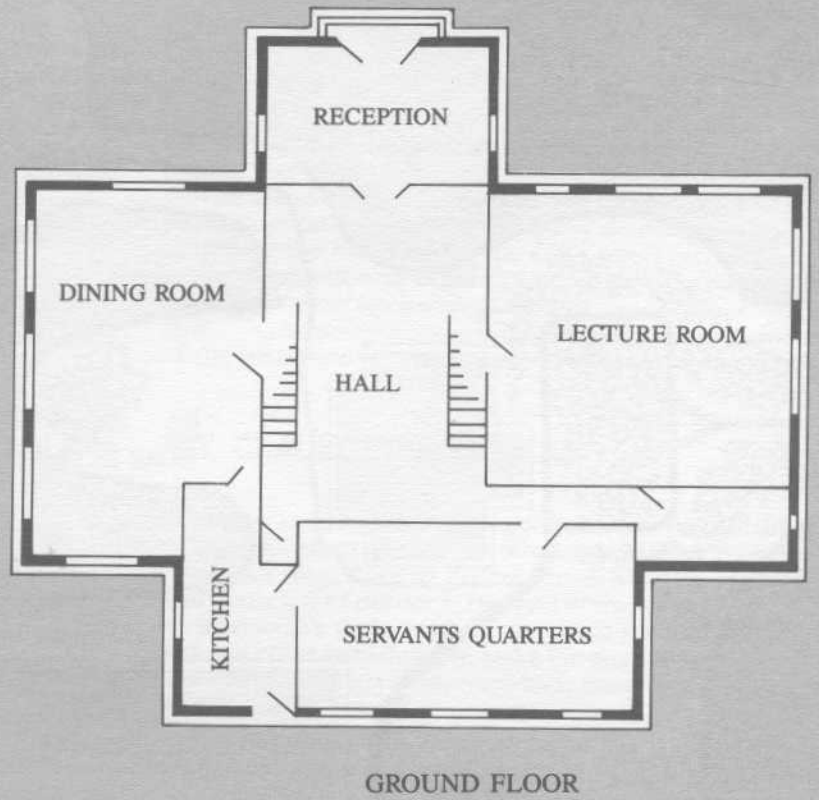
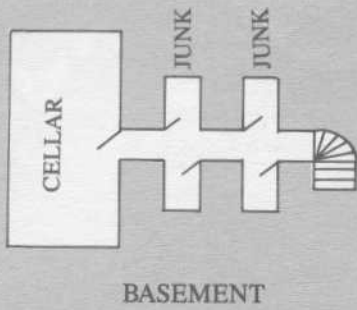
After the meeting, they are taken across the corridor to Workman's study. This is a converted drawing room, with bookcases from floor to ceiling on all walls except the end wall to the left of the door. This end of the room is dominated by Workman's desk, a megalomaniacal six foot wide, twin pedestal effort in mahogany, and a life-size full length portrait of a man in military uniform which hangs over it (see 'Further Research' below).

Workman himself is seated in an armchair by the fireplace opposite the door. As the investigators are shown in he places the leather-bound volume he is reading (it is Francis Barrett's *The Magus*) on an occasional table, and rises to greet them. Workman is a powerfully built man, about 5'10" tall, who most people would put in his early thirties. A strikingly handsome face, marred only by a three inch scar across the left cheek, is set off by glossy black hair and a neatly trimmed beard and moustache, and dominated by piercing blue eyes. The investigators are briefly introduced by Lilith, who remarks rather pointedly upon their perceptive questions at the meeting. Workman discusses some of the points they raised, and asks a few general questions about their interest in the occult (these can be answered any way the investigators like, for Workman doesn't particularly want to know the answers).









**Map 2**

- Worksmen •
- Ranch •
- House •

N

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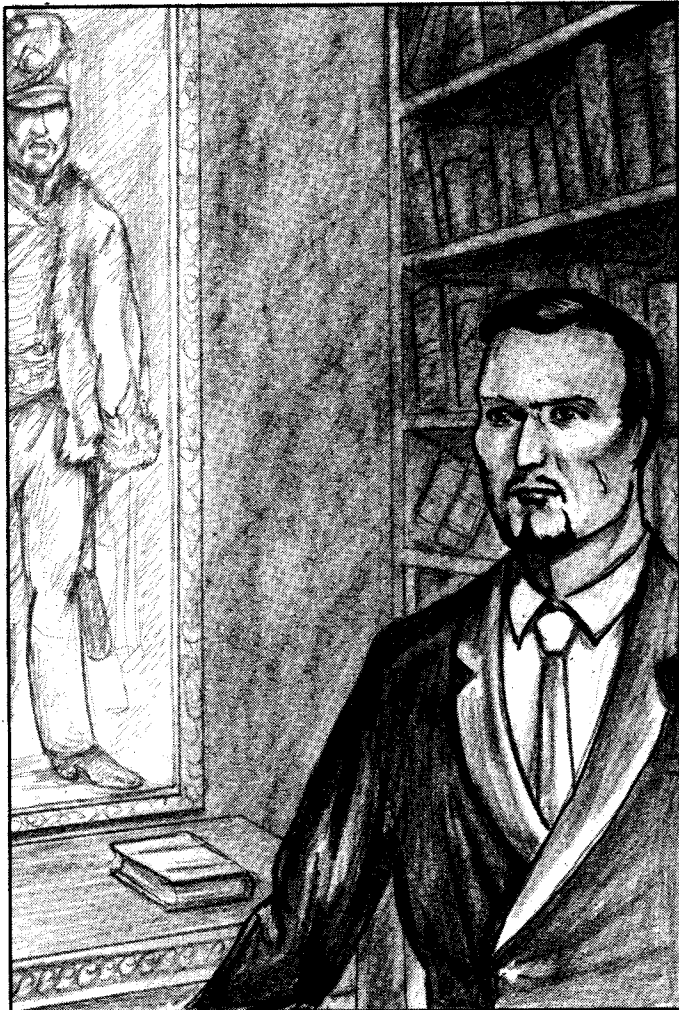
FEET

SCALE

He then offers his opinion that their insight shows them to have above-ordinary potential for psychic development, and suggests that they attend "a seminar for advanced students" held regularly at his estate north of the city. Assuming the investigators accept his offer, arrangements are then made for his chauffeur to collect them from his town-house at 10 am, on Saturday 20th — nine days hence. If the investigators are not keen, or if they refuse outright, Worlsmen leaves the offer open, telling them that the seminars are held on alternate weekends, and that the same arrangements for transport can be made if a message is left at the town house at least a day in advance.

If anyone questions Worlsmen about Schwartzvogel — hopefully not revealing that they are investigating him — he denies knowing him (convincingly, since Louis used an alias) but he will remember seeing a man of his description at one or two recent meetings. Anyone glancing around the study while Worlsmen is talking, and making a successful Spot Hidden roll, will notice a small leather volume on his desk, with the initials *C.R.W.* embossed onto it; it shouldn't require an Idea roll to work out that this is the index from which the page on Schwartzvogel's body was taken. Some of the books on the list are in plain sight on the bookshelves, but they do not include the mysterious Leontov books.

The most striking feature of the study is the full length portrait. It is obvious that it can't be Worlsmen, and investigators are bound to wonder who it is. If anyone pretends to admire it and asks their host about it, Worlsmen merely describes it as a 'family heirloom', and claims not to know who or what it represents. Investigators with History skill, or failing that those making a successful Idea roll, notice a puzzling feature of the portrait. The man is wearing a light green uniform, with



turquoise edging to his shoulder bag, and has the short jacket worn on one shoulder characteristic of 19th Century hussar regiments. However, he also carries a lance, which hussars most definitely did not. The background of the painting appears to be the standard column draped with silk in front of an abstract wash of dull brown, which gives no further clues to understanding the picture.

After a short, and hopefully pleasant conversation with the investigators, Worlsmen excuses himself, and, declaring himself to have a little more work to do tonight, bids them 'Goodnight' and calls a servant to show them out.

## Friday, June 12th Onwards

### FURTHER RESEARCH

In the nine days between now and the weekend of the 'advanced seminar', the investigators are likely to continue the research they didn't finish before the meeting, while others probably ought to put in an appearance at their place of employment. Those continuing the research may also wish to find out more about hussar uniforms, for which they will need to consult the Civic Center or University Library.

A successful Library Use roll will produce some intriguing information. One hussar regiment did indeed carry lances, but only between 1830 and 1860. These were a Russian regiment, the Pavlograd Hussars, who took part in the major campaigns of the time, including the Russo-Turkish War of 1828-29. If the investigators have been very thorough with their research already, they should remember seeing a mention of the very same regiment in *The Journals of Mrs Barbara Prescott Taylor*. Is it a portrait of Sergei Leontov? If so, why does Worlsmen have the picture on the wall of his study, and why should he want to deny knowing who it portrays? As they know, or soon will, Wurtzman and Leontov served together in the Pavlograd Hussars, and this Leontov's books were on the page stolen by Schwartzvogel from Worlsmen's study, but what secret could link 19th Century Moscow and 20th Century San Francisco, and be worth a man's life? As they prepare for their visit to Worlsmen's estate, the investigators should be starting to make some guesses, and getting just a little paranoid over the conclusions they are reaching ...

## Saturday, June 20th

### EL PROFONDO RANCH

Come the morning of Saturday, June, 20th, the investigators are taken from the town-house to the estate by Worlsmen's chauffeur. Although he handles the big Packard limousine well, the driver is no great conversationalist, and he responds in monosyllables to even the most urbane of questions. The man is dressed in a smart chauffeur's uniform with a peaked hat and highly polished boots. He is a large man, obviously not Caucasian, and investigators with Anthropology skill are able to identify him as being of Polynesian stock (no roll required).

The drive to the estate is uneventful, passing through typical farming country, much of it given over to citrus fruit. It takes around three quarters of an hour before the Packard pulls off the road and onto the rougher driveway leading to the estate. It is comparatively isolated — the car passed through the last settlement several miles previously — and there have been no other vehicles on the road for quite some time. As they



approach the house, the investigators first of all see its extensive citrus orchards and then, as the car sweeps down the drive towards the estate buildings and ranch house which lie at the foot of the gentle slope, the vineyards which lie behind them (see *Map 1* for a general view of the estate). Some of the avenues between the rows of vines are wider than others, and several tractors can be seen moving along them. Remembering the description of Charles Worlman as one of the area's most progressive winemakers, the investigators will not be surprised to see them, but they are likely to be puzzled by the curious structures which are scattered throughout the rows of vines at fairly regular intervals. They resemble a short oil drilling derrick with an aircraft engine and propeller mounted on top. One of them near the drive is being swung down, presumably for maintenance. If asked about them, the chauffeur will only grunt that they are "*Jacuzzis*". This is unlikely to mean much to the investigators unless they are specialists in viticulture (it is explained below).

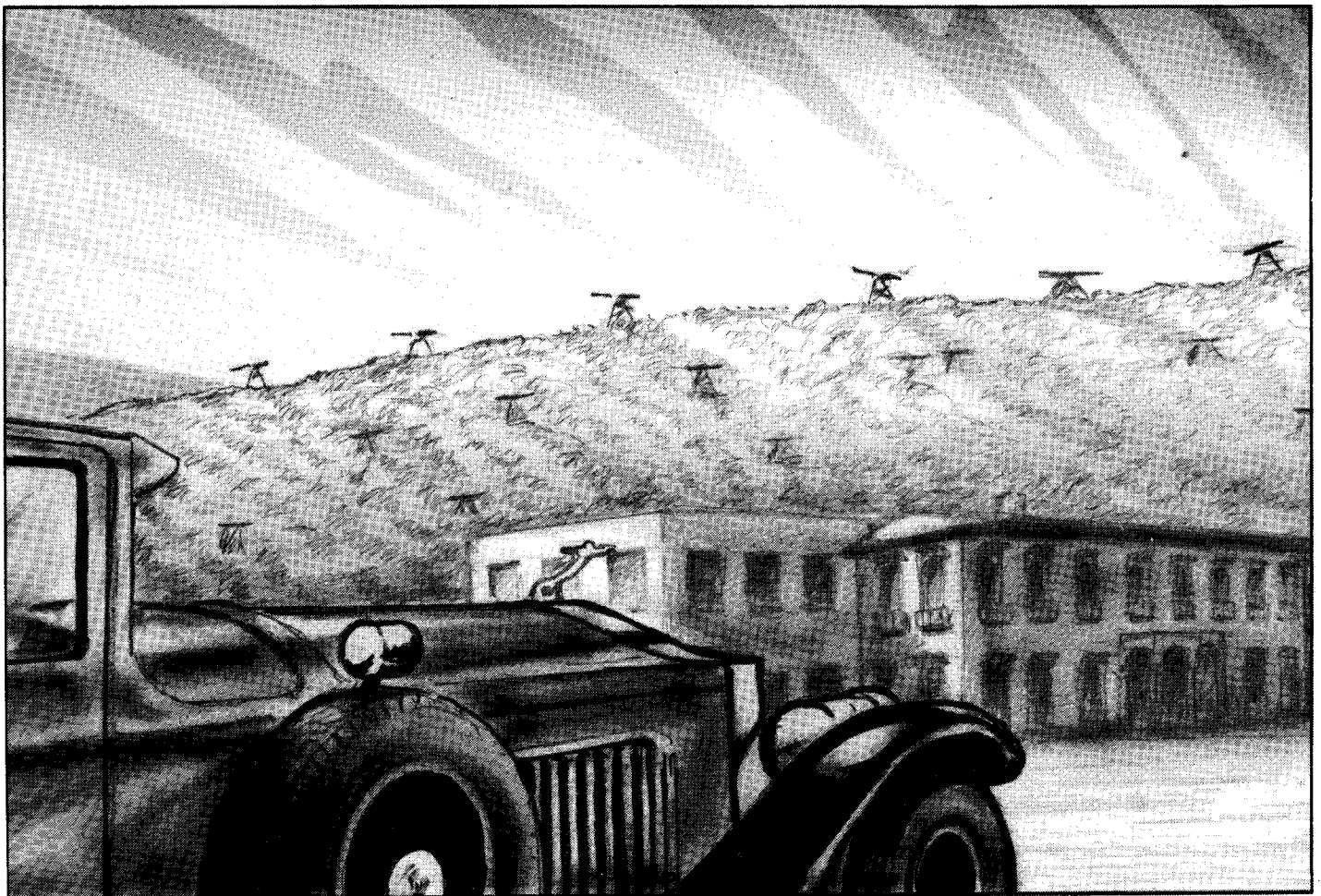
The ranch buildings consist of the main house, the winery, and an assortment of outbuildings. The house itself is a two story building in a mixture of styles, ranging from Spanish Colonial to Victorian. The central block is obviously of considerable age, and probably dates from the Eighteenth Century, but it has been added to extensively over the years. A few cars are already parked in front of the house. As the car draws to a halt, Lilith Hopkirk comes out to meet them. She greets them warmly, and asks them to follow her to their rooms, suggesting that they freshen up before joining the other students. The guest rooms are on the first floor of the ranch house, in the fairly recent North Wing (see *Map 2* for a plan of the inside of the house).

Depending upon the number of investigators present, you can either have them allocated single rooms, or sharing two to a room. The bedrooms are simply furnished with a bed (or two), a washstand with jug and basin set, a wardrobe and chest of drawers, and a cone-bottomed chair. A paraffin lamp stands on top of the drawers. The windows are unusual, in that they open inwards, and it can be seen that this is because they are barred on the outside (the bars are actually only there to blend in with the adobe walls and barred windows of the older parts of the ranch house, but they should introduce a hint of paranoia into the proceedings).

## THE FIRST SEMINAR

Having made themselves comfortable, the investigators should join the other students — and Miss Hopkirk — in a room on the ground floor, also part of the new wing. There are about twenty students present, including themselves; those investigators making a successful Spot Hidden roll will notice that they fall into two fairly distinct groups. Most of the students are elderly ladies and gentlemen — mostly female — and well-heeled to judge from their appearance. The remainder, though, are mainly male, younger, and don't look so prosperous. After a few minutes the students are joined by Worlman, who, 'For the benefit of new students ...', outlines the usual programme at the seminars. They normally begin with a talk by Worlman, following which the students break into seminar groups to discuss topics raised by the talk, or to practice techniques of meditation and dream analysis.

In his talk this particular morning, Worlman elaborates the message behind Lilith Hopkirk's last lecture. Although he is



much easier to follow, and is obviously well-versed at speaking on such matters, he is very vague and gives few details. He does, however, explain that as well as the Ancient Magi themselves, who represented the elite of the drowned continent, others of its inhabitants also survived. These include less-advanced Atlanteans, and a number of their servants. Even these have powers in some cases rivalling those of the greatest contemporary mystics. He also hints that though the Ancient Magi prefer to work indirectly, they can intervene directly in human events, but only with suitable help from their emissaries on Earth.

After the talk, which lasts around half an hour, the meeting breaks up into a number of smaller groups. Worlman suggests to the team that they would profit from tuition in the techniques of 'dream control and recall', to make it easier for them to receive and remember the messages of the Ancient Magi (if they do not agree to this suggestion, they will find that the other groups are practising yoga and meditation techniques, or discussing obscure messages that they claim to have received from the Ancient Magi). The investigators should spend the rest of the morning with Lilith Hopkirk being taught these techniques. By using Occult skill, these can be recognised as fairly standard meditation and mantic (divination) techniques; several may already be known to some investigators.

## A TOUR OF THE ESTATE

Lunch is held in a long dining room across the main hall from the lecture room, and consists of bread, cheese and fruit. Everyone seems rather subdued; an atmosphere of spiritual satisfaction seems to hang in the air. Following lunch, Lilith drifts over and asks the investigators if she can give them a tour of the house and estate. This is a chance for them to get a general idea of the layout and purpose of the buildings, but will not allow them to conduct a search. At certain points, especially the door to the cellars in the ranch house, and that to Worlman's own apartments, they are simply told what is beyond (for example, "... *and down that way are the kitchens and servants' quarters ... Mr. Worlman's private rooms are down that corridor ...*" and so on).

They are shown the winery, now converted to the production of grape juice and non-alcoholic grape tonic drink. The entrance to the former wine cellars is pointed out to them, and they are able to see large quantities of citrus fruit and raisins in boxes. Those suspicious (or cynical) enough to try a Spot Hidden roll will note evidence which suggests that fermentation is still going on, and that the material stored in the cellars is merely for camouflage.

Worlman's winemaking operations *are*, in fact, continuing, albeit on a much reduced scale, but because he produces a quality product which finds its way onto the tables of some very influential people — the least of whom is the local Sheriff of the County — he is not troubled by the authorities. There is no problem where organised crime is concerned either, as to avoid detection the well-known El Profondo clarets and hocks are now labelled as the products of prominent European chateaux, and command a premium price.

(If, after their first visit, the investigators choose to return without Worlman's knowledge and start asking questions around the neighbourhood, they will not be well received. The Sheriff and his minions will assume that they are agents for the Feds, and not want a lucrative sideline ruined by interference from that quarter; the locals also benefit from Worlman's activities, or know nothing about them; and if the Mob hear of anyone asking awkward questions they will assume those involved to be representatives of another gang trying to muscle in. There are plenty of other ways to get to

the bottom of the mystery, and other approaches should quickly prove more productive. If you need to, however, you could have the investigators picked up on a trumped-up charge, especially if they are carrying firearms. You could even have them 'spoken to' by suspicious gentlemen in tasteless suits who will accept their protestations of innocence, but give them a thorough working over anyway — just in case.)

Having seen around the buildings, they are shown some of the vineyards and citrus orchards (they can see all of them if they wish, but it will be a long walk!). There is nothing special to see in the orchards, but during the tour of the vineyards they will have a chance to ask about the mysterious towers they noticed on their drive into the estate. Miss Hopkirk is quite happy to enlighten them, as they are a recent innovation and one which bolsters Worlman's reputation as a progressive grower. They are, in fact 'Jacuzzi frost machines', and are exactly what they appear to be — aircraft engines mounted on short derricks. By keeping a current of air moving over the vines on nights when there is no wind and temperatures are likely to fall below freezing, they prevent a frost forming and so reduce the possibility of crop losses.

What the investigators are *not* told is that to deter trespassers a number of them have been adapted so they can be swung down to ground level (it is one of these that they saw as they came down the drive, actually being put back up rather than being taken down). Anyone making a covert entry to the estate will be forced, at some point, to make their way through the vineyards, and, rather than clamber noisily over the rows of vines or stroll down the very exposed driveway, will go down the avenues used by the tractors. If they do, unless they are very cautious they are likely to walk straight into an aircraft propeller which has been thoughtlessly left at head height! Don't kill anyone out of hand, but give them enough of a near miss to persuade them that creeping around at night is not a safe idea.

On the tour of the grounds, the investigators may also see a copse of trees (marked on *Map 1*) which is located a few hundred yards from the ranch buildings, but which is screened from the drive. Lilith Hopkirk does not point this out herself, but if asked tells them that it is the site of the Worlman family vault.

## AFTER THE TOUR

As the sightseers make their way back to the main house, Lilith suggests the investigators spend the rest of the afternoon practising their meditation techniques in the lecture room. They may choose not to, obviously, and may try snooping around the buildings, but they should find that there are too many students and servants about for this. If they go to Worlman's rooms, in particular, they will find him there, and will have to think of some excuse for intruding upon him!

About seven o'clock a gong will sound for supper, which is taken in the dining room as before. The meal is more substantial than lunch, with a large spread of cold meats and salad stuff. The conversation ranges from boring, if you talk to one of the old ladies, through polite but meaningless if you talk to one of the other students or Lilith, to intelligent and well-informed but unrevealing if you talk to Worlman himself.



## IN THE NIGHT TIME

After supper, everyone will start making their way to their rooms, and the investigators should do likewise. The servants will not turn in until all the guests have done so, so it is no use the investigators hanging back to snoop about. Once in their room(s), the investigators find themselves beginning to feel very tired and light-headed, even if they intend to stay awake until the house is quiet to do some sneaking around.

This effect is produced by a hypnotic/hallucinogenic drug which was included in their supper. You may, if you wish, allow a resistance roll on CON, as there are advantages to having at least one investigator fully conscious later, but fix the die rolls so that most succumb to the drug. Investigators who have simply chosen to go to sleep, or who succumb to the drug while trying to stay awake, will wake the next morning with the memory of an unearthly experience.

In the night, it seemed they woke, or dreamt that they woke perhaps, to find the room veiled in a cold mist, and to hear the sound of ghostly chanting coming as if from a great distance. Out of the mist a hideous creature appeared, with a tube-like slimy body crowned by a waving mass of disgusting tentacles. As it writhed obscenely before them, they heard its voice croak:

*The land that sank will one day rise,  
And He who in sleep deathless lies,  
Will wake beneath appointed skies,  
And those who serve will share his prize!*

At this point the mists thickened again, and the chanting slowly died away. When the mists had cleared again, there was no sign of the creature, nor any trace of its passing (all investigators seeing the apparition will need to make a SAN roll, losing 1d6 if unsuccessful, 1 point if successful).

What the investigators make of this experience depends upon a number of factors, chiefly their state of consciousness at the time, and the use they make of their skills. Those with Occult skill will, on a successful roll, recognise the creature as not being typical of any Atlantean myths they are familiar with. If they have Cthulhu Mythos skill, they may be able to use it to recognise the creature as being a Mythos monster, probably one of the greater independent races. Depending on how their Mythos knowledge has been gained in previous investigations, you may allow them to recognise it for what it is — a chthonian!

Any investigators who overcome the effects of the drug and are conscious when the apparition manifests itself should roll for a Spot Hidden. If successful, they realise that the thing is in fact just a clever costume! They will lose only 1 point of SAN for the initial shock of seeing the 'creature'. Even if they overcame the effects of the drug enough to remain awake, they find that trying to stand up is impossible, for their legs will not support them, and the apparition disappears into the thickening mists before they can reach it.

Once the investigators' suspicions have been roused, they probably want to search the room for clues. A Spot Hidden reveals that there are concealed vents behind the wash stand, wardrobe and chest of drawers, through which the mist could have been pumped, and out of which could have come the disembodied voices and the chanting they heard. Use of Chemistry (or, more properly, Physics) skill allows them to guess that the mist was in fact CO<sub>2</sub> vapour from solid Carbon Dioxide, or 'dry ice' (the vents could conceivably be found earlier by an investigator looking behind the furniture and making a Spot Hidden roll; in this case, the SAN loss for the manifestation will only be 1 point for an unsuccessful SAN roll).



When this evidence is added to the fact that the students at the estate fall into the two distinct groups already mentioned, investigators are likely to reach the conclusion that the Theologosophical Society of San Francisco is nothing more than an elaborate fraud. Its meetings are designed to identify rich suckers who can then be invited to the advanced seminars, where the 'visions' will convince them that they are on the way to spiritual enlightenment and salvation, and keep their dollars flowing into Worlsmen's coffers. This is in fact the truth, but not the whole truth. If the investigators seem too inclined to accept this explanation you should find ways to remind them of the mystery surrounding Schwartzvogel's death. At this stage they may believe this could be explained by Worlsmen's desire to protect a lucrative scam that Louis was on the point of exposing. However, although the vision they saw the previous night might look 'Atlantean' enough to fool the uninformed, their occult knowledge should have told them that it was not.

This fact, and the many other loose ends, should convince them that there are deeper and darker secrets yet to be uncovered!

## Sunday, June 21st

If any of the investigators mention their strange experience at breakfast, Worlsmen displays surprise followed by keen interest, but asks them to defer discussion until later in the morning. Keen-eyed investigators notice that several others, all elderly guests, appear eager to tell Worlsmen about their experiences too.

In his lecture following breakfast, Worlsmen elaborates upon his remarks of the previous day. He explains that although the Ancient Magi are reluctant to intervene directly in human affairs, the escalating threat posed by the forces which caused Atlantis to sink — forces about which he is vague and unspecific — has increased the need for them to do so, and that it is the duty of those who they have contacted to assist them in this.

After the talk, when the students once again break into small study-groups, he asks anyone who has had particularly unusual dreams to stay behind. This should include most, if not all, of the investigators, together with a number of elderly ladies and gentlemen. Without being at all blatant about things, Worlsmen asks them about their dreams first. Unlike the investigators, none of them had any 'visions', but they did hear eerie voices asking them to "*help us in our struggle ... you still cannot bear our messages for long, but those who serve us will guide you*". Making very enthusiastic noises about their 'splendid progress', Worlsmen turns them over to Lilith Hopkirk for further tuition.

He then turns to the investigators, and asks for details of their dreams. At least one of them, hopefully, should tell him what took place, remembering even if they realise it was all a ghastly charade, that Worlsmen has set it up and knows what they should have seen. He listens intently, and displays considerable excitement at what they tell him. Such rapid progress, he enthuses, is quite astounding, and certainly justifies his earlier assessment of their potential. A contact of this magnitude means they are already at the same level as some of his most advanced students, and will be able to join them if they are willing to come to another special seminar. He also adds that although their natural talent must be substantial, the progress they have made has been greatly influenced by the power of the Ancient Magi themselves. Because of the urgency of their mission, these beings have been making even more strenuous

attempts to contact humanity, and humans are now achieving results that in previous generations might have taken years of careful study and preparation. Worlsmen does not comment on the meaning of the message, except to say that it is obviously extremely significant, and he himself received the same lines, an Atlantean prophecy, several years ago. He tells them that he is still seeking guidance from the Ancient Magi as to its full significance.

If the investigators agree to continue attending the seminars, Worlsmen tells them that the advanced students meet every weekend, and that he would be delighted for them to come again in a week's time. For now, however, he suggests that they continue to practice the techniques that they have been taught, so that they may become even more receptive to the messages of the Ancient Magi. The rest of Sunday is uneventful, and ought to be spent in meditation and study (or more likely, discussion of the whole case and its implications). At around half past four the students begin to depart, and the investigators will be driven back into San Francisco by the same monosyllabic chauffeur.

## Monday, June 22nd Onwards

### PULLING TOGETHER THE THREADS

What begins as a straightforward, if somewhat bizarre, case of academic plagiarism has now turned into something much more sinister. The Theologosophical Society obviously bears further investigation; the discovery that there is an elite within it suggests that its ultimate purpose may be more than simple profit from the duping of rich and superstitious widows! Even without Mythos knowledge, the investigators should be deeply suspicious of the phony Atlantean trappings of the Society, and of the references to 'direct intervention' by the Ancient Magi or their agents. If they have used their skills to make a connection with the Mythos through the chthonian costume, they know that, whatever its ultimate aim, the Society must be stopped before it achieves it.

However, there still remains the incident which brought them into the whole affair in the first place. Louis Schwartzvogel might have been killed because he stumbled across the Society's secret, but this is unlikely, as it really required a visit to El Profondo to reveal crucial facts, and there is no evidence to suggest that the detective did anything more than visit a few meetings at Worlsmen's town house. More poignantly, Louis is dead, and the investigators are still alive — so far! This line of reasoning will take them back to where they started, with the index page found on Schwartzvogel's body. Someone went to great lengths to prevent anyone gaining access to the Leontov books — and that someone is very likely to have been Claud R Worlsmen!

Their researches should have enabled them to link Klaus Wurtzman with Claud Worlsmen. In view of the substantial profits that the latter has made from popularising certain aspects of the occult, it would possibly be quite costly as well as embarrassing for him to be associated with a lurid black magic scandal involving one of his ancestors, however far removed. But would this be enough of a reason for murdering someone, especially by occult means?

So far, the investigators should have established that Wurtzman and Sergei Leontov served in the same unit, the Pavlograd Hussars, and that whilst serving in the Russo-Turkish War Wurtzman became intimate with a 'deathless'

Transylvanian countess, and stole the secret of her immortality. What was this secret? Did it have anything to do with Wurtzman's subsequent trip to Siberia, or his activities when he returned to Moscow? Put together, these suggest a fairly large skeleton in the family closet. If they have asked Worlman about the portrait in his study they will know that he is unable — or unwilling — to identify it as Sergei Leontov. In view of the fact that the novels have been available for some years, however, the investigators may also ask themselves what has suddenly made them so sensitive.

On the face of it, there seems no obvious connection with the alleged plagiarism of Niall's article, but on reflection a disturbing possibility may present itself. Knowing what they do, it is easy for the investigators to guess that Louis — having made some excuse to leave the meeting, or deliberately arriving late — was searching the index as the quickest way of discovering whether Worlman possessed a copy of *De Magistri Draconi*. Being disturbed, he tore the page from the index, either to study at leisure, or to use as proof that Worlman did not have the journal. It is safe to assume that the theft was discovered by Worlman, who then activated the Square of Mars, and passed it to Louis without his knowledge. If Worlman had indeed plagiarised Professor Niall, he might well expect some response, and when an obvious gumshoe turned up at the meetings, correctly assume that he was acting at Niall's behest. If this were indeed the case (and to be fair there is no way of checking it, short of asking Worlman!), it would nevertheless surely be in Worlman's interest to let Schwartzvogel take the relevant page of the index. This would establish his innocence in the eyes of the world, if not Niall, and with any luck mean an end to the whole affair — unless it was the possibility of John Niall learning of the Leontov books that panicked Worlman into murder? There is one very simple way to test this: make Niall aware of what they have learned, and see if he can suggest why Worlman would be so desperate to prevent him learning of the Leontov books.

On their return from the estate, it is a good idea for the investigators to take stock of what they have unearthed so far. Using the above as a guide, take a time out and ask a few questions to get them thinking along the right lines. Where necessary you can make direct suggestions, but let them get as much as they can by themselves, and then contact Professor Niall again before the next trip to the estate.

## PROFESSOR JOHN NIALL

From this point onwards Niall will become increasingly important. The investigators have already had some contact with him, and from this and the tone of his original letters to the Pinkerton Agency they will surely realise that he is a difficult man to deal with. If anyone wishes to check up on the man, a little judicious research in University yearbooks, bibliographies, and with someone in the History Faculty reveals the following details.

Professor John Niall is a leading Medievalist, and the author of a number of standard works. Born in Boston in 1865, he studied at Oxford and the Sorbonne, and after gaining degrees from both took up a research position at the University of Heidelberg in 1888. After publishing *The Legacy of Charlemagne*, which was based upon work carried out in his undergraduate days, he spent the next ten years researching and writing *The Cross and The Crescent*, his massive study of the spread of Islam and the Wars of Religion in Spain and the Middle East. He also travelled widely during this time, and held visiting professorships at the Universities of Vienna, Cairo and Barcelona. It was to be fifteen years before his next work appeared. This was *The Lord Will Know His Own*, a study of the Church's struggle against heresy in Medieval France and

Germany. Although recognised as a work of major importance, some of its conclusions — particularly those relating to the influence of Islamic occult texts and Maryonite heresies upon the Cathars and Knights Templar — were regarded as going beyond the evidence.

Since then, John Niall has not published any major work, but has conducted a number of tetchy correspondences in learned journals. In 1914, Niall returned to the United States, to take up the Peryton Chair of Medieval Studies at Brown University, and now divides his time between teaching graduate students there, and researching at Miskatonic University in Arkham. Although there were suggestions that a book on the Salem witch trials would result, there has been no sign of such a work. The general view of Niall is that he is a scholar of enormous erudition, but subject to a number of hobby-horses over which he can be utterly unreasonable. His interest in the occult is also felt to be somewhat undignified for a scholar of his standing.

The investigators should be encouraged to write to Niall, setting out what they have discovered so far, and inviting him to suggest any possible reason why Worlman should wish to prevent him learning of the Leontov books. Provided the letter is sent by Wednesday (the 24th), a telegram will arrive from Niall on the Friday of that week. Its contents will depend on exactly what was in the letter from the investigators, quite obviously. Since it is unlikely that they have identified the creature from the 'vision' as a chthonian (and are certain not to have passed on such information to Niall if they have), the telegram should run something like this... (give out handout I at this point).

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ESSENTIAL I KNOW DETAILS OF  
'PROPHECY' STOP CONFIRM AP-  
PEARANCE ACCOMPANIED BY  
CHANTING STOP WHAT EXACT  
REPEAT EXACT PASSAGE IN JOUR-  
NAL REFERRING MADNESS LEON-  
TOV SISTER STOP PUZZLED BY  
PICTURE OF HUSSAR/LEONTOV  
STOP WHY NO PICTURE WURT-  
ZMAN QUERY SUGGEST TWIN IN  
ROOMS AT RANCH STOP REPORT  
EVENTS OF WEEKEND TO ME  
SOONEST STOP UTMOST CAUTION  
URGED STOP

NIALL

---

Those investigators with sufficient Mythos knowledge will probably have spotted the potential significance of the 'prophecy', and may have identified the costume as representing a dreaded chthonian, but Niall's other question should hopefully cause them to think again about the incident involving Leontov's sister. There is little the investigators can do except write to Niall giving him the details he asks for, but the question of a second portrait is another matter. Niall's suggestion that one exists, and that it is at El Profondo should be borne in mind tomorrow, when the investigators return for their advanced seminar.

Saturday, June 27th

## THE RETURN TO EL PROFONDO

As they pass down the curving slope of the drive in the back of the Packard on their second visit to the estate, the investigators notice that construction work is going on at a spot about two or three hundred yards behind the estate buildings, where a large clearing has been made in the vines. The Polynesian estate workers are also unloading a large quantity of building stone from the back of a flat-bodied truck.

As they enter the ranch house, they feel an atmosphere of urgency in the air, and there is a greater sense of purpose in the way the advanced students stride about on their various tasks. Lolith Hopkirk greets them hurriedly, and tells them to put their luggage in the same rooms they used last weekend, and then to wait in the lecture room. After half an hour, Worlman finally arrives, breathless but with a great sense of elation, apologising for having been delayed by very pressing business.

*"My friends, I am so sorry to have kept you waiting, but I had urgent matters to attend to. We are on the verge of great things, great things. The message of the Ancient Magi is clear to me now. Although their powers are enormous, it is easier for them to act at some times than at others, but a time is now approaching when with help from us who serve them on Earth they may return. It will not be easy, for no truly great end is ever achieved without sacrifice, but the goal here is the greatest that can be imagined.*

*"When the stars are right, I will call upon one who is as old as them, but is not one of them. With his help I can offer the sacrifice necessary for He who is the Key and the Gate, the Opener of the Way, to wake He Who Sleeps and bring back the Ancient Magi to our Earth! To do all this, though, I need help. The other students already know what they have to do, but they are not enough. Are you willing to help? Many would not understand the need for what we will have to do, and would find the form of those we serve repellant, but you have seen their servant, and I know you are made of stronger stuff. I am offering you the chance to change the world! Will you take it?"*

The right answer to this question is an enthusiastic "Yes", whatever the investigators' doubts about Worlman and what he intends doing. Once they have agreed, Worlman explains that they must learn how to channel their spirit and energy, and that the necessary techniques will be taught to them by other students who already know them (these 'techniques' are actually the simple spells for expending POW permanently to enchant an item, and for using Magic Points in enchantments; those investigators who have already acquired such cantrips will have to pretend not to know them).

The rest of the morning is spent in the company of an intense young man, introduced as 'John'. He teaches them the techniques, but once they show themselves able to carry out the various mental exercises, chants and gestures involved he leaves them to practise on their own in their rooms. While he is teaching them, John is unwilling to discuss Worlman or himself, and insists upon concentrating on mastering the techniques, without which nothing can be achieved.

After lunch, which is taken in an almost tangible atmosphere of tense urgency, Worlman announces that he, Miss Hopkirk,

and two of the most senior students will spend the afternoon in "the cellar", preparing for a ritual due to take place that evening. He asks all of the students to occupy themselves with meditation in preparation. The investigators should realise that this represents a golden opportunity, at last, to investigate the house and estate properly. The obvious place to start is Worlman's apartments.

## Worlman's Apartments

Worlman's rooms are upstairs, in the old part of the house, and consist of a bedroom, bathroom, dressing room, and study. The house is quiet, and most of the servants seem to be outside, helping with the construction of whatever the stone is intended for. One or two of the other students are about, but the investigators find it easy enough to slip upstairs without being noticed. Once in Worlman's rooms, they find nothing unexpected in the bedroom, bathroom or dressing room, but are still left with the feeling that something is not quite right. On a successful Idea roll, someone realises what it is.

Most houses which have been lived in by the same family for a number of years retain traces of previous generations, such as furniture, pictures, keepsakes and the like, but here it is as if a museum was being lived in! There are modern objects, certainly, but many of the personal items, such as combs and hairbrushes, are antiques, and the clutter of old bottles and tins in the bathroom cabinet goes back not years, but decades!

The study is a large room with a fireplace on the wall to the right of the door. The two longer walls, through one of which the investigators enter the room, are lined with an arrangement of drawers, cupboards and bookshelves. The drawers and cupboards are waist high, and above them the crammed bookshelves stretch to the ceiling. A search of these will reveal that the books are almost exclusively occult in nature, and more specialised than those in the library of the town house. There are numerous notebooks, some of considerable age to judge from their condition, but all apparently written in the same hand!

The drawers and cupboards contain a bewildering variety of scrolls and other parchments, few of which the investigators are able to read, although they may recognise some as being Oriental and Greek, and others as being in the crabbed Gothic script of the Middle Ages. Any they can read (by the application of appropriate skills) reveal themselves to be philosophical and magical works, and in a few cases apparently actual grimoires of spells (these should be the sort of reference material that those investigators with Occult skill are used to working with, and although they will be impressed that any private collection should have so many rare and expensive items, they should not feel tempted to take any in the hope of learning arcane secrets from them!). Also scattered amongst the drawers and cupboards is a bizarre assortment of artefacts, including statuettes, fragments of pottery with inscriptions or designs, jewellery of strange and ornate workmanship, and magical and alchemical apparatus. Some of these items are strangely disturbing, and the investigators may well find themselves closing some drawers with a shudder.

The very first thing that attracts their attention on entering the room, however, is the portrait which hangs over the desk at the far end of the room. Both desk and painting are apparently twins to the ones in the town house, with one major difference — the portrait is of Worlman! There can be no doubt, as the artist has even included the scar on his left cheek. Especially thorough investigators

who search for secret passages or cupboards will not find any, but any attempt to look behind the painting will reveal that it is hinged to the wall, and that behind it is a safe of some size. This is unusual in that instead of a conventional lock it has a combination, and that rather than using numbers it has the letters of the alphabet around it. Whether or not the *players* can successfully guess at the word or words that unlock the safe, it is more than likely that their characters will have to carry out much more research before finding an answer (for this reason opening the safe is covered in a later section).

## WORK IN PROGRESS

It is possible that the investigators will want to take a closer look at the construction work which is taking place. There is little to see so far, but it looks as if some form of platform is being constructed. A circular foundation about 15' in diameter has been laid, and on this a stone wall is being built. The space inside the wall is being filled with rubble, and there is a line of smooth stones protruding from the beginnings of the wall, running upwards in a spiral.

While they are looking at the building work, it is possible that the investigators will find themselves near the small copse of trees which they may have seen during Lilith's tour of the estate. If they go over and examine it, they find that inside the trees is a building resembling a Greek or Roman temple in miniature. Even if they have not asked Lilith, they easily recognise it for what it is: the Worlsmen family vault, similar to many found in large cemeteries. It is surrounded by cast iron railings, about six feet high with spiked tops, which include a padlocked gate on the western side. If an attempt is made to enter the vault, they will find that the substantial door is firmly locked.

## THE RITUAL IN THE CELLAR

In the early evening, all the students — including the investigators — are summoned to the lecture room, where they are issued with simple brown robes. After changing in their rooms, they reassemble, and follow one of the most senior students to the door leading to the cellar. From this, a short flight of stairs leads down to a corridor about fifty

feet long, with two doors on either side and one at the end. All the doors except that at the end are closed, but if the investigators make their way down here at any time and search them, they find that three of the four rooms, all about fifteen feet deep and five wide, are empty except for the sort of junk that collects in attics and cellars over the decades.

The other room, the first on the left, is entirely different. It has been cleared and whitewashed, and is filled with a large apparatus of wood and metal, which they will recognise as an industrial refrigerator. This is not surprising, considering Worlsmen regularly has large numbers of 'guests', but if they look inside it they find that as well as the expected assortment of meat and dairy produce, the ice compartment also holds a large metal container labelled '*Property of the Oakland Chemical and Air Products Company*'. The investigators remember that they saw the same name on bags of Bordeaux Mixture and fertiliser in the vineyard buildings. This, however, does not contain fungicide or fertiliser. If the lid is taken off it begins giving off a cold vapour. It is possible to tip out some of the white substance inside, but it is intensely cold, and will do 1d2 of damage to any exposed flesh that it touches. Once out, it rapidly gives off clouds of a cold fog, and will eventually disappear entirely. Anyone with basic scientific knowledge will be able to identify the container as a Dewar flask, used for keeping substances insulated, and the material within it as solid CO<sub>2</sub>, or dry ice.

This room also contains a small incinerator, and an air-pump, with a flue leading up into the ceiling above. If the door of the former is opened, the investigators find a small conical dish on a tripod, which requires an Occult roll to be recognised for what it is — an alchemist or witch's thurible. There are traces of ash and a gummy residue inside the dish, and if these are scraped out and analysed later that week, they are found to contain a number of vegetable alkaloids, which could produce a tranquilising and mildly hallucinogenic effect if inhaled. It is through this apparatus, which connects to a number of the guest rooms through a system of valves operated from the kitchens, that Worlsmen prepares his students for the 'visions' of the Ancient Magi that persuaded them to serve him.





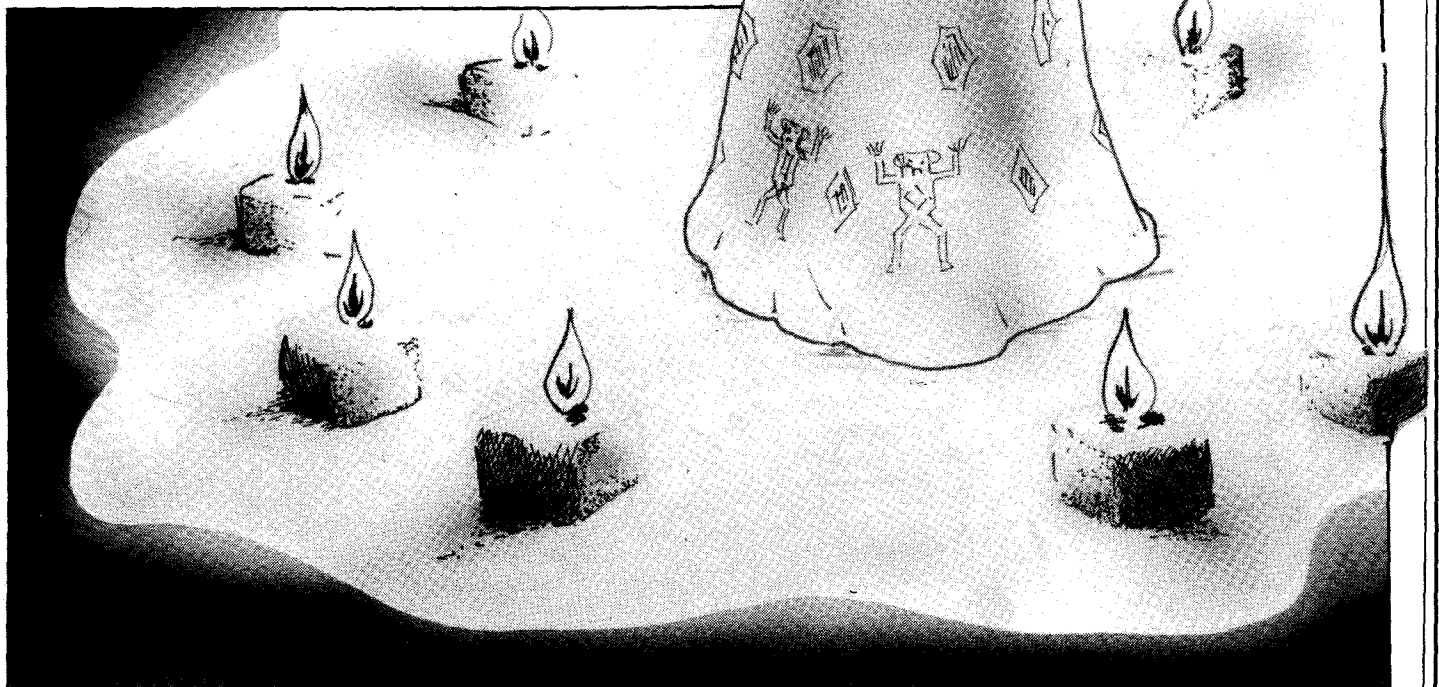
## The Cellar

Like the passage and the rooms leading off it, the cellar is original, and was probably built at the same time as the house. It is a large room, about sixty feet long and thirty wide, with a paved floor. The roof is vaulted to support the weight of the floors above, and along the walls are woven hangings. These resemble those produced by the Navajo and Hopi Indians, but the designs are markedly different, featuring humanoid figures apparently worshipping tree-like growths. The figures are manlike apart from their distorted features, with large eyes and ears, and the fact that they appear to be naked. Any investigator with Anthropology skill given time to examine them properly is able to confirm that the weavings are from the native American cultures of the South-West, but also that the beings shown in them are not traditional designs. The cellar is lit by a number of crude stone lamps around the walls, with others in a ring in the centre of the floor.

As the investigators and other students are led in by the senior student, they find Worlman seated cross-legged in the middle of the ring of lamps, dressed in a robe similar to theirs but ornamented with woven designs similar to those on the wall hangings. He seems completely oblivious to the presence of everyone, and it is Lilith Hopkirk who instructs the students to stand in a ring outside the circle of lamps, to repeat the chants and invocations she makes, and to 'lend their power' (ie expend a Magic Point) when she signals. Investigators who keep their watches on are able to calculate that the ceremony takes about an hour. Most of the chanting is rhythmic and repetitive, and to those without Mythos skill will be unintelligible. Use of such skill, however, may reveal that the chants form part of a spell of contacting — or calling — a being more powerful than the servitor races, but less powerful than the Outer Gods.

However, even those without Mythos knowledge are able to remember the blasphemous chant used by Worlman towards the end of the ceremony, when all those present are commanded to support his efforts. Its very syllables have an alien sound, and were never meant to be produced by a human throat, but can best be rendered as:

*"Ia, Ia, ngh'aa cthgyr ghaai! Ytnagh llaiybt gnnngthgl  
'ntr! Ehbyeba nggab! g'nmai Y'bnai Shudde M'ell! Eb'y'  
ya!!"*



At the climax of the chant, Worlman sinks to his knees, his arms stretched rigidly out in front of him, eyes staring at something that only he can see. He remains like this for a number of minutes, and then relaxes abruptly and strides from the cellar in silence. Lilith follows him, and the rest of the students are only too glad to leave the cellar for their rooms.

excitement, and carries a large revolver. All heads turn to stare at him, but he ignores everyone in the room except Worlman, who he regards with a mixture of horror and loathing.

## Sunday, June 28th

### THE TOWER

The following morning, the students are all summoned to the clearing in the vineyards where the building work is going on. Here they are met by Worlman, looking fresh and invigorated, who tells them it is important for the task he has in hand that the 'tower' is consecrated. It is to this end that they have all been taught the spell for enchanting an item by permanently expending a point of POW, and each of them in turn is asked to step up to the base of the construction and cast the spell on it. Whether or not the investigators actually do cast the spell (if they realise that this is what it is) is up to you and their ingenuity. If they have not used the technique before, then the loss of a point of POW to learn the spell is logical, if costly. The investigators may accept this philosophically, but not everyone feels the same way — as they will discover after lunch. The permanent loss of a point of POW has a considerable psychic impact, and everyone casting the spell is affected in some way. One student in particular seems stunned by what happened, and returns to the house without a word. He is not present at lunch either.

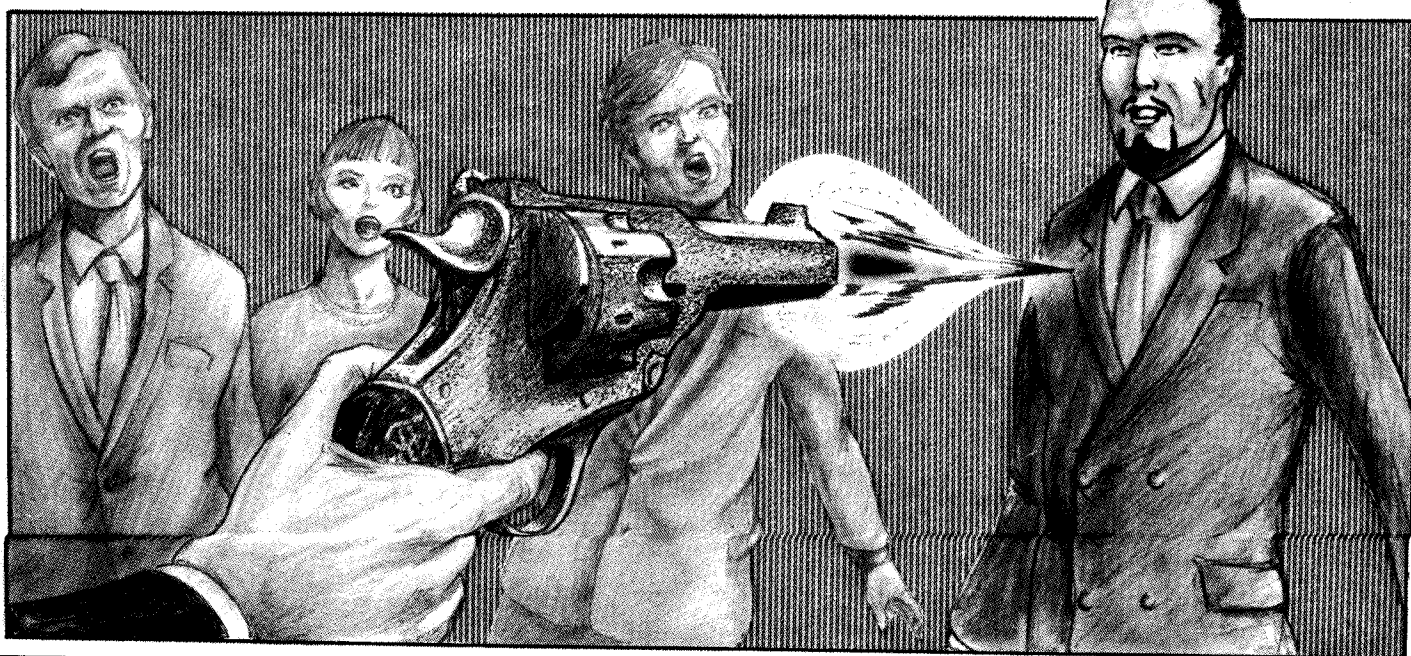
Early in the afternoon, the students gather in the meeting room to hear what Worlman has to say to them. As he is about to start, the door of the room flies open, to reveal the missing student. He is in a state of considerable

*"You devil! I know what you are now! You're a vampire, you've stolen my soul! I felt it this morning, but it was too late, it had already happened. You won't stop there though, oh no, you won't stop until you've drained me and left me a husk! But I won't let you, I won't, do you hear me? You are going to STOP!!!"*

He raises the revolver, and aims it at Worlman. There are screams as the students dive for the floor, but Worlman doesn't appear to move. Afterwards, it is difficult to decide just what did happen in the confusion, but everyone agrees that five shots were fired, before the student with the gun gave a terrified shriek and fled from the room. Moments later, the sound of a car driving off a high speed was heard. There is pandemonium in the room, but Worlman calls for quiet before remarking that there is no need for panic.

*"The young man was obviously mentally deranged to begin with, and unable to cope with the knowledge to which he was being given the key. After all, who but a madman would try to shot someone with a gun full of blanks? I think it best in the circumstances, however, if we disperse now and meet again next weekend."*

What he says seems very reasonable, for he is patently still alive, but the investigators (some of whom are likely to have served in the Great War, and heard a gun fired in anger) will be left with the uneasy feeling that the gun was not loaded with blanks, and that what they have just witnessed is the impossibility of a man being shot five times at close range, with no apparent sign of injury. Returning to the city in the Packard, they may well wonder what sort of opponent they have pitted themselves against.



## Monday, June 29th Onwards

### A LITTLE LEARNING

On their return to the city, the investigators find another telegram from Niall waiting for them. It reads as follows (give out handout J at this point).

YOUR LETTER RECEIVED  
STOP DEEPLY DISTURBED  
BY CONTENTS STOP ARR-  
IVING SOONEST MEAN-  
WHILE ESSENTIAL IN-  
VESTIGATE PHARR COL-  
LECTION FOR REFER-  
ENCES WORLSMAN STOP  
AWAIT LETTER STOP  
SUCH KNOWLEDGE DANG-  
EROUS BUT IGNORANCE  
DOUBLY SO STOP AT-  
TEMPT NOTHING UNTIL  
MY ARRIVAL STOP

NIALL

Two days, the promised letter from Niall arrives. In fact there are two: one is a short manuscript note to the investigators, the other a sealed envelope addressed to Randolph Coutts Esq, of Coutts and Winthrop. The note informs the investigators that they are to take the sealed envelope to the offices of the said lawyers, who will then grant them access to the Zebulon Pharr Collection. Niall wishes them to look in Pharr's notebooks for references to Wurtzman or Worlsmann, and also for any creatures such as the one they 'saw' on their first visit. He also informs them that he has taken the unusual step of asking the Collection's trustees to show them relevant passages from "a book whose very name should not lightly be banded about. You will not thank me for giving you the opportunity to read it, and only the very real danger that you face convinced me that it would be more perilous for you not to know with what you were dealing." The envelope addressed to Randolph Coutts is sealed. No-one should be caddish enough to open it, but if anyone does they discover it says exactly what Niall's letter has led them to believe, but also that it should not be accepted if the seal is broken. They can then wait for Niall to arrive and explain the situation to him.

If the sealed letter is taken to Coutts and Winthrop, the investigators are taken to Pharr's house, which is set in its own grounds a few miles to the north of city limits. The house is much as Pharr left it, and the investigators will be alone except for Randolph Coutts, who has accompanied them, and who takes them to the room where the boxes of Pharr's field notebooks are kept. From these the investigators learn some disturbing facts.

There are no references to Wurtzman, who had disappeared from the scene by 1852 when Pharr began his researches. By the 1860s, however, Pharr had begun to study the religion and magic of the tribes of the region. Successful Library Use rolls show that in the course of several months spent with Coyote Runs Backward, a medicine man, Pharr found him to be in-

creasingly concerned about the return to the region of someone called 'He Who Casts No Shadow', a name which could be translated both as 'The Soulless One' or 'The Deathless One'. Coyote Runs Backward seemed to fear this person's ability to talk to "the walkers beneath", who he said could "eat up a whole tribe". A later entry in the same notebook contains references to a medicine man's blanket woven with designs of "walkers beneath", and a reference added later gives the location of this in the Pharr collection of artefacts. If the investigators examine this, they find the design is identical to those on the hangings in the cellar at the estate.

Further research reveals later entries in the notebooks referring to a deity worshipped by certain decadent shamans and medicine men along the West Coast, known as 'The Father of Earthquakes, Shudde M'ell, greatest of the Walkers Beneath, or Chthonians!' A note has been added in the margin — at a later date, presumably, for it is in ink: "*Merciful heaven, can it be? Do they walk beneath our city streets and we know it not? I fear we have but felt Him stirring in his sleep. Let us pray that no-one wakes Him or we shall perish utterly. 1906.*" The significance of this date should not be lost on the investigators.

Before leaving, Randolph Coutts takes the investigators to an inner room, and from a locked chest carefully brings out a very ancient volume. He opens it, with some trepidation it seems, at a particular page, and motions the investigators to read. The book is the Olaus Wormius translation of *The Necronomicon*, and only those investigators with Latin are able to read the page in question. If none of them can, Coutts reluctantly translates the passage Niall has asked them to be shown:

*"Yog-Sothoth knows the gate. Yog-Sothoth is the gate. Yog-Sothoth is the key and guardian of the gate. Past, present, future, all are one in Yog-Sothoth. He knows where the Old Ones broke through of old, and where they shall break through again. Yog-Sothoth is the key to the gate, whereby the spheres meet. Man rules now where They ruled once; They shall soon rule where man rules now. They wait patient and potent, for here shall they reign again."*

Reading this passage does not add as much to investigators' Mythos knowledge as reading the book, quite obviously, but it has the advantage of leaving them sane for what is to come. Add 3% to Mythos knowledge, and remove 1D6 SAN (except for anyone who has already read the whole of this edition). At your discretion anyone who has not read this — or any other — edition of the work can return at a later date to study the book, but they will be of limited use to their fellow investigators thereafter.

Once the passage has been read, and everyone has rested awhile to recover their shattered nerves, Coutts drives the investigators back to the city in silence.

## Thursday, July 2nd

On Thursday of this week Niall arrives just before noon in a cab from the railway station. He is a slightly-built man of below-average height, who wears gold rimmed glasses and has a small goatee beard. At first glance he could be taken for a prosperous accountant, doctor or lawyer, or even an alienist of Dr Freud's school in Vienna. A few moments' conversation leave no doubt, however; he is an academic, who manages to be unworldly, pugnacious and dauntingly intellectual at the same time. Brushing aside the usual pleasantries, he insists on



all the investigators being present to discuss their findings. This is another good opportunity for the players to take stock of what they have learned and come to some definite conclusions. You can use Niall to prompt them, but wherever possible the ideas should come from the investigators.

There are two main strands to the mystery: who is Worlsman, and what does he intend? Since their last letter to Niall the investigators should have found the portrait of — presumably — Wurtzman, and noted the astonishing resemblance to Worlsman. When put alongside the other evidence, of notebooks in the same handwriting, antique personal effects, the continuous occupation of the El Profondo ranch by Wurtzman and his relatives, and the unusual succession of sons, these all suggest that they are dealing with one and the same man!

The thing which worries Niall most, though, is their description of the shooting incident that weekend. From his valise he takes a copy of the issue of *De Magistri Draconi* in which his article appeared. This was based on a passage in the *Malleus Maleficarum* in which the authors, whilst describing the ways in which curses were cast, also condemned the practice of making figures or charms to take the effects of the evil eye away from the intended victim. Niall was intrigued by this idea, and suggested in his article that, as voodoo dolls were made by a sorcerer and could transfer harm done to them onto a victim instead, if a person were to make his own doll or homunculus, a curse aimed at him would affect it instead.

Put together with the hints in Leontov's books, all this combines to suggest that Wurtzman/Worlsman has been able to achieve a sort of immortality by constructing a scapegoat homunculus! If this is indeed the case, Worlsman himself cannot be destroyed, as the attack at the weekend clearly showed. Worse than that, Niall tells them, there is no point in trying to destroy the homunculus. In the case of a voodoo image, if it is found and destroyed by the victim, not only is the link broken — which does not happen if another person destroys it — but the evil is reflected back upon the caster. What happens, though, when caster and victim are one and the same person? Destruction of the physical form of the homunculus would not break the magical link, which can only be done by Worlsman himself and he is unlikely to oblige them by doing this! In any event the discussion is rather academic, as the homunculus has not even been located yet. Let the investigators chew these unpleasant conclusions over for a while, before Niall raises the question of what Worlsman is trying to achieve.

While they cannot be sure, it is reasonable for the investigators to assume that when Worlsman learnt of Niall's article in *De Magistri Draconi* he wrote the *Niveus Nanus* article in a probably unnecessary attempt to divert attention from Niall's conclusions. It is also easy to understand now why the thought of Niall seeing the Leontov books was enough to make Worlsman commit murder. In both cases, it would probably have been better for Worlsman to have left well alone, and, but for his guilty conscience, the investigators might never have become involved. The Leontov books might also hold a clue to Worlsman's present activities, however. Niall explains that he is worried by the description of the incident involving Leontov's sister, and suspects a connection with the worship of Yog-Sothoth. By itself this would be bad enough, but coupled with remarks by Worlsman about offering "the sacrifice that is necessary for He who is the Key and the Gate, the Opener of the Way, to wake He who sleeps and bring back the Ancient Magi to the Earth", it suggests that Worlsman has been working for years towards a goal almost too hideous to conceive, that which is hinted at in the passage in *The Necronomicon* shown to the investigators.



What, then, was Worlman referring to in his remark about obtaining the help of "one who is as old as them, but is not one of them"? From the description of the 'vision' seen by the recruits to the Theologosophical Society, Niall suspects it to be a chthonian, and if this were the case the reference is likely to be to Shudde M'ell, the being behind legends of the Worm Ouroboros and the Midgard Serpent. Even though the investigators may now know that the apparition was faked, the accompanying details, such as the chanting, were accurate, and the subsequent ritual in the cellar can leave no doubt that Worlman has made contact with chthonians, and possibly with Shudde M'ell itself.

At this point, if it hasn't already occurred to them, a horrible thought should strike the investigators. From their research in the Pharr Collection, they know of the power of chthonians to cause earthquakes, to "eat up whole tribes" as Coyote Runs Backward put it. They have also seen Pharr's horrified note written in 1906, the year of earthquake and fire. Could the "sacrifice that is necessary" be San Francisco itself? It is obvious that this has occurred to Niall, but that he has been desperately searching for some other possibility. He admits that for Yog-Sothoth to open the way for the Old Ones to return, an enormous sacrifice would need to be made, but also stresses that for the effort to succeed the stars would need to be in the right positions. With obvious reluctance he asks for a room to be made available so he can make the necessary calculations and see what answer emerges.

While he is doing this, he suggests that the investigators return to the Zebulon Pharr Collection and try to establish the significance of the tower being built in the vineyard. He does not mention *The Necronomicon*, but if any investigators have previously gained Mythos Knowledge from reading this or another edition they will be able to use it for reference, and if not, they should be allowed access by Coutts to appropriate passages, with a 3% increase to Mythos knowledge, and a 1d6 SAN loss. If a successful attempt is made, they discover the information about Yog-Sothoth given in the *Call of Cthulhu* rulebook (pp61-62), and the details of the spell 'Call Yog-Sothoth' (p70). Further research in Pharr's notebooks also reveals more information about chthonians (as given in the rulebook, pp37-39). If appropriate, this can take the form of a small addition to Mythos Knowledge, with a corresponding loss of SAN.

Niall is still working when they return from the Collection, but after only a short while he emerges in a state of considerable agitation, clutching a piece of paper scrawled with astrological symbols and what looks like Arabic writing. What he has to tell the investigators confirms their and his worst fears. Not only are the stars moving into the right positions to allow an attempt to be made for the return of the Old Ones, but they will reach this position in only two days - this coming Saturday!

At this point, with the end of the world less than forty-eight hours away, and no apparent way of preventing Worlman from carrying out his insane plan, there is only one sensible thing to do - take solace in strong liquor, and someone should suggest this (if no-one does, Niall can always shock the investigators by asking if they know any good speakeasies!). After everyone has downed a couple of stiff drinks, the words and ideas should begin to flow again. Niall starts talking about how there are two opposing factors - the homunculus and Worlman - and how there must be some way of getting one to destroy the other. At this point, make an Idea roll for each of the investigators. One of them will be successful (regardless of the roll), and you should pass that player a note which suggests that they

jokingly observe that, since they can't persuade Worlman to go and kill his homunculus, perhaps they could persuade the homunculus to go and kill Worlman!

The effect on Niall is electrifying. Clapping a hand to his forehead, he exclaims: "Of course! Oh, ye gods! How could I be so dense? Out of the mouths of babes and sucklings..." before rushing out of the illicit bar and back to the room where he has been working. He remains there all night, but emerges at ten o'clock the next morning with a list of occult ingredients, including alchemical paraphernalia such as retorts, thuribles and the like, together with a list of places where they should be able to purchase such items. The investigators should be kept busy for the rest of the day collecting these items. When they bring them back for Niall, he merely sticks his head out of the door, takes the items with a murmured thanks, and disappears again.

## Friday, July 3rd

Sometime after midnight, Niall emerges, looking very haggard, and beckons the investigators in. The room has been cleared to make space for a pentagram that he has drawn on the floorboards in coloured powders, and in the centre, surrounded by symbols which may be familiar to those with Mythos knowledge, are three of the items which Niall asked for earlier. One is a small lead crystal perfume flask, filled with a fine golden dust, and the others are two identical scroll cases made of ivory. It is with these, Niall tells them, that Worlman's fate will be sealed.

As near as possible to the time of the ceremony of summoning, they must find the homunculus, and sprinkle the contents of the flask over it. When this has been done, the contents of one of the scroll cases is to be placed on the chest of the homunculus. Then, as quickly as possible, the contents of the other scroll case must be given to Worlman without him knowing. Naturally, the investigators will want to know more, but Niall brushes their questions aside, merely observing that he intends to repay Worlman in his own coin, and will explain afterwards. It should be obvious that he cannot carry out the tasks himself, for fear of being recognised by Worlman, but if asked he explains that this is indeed the reason. He finally advises the team to take their own transport to the estate, and to leave as soon as they have made sure of Worlman's fate.

## Saturday, July 4th

Having made two previous visits to the estate (and possibly more if they have been snooping during the week), the investigators have no difficulty in finding their own way there. Arriving at the ranch house in mid-morning, they find the other students gathering in the lecture room. There is almost unbearable feeling of expectation in the air, for everyone knows that today sees the climax of all their preparations. When they are all present, Worlman addresses them briefly. He is excited, almost feverish state, and tells them that this very day will see the dawn of a new age, as Earth's former masters return to claim their own.

*"Man rules now where They ruled once; They shall rule where man rules now. Yonder city shall be one with Kadath in the cold waste, but its passing shall procure their coming. I go to prepare myself, do thou likewise. An hour after dark, we shall gather in the cellar!"*

It is with a shudder that the investigators recognise the very words of *The Necronomicon*. Worlman then leaves, followed by Lilith, after telling the students that on no account are they to enter the celler before the appointed time. From this the investigators will be able to deduce that Worlman will be in the celler for the remainder of the day, and that they can proceed with their efforts to locate the homunculus.

The obvious place to look is in Worlman's family vault, but they should already know that this is securely locked. If anyone has the keys it will be Worlman of course, and assuming that he does not carry them on his person, the obvious place to look for them is in his rooms.

### THE SAFE IN THE STUDY

The investigators may have found the wall safe on their last visit to the study, but if they did not they can always search the room again, perhaps being helped along by an Idea roll. There still remains the problem of the password or words that will unlock it, but knowing what they do about Worlman this should not be difficult to deduce. It must be something memorable, but also something that would be difficult for a stranger to guess, and ideally something appropriate as well. What better password than "*Yog-Sothoth*" - the Key and the Gate?

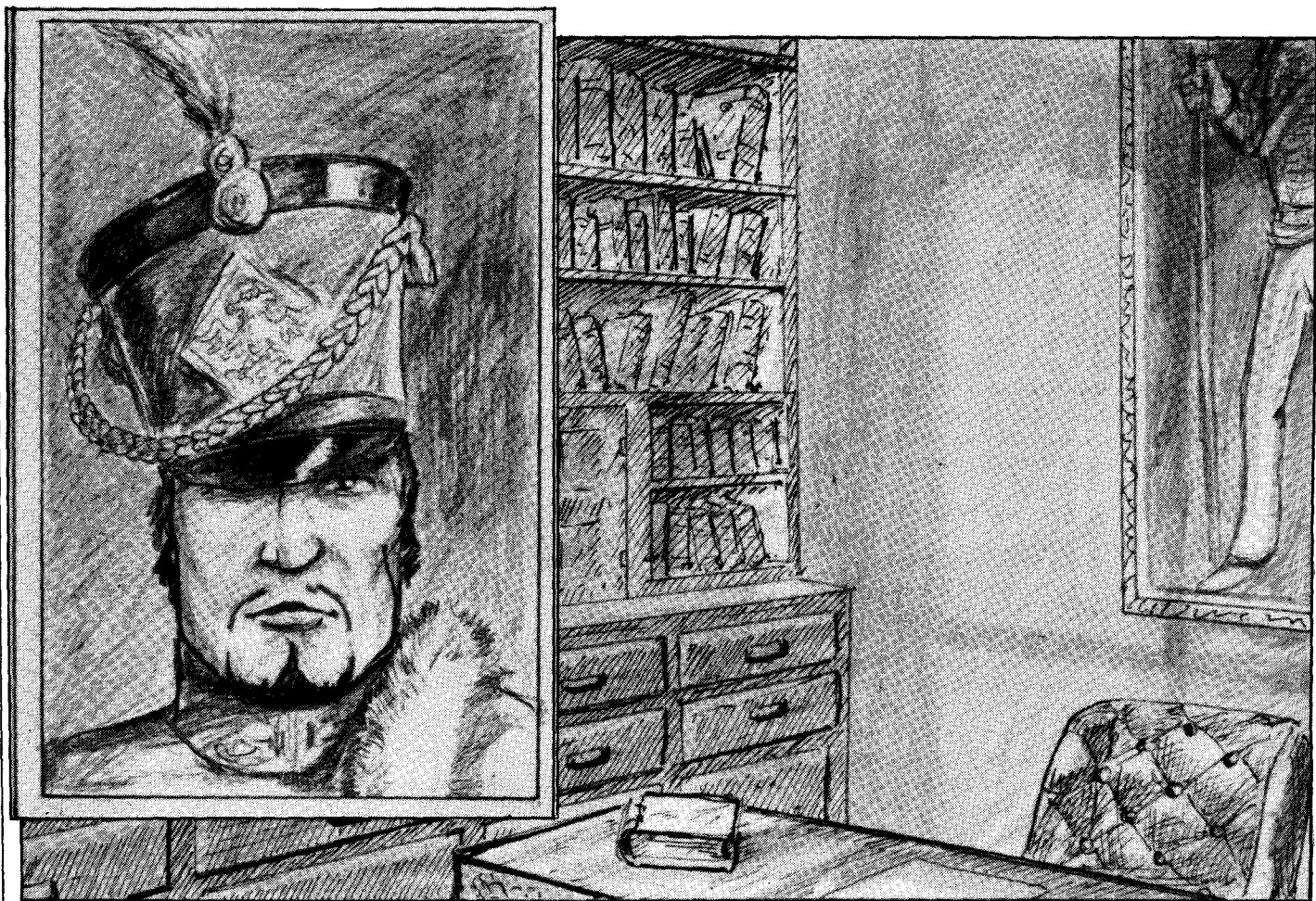
Once this has been entered, the safe opens easily. Inside are a deed box, which contains papers relating to Worlman's business interests, a large key ring with several sets of keys on it, and two books. The books, of course, are the two Leontov novels stolen from the Civic Center Library. There isn't time to read them properly now, but browsing quickly through them reveals passages which take on a sinister significance in

the light of what the investigators now know (the events on which the books are based are outlined in Appendix I, but Leontov, although uneasy and later horrified at the change in his friend, did not appreciate the full significance of much to which he was witness). Inside the front cover of both books is a head and shoulders portrait of the author, which can easily be recognised as the subject of the portrait in the study at the town house. The investigators can now be fairly sure that they have the keys to the vault. However, in view of the fact that it is still light, and Niall's caution to wait until near the time of the ceremony, it will be advisable for them to wait until the evening before going there. Until then, the best plan is to sit out the rest of the daylight in their rooms, perhaps planning every last detail of what they are about to do.

### INTO THE VAULT

As they make their way toward the vault, the bulk of the now-finished tower can be seen silhouetted against the evening sky. In spite of the time of year, a chill wind has sprung up, and the gibbous moon can be seen through ragged cloud.

The locks on the gate and door of the vault open easily, and are obviously kept oiled. A short flight of steps leads down from the door. Inside is pitch dark, except (hopefully) for the beams from the investigators' flashlight or lantern. This reveals five coffins: four on shelves set into the walls, and one on a plinth in the centre of the vault. All are oak with brass fittings, and as is normal the lids are secured with brass screws. Unless someone has thought to bring a screwdriver or crowbar, the investigators will have to locate one before the coffins can be opened (this should not be too difficult - the tool kit of the



car is a likely place - but as time ticks away the scramble to find one will add to the tension!).

Four of the coffins are labelled, bearing the names of Felicity Worlman, Elizabeth Worlman, Clement R Worlman, and Charles R Worlman. If opened, the coffins of the two women prove to contain female bodies in an advanced state of decomposition. The coffins of the two Worlsmans, on the other hand, contain nothing but a number of large rocks, wrapped in coarse cloth to prevent their rattling.

The sight of what is in the fifth coffin requires each investigator to roll against their SAN, losing 1 point if successful, or 2d4 if they are not. It resembles a life-sized model, but no sane imagination could have produced such a likeness. Bent and deformed by age, it also bears the scars of wounds and disease. Limbs twisted by badly-healed fractures lie at unnatural angles, and the skin is leprous and blotched. To their horror, the investigators also see that chest and abdomen are torn by five gaping bullet wounds, crusted with dried blood. The physical horrors are bad enough, but what should not be possible is that within the eyes of this thing, with its obscene resemblance to Worlman, lurks consciousness of a sort. Niall could tell them that for what Worlman intended no mere image would suffice, but the thought that for generations this thing has suffered in his place and known what was being done to it, is enough to shake anyone's sanity. Of all the sins that Worlman has committed, this must surely rank supreme.

When the golden powder is shaken out over the homunculus, no trace is left within the flask, and the cloud of golden motes is drawn to the body as if alive. Taking either of the scroll cases, the investigators find inside a piece of parchment about four inches across, with a series of numbers in a grid. It is similar to the magic square shown by Hammett, but considerably larger. When placed gingerly upon the chest of the homunculus, it clings to it as if pressed or drawn by some force. There are no dramatic changes, and it may only be their imaginations that make the atmosphere of the tomb seem charged with unseen forces, but it will be a considerable relief to emerge into the night air again.

## THE OPENING OF THE WAY

The twin of the parchment that was placed upon the homunculus is still in its ivory case, but the investigators now have to give it to Worlman. How this is done is entirely up to the ingenuity of the investigators, but there would be a pleasing justice in passing it to Worlman with his ceremonial robes before the ceremony, for example (the robes are kept in a store cupboard in the kitchens area, and are usually given out by a pair of students). It is preferable that Worlman be passed the parchment without being aware of it, as having disposed of Schwartzvogel by similar means he is unlikely to take something so suspicious without being sure what it was.

Once all the students have joined Worlman and Lilith in the cellar, and donned their robes, they all make their way to the clearing in the vineyard where the tower now stands. They gather in a circle around its base, as Lilith asks them to give their aid as they did before. This time, though, the chanting is subtly different, although the name of Shudde M'ell is still invoked. Those with Mythos Knowledge may be able to identify the spell as one of calling or summoning.

After perhaps fifteen minutes, the crescendo of the chant slowly begins to rise as Worlman, standing in the eastern part of the circle, adds his own counterchants to those of the students. If they are just pretending to assist the ritual, the investigators may notice a disturbance coming from the vineyard, as if some large object were being dragged through the vines from the direction of the vault. Worlman appears not to notice it, and nothing can be seen outside the ring of torches which surround the clearing, but a few moments later the chanting begins to break up as those students nearest the noise run screaming from what emerges into the light.

It is the homunculus, now surrounded by a faint gold mist, the figures on the parchment on its chest glowing with an eldritch light. As it staggers into the clearing it pauses, its deformed head swinging blindly from side to side like a hound casting for a scent. As it does so, Worlman suddenly becomes aware of the presence of the second parchment. Clawing frantically at his robes, he tries to hurl it away, but as soon as it touches his flesh it clings to him, and resists all his crazed attempts to rip it off. As the second parchment is exposed, the homunculus begins to stagger towards Worlman. Seeing this, the sorcerer breaks into a run towards the tower, scrambling up the stone steps spiralling it. The circle of students is now completely broken; some run screaming away from the creature, others simply stand in mute terror watching the drama unfold before them.

Reaching the summit of the tower, Worlman begins an awful invocation. An icy wind springs up out of nowhere, and the ragged cloud begins to thicken at a point above the tower.

*"Ygnaiib, ygnaiib ... thflthkb'ngba ... Yog-Sothoth!  
Ehya! Y'bthnk, b'ebye - n'grkd'l'h Yog-Sothoth! Ngh'aaa  
Eh-y-ya-ya-yahaah!"*

As he desperately chants, the homunculus reaches the tower, and begins its painful ascent, half staggering, half clawing its way up. As it nears the top, the number of both parchments glow steadily brighter, burning with a cold fire. Although the wind is now approaching gale force, Worlman's frantic voice can still be heard, screaming for his inhuman gods. Finally the awful figure drags itself onto the top of the tower and advances towards Worlman. As it does so, the sorcerer's voice rises in an agonised shriek:

*"Nooo! Yog-Sothoth! SAVE ME! NO! NO! GET BACK!  
AAAAAAGHHH!"*

A blinding flash comes from the two parchments as the homunculus grasps its creator in a dreadful embrace. To those on the ground it is not clear what happens, but a moment later one figure collapses on the tower as another plummets to the ground. However, the twisted thing which lies at the base of the tower now wears brown robes.

The wind ceases as abruptly as it started, but it has now been replaced by a low, insistent rumbling and a distant chanting which seems to come from the very ground itself! The investigators should need no further prompting to run for the car and make their getaway. As they reach the gates of the estate, they hear the terrible grinding crashes of falling masonry and trees from behind them. Those who, like Lot's wife, choose to look back must take their chances (make a SAN roll or lose 1d20 SAN; lose 1d3 if successful). They see an enormous crater where the estate buildings used to be, and rearing from the ruins the hideous bulk of an enormous chthonian, its obscene tentacles writhing in fury - Shudde M'ell! One, at least, of Worlman's gods answered his call.

## The Epilogue

Before his return to the East Coast, Professor Niall is able to explain what it was the investigators took with them to the estate. The Dust of Osiris was the product of years of research in which he has attempted to reproduce a magical substance possessed by the Ancient Egyptians, and credited with the power of raising the dead, but now known only from fragments of scrolls themselves many times transcribed from the originals. Since the homunculus was already more than half alive, the Dust gave it one of the two things it needed to be revenged on its creator - the power of movement.

The two squares of parchment provided the other element. They were the Square of Saturn, a magic square similar to the Square of Mars used to kill Schwartzvogel, but used for spells of joining and binding. Once one square had been placed on the homunculus, and it had been given the ability to seek out the holder of the other, it was only a matter of time before the two came together and the transfer of the curse took place. Had the holder been anyone but Worlman, they would have suffered the same effects, and the homunculus would also have been destroyed, but the then mortal Worlman might still have been able to complete his awful plans.

Surprisingly little publicity is given to the mysterious destruction of the Worlman estate. While the total devastation suggested that an earthquake was responsible, no tremor of such power could have been so localised. The absence of bodies, while thankfully suggesting that loss of life was minimal, only added to the mystery, while the anomalous weather conditions could only be explained as a freak storm. In the end, like so many paranormal events, the incident will be the victim of an embarrassed conspiracy of silence. The investigators could throw some light on the matter, but they would never be believed, and for the sanity of the world it is better that some things remain hidden.

They may choose to reveal some of the truth to Hammett, however. He is an intelligent and open-minded man who has already seen some evidence, in the death of Louis Schwartzvogel, that there are more things in life than meet the eye. He passes no judgement upon what they tell him, but it will be evident that it has left an impression. Some time later, a parcel will arrive at the University. In it are autographed copies of the latest novel by the famous Black Mask author - *The Dain Curse*.

And so the city of San Francisco will carry on as before, blithely unaware of how narrowly it has escaped destruction, and the investigators return to their normal lives. Or will they? Over the next few weeks and months, the one loose end in the affair may come to assume worrying proportions. In all their researches, nothing ever came to light about the enigmatic Lilith Hopkirk, which in itself is suspicious. There is also the riddle of the unknown Magda Bathory who was the last known person with access to the Leontov books from the Library of Congress. If the investigators chanced upon this last detail, they may well have decided that it is more than likely that they are one and the same person, but the surname Bathory has some very unpleasant connotations, and they may find themselves thinking back to the events of Leontov's first novel. But even so, not even an immortal could have survived the events of that night, could they?





## Appendix I - A Timeline for Worlsman

- 1798 Klaus Wurtzman born in Prussia, the youngest of five sons of a minor landowner.
- 1814 Wurtzman's father purchases a commission in a cavalry regiment, in lieu of an inheritance.
- 1825 Nicholas I becomes Czar.
- 1828 Wurtzman, unable to obtain further promotion in the armies of the German states, joins the Russian army as a Major. On April 27th, war is declared against the Turks, and Russian armies invade Moldavia and Wallachia.
- 1829 Whilst engaged in buying remounts for the army, Wurtzman engages in an affair with a beautiful Wallachian countess. During this, he discovers that she is immortal, and later steals the scroll containing her secret.
- 1830 Returning to Moscow, Wurtzman becomes known as a rake and womaniser. Because of his friendship with the son of Count Ivan Vasilievitch Ulyanov, he is able to obtain a commission to prospect for minerals in Siberia. Under cover of this, he secretly studies with tribal shamans, and with their guidance constructs the homunculus which will allow him to become immortal.
- 1833 During an attempt by Wurtzman to summon Yog-Sothoth in its form of Tawil at'Umr, the daughter of Count Ivan Leontov is driven insane when Tawil at'Umr removes its veil. For a time Wurtzman's protectors are able to suppress the resulting scandal, but eventually Count Ulyanov persuades him that his only option is to accept exile to the Russian whaling station on the Californian coast which will eventually become Fort Ross.
- 1834 Arriving at Fort Ross, Wurtzman buys land and begins to breed and trade horses, and later to plant vines. Working with fur trappers, he explores deep into the interior, and later returns by himself to study with tribal medicine men and to worship at ancient sites.
- 1841 When the Russian colony is abandoned, Wurtzman remains behind.
- 1845 On the outbreak of the Mexican-Texan War, Wurtzman takes advantage of the resulting confusion to disappear to Alaska, leaving the estate in the hands of his servants, and the homunculus safely buried. Between now and 1857, he will study with Inuit shamen, adding much to his Mythos knowledge.
- 1857 Returning as Clement Worlsman, a distant European relative, he resumes his life in California.
- 1858 Clement Worlsman marries Felicity Todd.
- 1859 Charles Worlsman is born.
- 1875 Charles, aged 16, is sent East to finish his education, but is actually murdered by one of Worlsman's servants.
- 1885 To avoid the increasing difficulty of disguising his apparent age, Worlsman fakes his death through a cataleptic trance induced by a form of space mead. He assumes the identify of Charles, supposedly summoned to his father's deathbed but arriving too late to take farewell of him.
- 1886 Charles marries Elizabeth Anne Gray.
- 1888 Claud Worlsman is born.
- 1906 Claud, aged 18, is sent to Europe to study. Like Charles, he is murdered soon after.
- 1914 Judging it to be wiser to wait until after the war for 'Claud' to return, Worlsman becomes a reclusive invalid and concentrates on research into the Mythos.
- 1919 Worlsman again fakes his own death, and assumes the identify of Claud Worlsman. Shortly afterwards he buys his town house and starts the Theologosophical Society of San Francisco with two purposes: to attract rich and gullible eccentrics who will provide funds for his researches, and to identify likely recruits who will help in his ambition of making possible the return of Cthulhu and the other Great Old Ones.
- 1925 Louis Schwartzvogel is killed, and the investigation begins.

## January

Mon		5	12	19	26
Tue		6	13	20	27
Wed		7	14	21	28
Thu	1	8	15	22	29
Fri	2	9	16	23	30
Sat	3	10	17	24	31
Sun	4	11	18	25	

## March

Mon	30	2	9	16	23
Tue	31	3	10	17	24
Wed		4	11	18	25
Thu		5	12	19	26
Fri		6	13	20	27
Sat		7	14	21	28
Sun	1	8	15	22	29

## May

Mon		4	11	18	25
Tue		5	12	19	26
Wed		6	13	20	27
Thu		7	14	21	28
Fri	1	8	15	22	29
Sat	2	9	16	23	30
Sun	3	10	17	24	31

## July

Mon		6	13	20	27
Tue		7	14	21	28
Wed	1	8	15	22	29
Thu	2	9	16	23	30
Fri	3	10	17	24	31
Sat	4	11	18	25	
Sun	5	12	19	26	

## September

Mon		7	14	21	28
Tue	1	8	15	22	29
Wed	2	9	16	23	30
Thu	3	10	17	24	
Fri	4	11	18	25	
Sat	5	12	19	26	
Sun	6	13	20	27	

## November

Mon	30	2	9	16	23
Tue		3	10	17	24
Wed		4	11	18	25
Thu		5	12	19	26
Fri		6	13	20	27
Sat		7	14	21	28
Sun	1	8	15	22	29

## February

Mon		2	9	16	23
Tue		3	10	17	24
Wed		4	11	18	25
Thu		5	12	19	26
Fri		6	13	20	27
Sat		7	14	21	28
Sun	1	8	15	22	

## April

Mon		6	13	20	27
Tue		7	14	21	28
Wed	1	8	15	22	29
Thu	2	9	16	23	30
Fri	3	10	17	24	
Sat	4	11	18	25	
Sun	5	12	19	26	

## June

Mon	1	8	15	22	29
Tue	2	9	16	23	30
Wed	3	10	17	24	
Thu	4	11	18	25	
Fri	5	12	29	26	
Sat	6	13	20	27	
Sun	7	14	21	28	

## August


Mon	31	3	10	27	24
Tue		4	11	18	25
Wed		5	12	19	26
Thu		6	13	20	27
Fri		7	14	21	28
Sat	1	8	15	22	29
Sun	2	9	16	23	30

## October

Mon		5	12	19	26
Tue		6	13	20	27
Wed		7	14	21	28
Thu	1	8	15	22	29
Fri	2	9	16	23	30
Sat	3	10	17	24	31
Sun	4	11	18	25	


## December

Mon		7	14	21	28
Tue	1	8	15	22	29
Wed	2	9	16	23	30
Thu	3	10	17	24	31
Fri	4	11	18	25	
Sat	5	12	19	26	
Sun	6	13	20	27	



Howard Horne, esq  
Theatrical Impressario

249 Pierpoint Buildings,  
Long Acre,  
London.



*Do try and come, & bring your  
friends, as I am in need of  
your help & advice*  
H.H.

Chancellor's Theatre	<u>Chancellor's Theatre</u>	
	DRURY LANE	
Row DD Seat 15		
June 22nd 7.30 p.m.	June 22nd 7.30 p.m.	Row DD Seat 15

HANDOUT E                      The Statue of the Sorcerer

- Giffard, George. **Dialogue Concerning Witches** (Eng.) 1603
- James I, King. **Daemonologie**(Eng) 1597
- Leontov, Sergei Ivanovich. **Horses For The Holy War** (Trans) 1904
- Leontov, Sergei Ivanovich. **Amid Siberian Forests** (Trans) 1904
- Levi, Eliphas. **The Doctrine And Ritual Of Magic** (Fr) 2 vols, 1855-6
- Maternus, Firmicus. **On The Dark Errors Of Heathen Cults** (Trans) 1795
- Mather, Rev Cotton. **The Devil Discovered** (Eng) 1692
- Mather, Rev Cotton. **Discourse On The Wonders Of The Invisible World** (Eng) 1692
- Notre-Dame, Michel de. **Centuries** (Fr) 1555
- Perkins, William. **Damned Art Of Witchcraft** (Eng) 1608
- Sprenger, Jacobus & Kramer, Heinrich. **Malleus Maleficarum** (Lat) 1486



"...On Wednesday to a grand ball at the house of Prince Golitsin, the Governor of Moscow, where I once again met Tanya Narishkin. I twitted her about having to hide her risqué novel in her wrap again, but she laughingly told me that tonight's affair would not prove so dull, and she had not brought it. How right she was to prove! Wurtzman was again present, and halfway through the evening was the centre of an almighty fracas. A handsome young man in hussars' uniform, who had been talking to W for some time, with voices on both sides being raised, finally hurled a torrent of Russian at him before storming from the house. According to Tanya, this was none other than the author of 'Horses For the Holy War' himself, Sergei Leontov, and the cause of the contretemps his sister, with whom W is widely rumored to have formed a liaison. Tanya expressed the opinion that it was as well I did not speak Russian, as L's language would have made a Cossack blush, but he apparently demanded that all contact between Wurtzman and his sister should cease immediately, and would brook no attempt at explanation..."

"...I had been due today to call upon Princess Waldemar, but as I was preparing to leave, a note was delivered from Mme Aprarian asking me to defer my visit for some days. I was at a loss to know why, until Wendall returned from seeing Prince Kyril Narishkin, the Grand Marechal of the Court. Apparently all Moscow is stunned by the tragedy that has struck Count Ivan Leontov. His daughter Olga and a maid left the house in stealth the night before last, and none saw them go. Yesterday at dawn the servants were roused by a knocking at the front door, to find a huddled figure on the steps. It was none other than Olga, but the poor child's reason was quite gone, and she can only babble nonsense about seeing someone without their veil "when the way was opened" or some such. She has also developed a morbid fear of what lies behind doors, and exhibits pitiful terror at the sight of a key..."

"...Still unwell, and unable to attend the Stroganoff's ball. On Wendall's return, he told me of an astonishing scene that took place there. In front of all present Leontov struck Wurtzman, and called him out. It is an open secret that for some reason he holds W responsible for what has happened to his sister..."

"...L'affair Leontov, as all here are calling it, has taken another, most tragic twist. As he was passing along a crowded street yesterday, he was jostled by a group of ruffians, and fell to the ground. When passers-by went to assist him to his feet, they found him dead, a dagger buried in his side! His murderers had by then made good their escape, and witnesses describe them only as swarthy Mongol or Tartar types. The dagger was apparently of Siberian pattern. Although there is no proof, popular opinion holds Wurtzman responsible, as many of his personal servants returned with him from there after his prospecting expedition..."

"...Following Leontov's death, the outcry against Wurtzman grew. For a while, his protectors among the court were able to shield him, but the mob stoned his house, calling him murderer and devil worshipper, and there were rumors that the Metropolitan had threatened to pronounce anathema against Wurtzman if Czar Nicholas did not act. Before anything could be done, however, he disappeared. It is widely stated that he has taken ship for the whaling station called Fuerto Russo by the Mexicans, on the Pacific coast. At least there he should be no further trouble to anyone..."

**PINKERTON DETECTIVE AGENCY**

*N.C. Eumenides, 468 W 23rd St, New York, N.Y.*

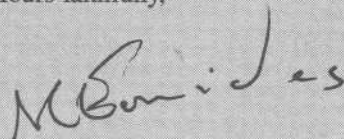
Professor J Niall,  
Dept of Medieval Studies,  
Brown University,  
Providence, R.I.

Dear Professor Niall,

Thank you for your recent letter. Although the Pinkerton Agency could undertake the sort of investigative work that you mention, it might be better in the case that you have in mind to seek redress through a civil action in the courts, particularly in view of its specialised nature. I am sure that your attorney would be able to advise you how best to proceed with such a course.

Assuring you of our best attention at all times, I am,

Yours faithfully,



N.C. EUMENIDES,  
RESIDENT SUPERINTENDANT,  
NEW YORK BUREAU.

**Leontov, Sergei Ivanovich. *Horses For The Holy War*. 480pp 8vo, cloth bound.**  
A novel based on Colonel Leontov's service during the Russo-Turkish War of 1828-29. Little information on the main campaign, as this officer was attached to a supply unit buying horses in Moldavia, but many colourful anecdotes about his companions and Moldavian customs.

**Leontov, Sergei Ivanovich. *Amid Siberian Forests*. 512pp 8vo, cloth bound.**  
Novel inspired by the author's part in pioneering expeditions to exploit the wealth of the Siberian wilderness. A full-blooded tale of adventure and prospecting, with much information about the cults and customs of the Siberian natives.

**HANDOUT I** *The Statue of the Sorcerer*

ESSENTIAL I KNOW DETAILS OF 'PROPHECY' STOP CONFIRM  
APPEARANCE ACCOMPANIED BY CHANTING STOP WHAT EXACT REPEAT  
EXACT PASSAGE IN JOURNAL REFERRING MADNESS LEONTOV SISTER  
STOP PUZZLED BY PICTURE OF HUSSAR/LEONTOV STOP WHY NO PIC-  
TURE WURTZMAN QUERY SUGGEST TWIN IN ROOMS AT RANCH STOP  
REPORT EVENTS OF WEEKEND TO ME SOONEST STOP UTMOST CAUTION  
URGED STOP

NIALL

**HANDOUT J** *The Statue of the Sorcerer*

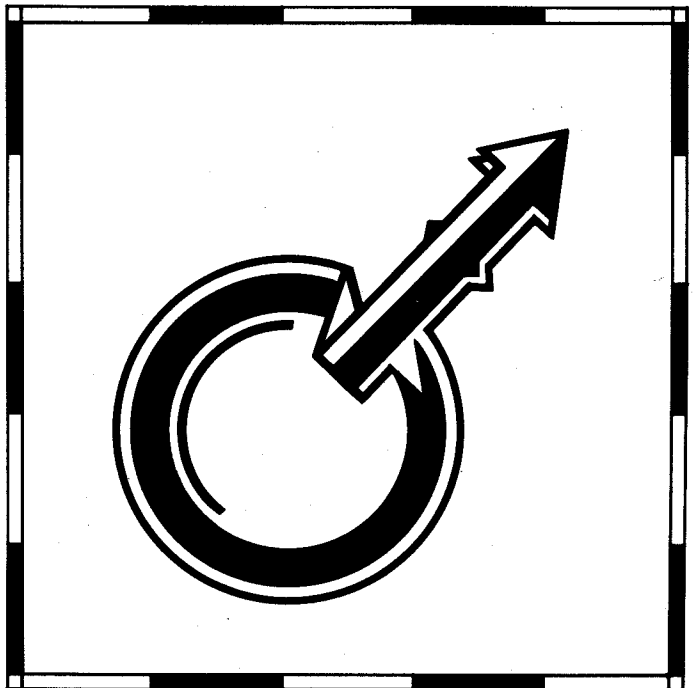
YOUR LETTER RECEIVED STOP DEEPLY DISTURBED BY CONTENTS STOP  
ARRIVING SOONEST MEANWHILE ESSENTIAL INVESTIGATE PHARR COL-  
LECTION FOR REFERENCES WORLSMAN STOP AWAIT LETTER STOP SUCH  
KNOWLEDGE DANGEROUS BUT IGNORANCE DOUBLY SO STOP ATTEMPT  
NOTHING UNTIL MY ARRIVAL STOP

NIALL

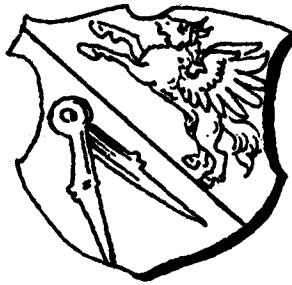
**HANDOUT A** *The Statue of the Sorcerer*

11	24	7	20	3
4	12	25	8	16
17	5	13	21	9
10	18	1	14	22
23	6	19	2	15

(Front)



(Back)



Professor J. Niall,  
Dept of Medieval Studies,  
Brown University,  
Providence,  
Rhode Island.

Mr N Eumenides,  
Pinkerton Detective Agency,  
468 W 23rd Street,  
New York,  
N.Y. State

Wednesday, 15th April 1925

Dear Sir,

I have recently had brought to my attention a case of academic plagiarism of the grossest sort. One Claud R. Worlman of San Francisco, a dilettante professing to be scholar of the Occult, has had an article on homunculi published in *Niveus Nanus*, a periodical specialising in such material, and produced by the Supmet Press of San Francisco. This is a travesty of an earlier article of my own, produced for the benefit of other scholars in a specialist journal.

I wish to obtain evidence of this outrage, and would be obliged if you would advise me of the likely cost of such an exercise. I remain,

Yours faithfully,

Handwritten signature of John Niall.

John Niall (Prof.)





PROFESSOR J. NIALL,  
Dept of Medieval Studies,  
Brown University,  
Providence,  
Rhode Island.

Mr N Eumenides,  
Pinkerton Detective Agency,  
468 W 23rd Street,  
New York,  
N.Y. State

Friday, 24th April 1925

Sir,

In the course of years, I have had to become accustomed to seeing my work ignored or misinterpreted by so-called academics incapable of grasping the awesome truths at which I have so far been able only to hint. It is, however, a new experience to be advised in my own field by a tradesperson to whom I offer employment.

The breathtaking effrontery displayed by Worlman in his plagiarism of my research would in itself be enough to justify my seeking to obtain firm evidence, without which may prosecution would likely prove fruitless. I am not desirous of obtaining restitution through the process of law, though, as the content of my research would all too easily lend itself to sensationalism by the yellow press. I prefer to expose Worlman to his peers, such as they may be, and leave them to draw their own conclusions. To do this I still need evidence, and in using on him tactics as heavy-handed as his own I see a certain ironic justice.

The work which has been turned to his own ends originally appeared in a hand-printed journal of limited circulation called *De Magistri Draconi*. If evidence were secured that he has possession of a copy, no excuse would be possible.

You will, sir, oblige me by obtaining such evidence and tendering a bill for your services. I remain,

Yours faithfully,

John Niall (Prof.)

"...while in Tao An I saw a most peculiar fellow working in the paddy fields. He was old and leathery-skinned, like so many of the peasant farmers of the area, but upon his back was tattooed a most delightful dragon motif, which I will tray and sketch below. When I pointed it out to my guide, however, he virtually spat out the words 'Lan Shee!' and rode on.



Tao - Northern China  
Back Tattoo - 21th August 1872  
Harold Amer sham

"I had all but forgotten the strange incident but the next evening, as we relaxed in my rooms in yet another delightful roadside tavern, Shaylin brought me a battered history book which he said detailed the history of the region. Of course I could not read a word of the thing, and Shaylin was somewhat reluctant to translate it for some reason, but the pictures were plain enough. They were painted in quite delightful style and colouration as always, but what scenes!

The first showed a priest dressed up in the finery of a mandarin, standing at an altar with a dirk the size of an elephant's tusk poised over some poor smiling peasant. May the grace of God preserve me, but I swear it was a human sacrifice! The next showed some sort of decoration on a tapestry or something similar. It was of an emaciated man, thin and white as if something had sucked the very blood out of him. The last picture showed the hellish priest again, but this time dying at the hands of hundreds of righteous men who were plainly razing the unholy temple. I have heard tales before now of China's pagan past, but this 'Lan Shee' lot have been quite the worst I have ever heard of. May I never look at an old peasant's tatoos again!..."

"...A ball at the Stroganoff's. I had been told by Madame Stroganoff to seek out Count Narishkin's daughter, and found her in a side salon. My approach clearly startled her, as she dropped a book she had been reading whilst trying to conceal it beneath her wrap. I could not help laughing, and within minutes we were chatting like old friends. She confessed that she had brought a book as the Stroganoff's soirees were so infernally dull, but that the novel in question, a certain 'Horses for the Holy War' would have caused eyebrows to be raised if she had been seen reading it. Set during the war against the Turks, it is based on the exploits of a unit engaged in buying remounts in Moldavia. The central character is widely reckoned to be Klaus Wurtzman, with whom the author served in just such a unit, and whose name I had already heard bandied about. The novel fed Wurtzman's reputation in society as an enfant terrible, being a gothick concoction involving a liaison with a deathless countess descended from the bloodthirsty tyrant Vlad Tepes, and from the terrible Elizabeth Bathory, and the theft by Wurtzman of her secret. Apparently another novel from the same pen has recently been published, based on a prospecting trip made by Wurtzman and the author to the Siberian territories. This has swiftly achieved great notoriety, being full of purple passages about diabolic rites by tribal shamans, and the worship of hideous idols. It also caused something of a rift between the former comrades. Tanya later pointed out Wurtzman to me, and I must confess I could not share the immortal countess's attraction to him, although his uniform was that of the Pavlograd Hussars and fine enough, and he himself tall, with piercing blue eyes, and sporting a fine beard."

