

Mystery On Mona

An Original *Cthulhu Invictus* Scenario

For Yog-Sothoth.com

By Oscar Rios

Introduction – Mona was once a cradle of rebellion against Roman rule in Britannia, but those days were supposed to be over. A collection of small islands surrounding a larger central one, Ynys Mon was a major religious center for the native Britons. Once it was a powerful druid stronghold, containing sacred groves and shrines, the whole of these islands were not only holy grounds to the Britons but major cultural centers openly defying the Roman way of life. Tales of abductions, decapitations and human sacrifice by the local druids were bad enough, but when the nature priests began to preach open rebellion to Roman authorities action was taken.

Ten years ago Roman forces, led by the general Suetonius Paulinus, invaded Mona. Arrayed against him were hordes of druid priests and priestesses and some say all the ancient gods of the Celts. Stories tell of the druids rushing about naked, wild hair blowing in the wind, screaming out curses and prayers to their dark gods while the battles raged. Holy sites were razed, sacred groves were burned, and the druids put to the sword. In the end the druids fell, order was restored and this nest of rebellion fell silent. Or had it? As the final victory against the druids was being sealed, the Icini Queen Boudica launched her rebellion and all forces on Mona were hastily recalled back to Britannia. Could something have been missed?

Upon Mona there are whispers and rumblings. A decade after what was thought as the final victory over the druids something is stirring upon these islands. Strange symbols have been found carved into trees and houses in eastern Mona, slaves have begun to run off into the countryside and a patrol of Roman soldiers has gone missing. Worse still, a boat sailing from Mona's main island to a smaller outer island called Ynys Seiriol mysteriously sank, killing all but one of it's passengers.

This man, a local Briton of the Ordovices tribe, was found roaming the shoreline near Din Lligwy (the closest settlement to Ynys Seiriol). Called Comrith, the man had apparently swum from Ynys Seiriol back to Mona. His mind was unhinged and his ranting caused his own people to shun him and cast him out, calling him cursed. Roman authorities took possession of the madman, bringing him to Segontium (a military fort in Britannia, just across the straight from Mona) for questioning.

The man spoke little that made sense, but what he claimed was cause for concern. Comrith spoke of a sudden and violent storm that appeared as if called down by magic. He spoke of replanted groves, restored stones, and druid rites being performed on Ynys Seiriol. What is certain is that a half dozen soldiers are missing along with the nine passengers and crew that Comrith set out for Ynys Seiriol with. Could Suetonius have missed something all those years ago? Are those who dwell on Ynys Seiriol pretenders or are they remnants of the true druid faith, thought to be long vanquished? This is a mystery that requires an answer.

Keeper's Information – Ten years ago there was a small community of Druids on Ynys Seiriol. These druids were shunned by most of the others for they had been delving into dark and forbidden secrets. They felt that such knowledge was the only way with which to gain the strength to drive out the Romans once and for all. Before they could use such knowledge the Romans invaded and these druids, along with the others, were put to the sword. During the fighting the druids send the bulk of their young students, all children, into an area cave for safety. However, their attempts to guard the mouth of the cave failed, and Roman soldiers pitched torches and oil into the cave's mouth. This caused a fire on the support beams that quickly caused the cave to collapse. A dozen children terrified and choking on smoke and dust, were trapped.

The children were blind in the darkness and groped to find one another. They attempted to escape the cave but did not have the strength to dig themselves out. Days passed under the earth and soon hunger and thirst were upon them, fear rising to near madness. These young druids prayed to whatever gods would listen to them. They prayed for eyes to see in the dark. They prayed for hands powerful enough with which to escape their tomb, they prayed for food to fill their cramping bellies. One by one they started to die until only six boys remained and then their prayers were answered.

They were filled with a new hunger and suddenly these six surviving children began to eat the bodies of their fallen companions. Soon their eyes could see in the dark, their fingernails grew into digging claws and their arms filled with a strength they never knew. Within days the final six freed themselves only to see that all they had known was destroyed. Their village burned, their families dead and gone. But so too was their humanity and the cave was now their home. These children had transformed into ghouls.

For the next ten years these young ghouls lived hidden on Ynys Seiriol. They fed from the mass grave left by the Romans, they replanted the sacred oaks and restored the holy shrines. They grew into adulthood, praying to the dark gods who'd saved them and mastered the dark secrets their parents had sought to discover. But now the time for hiding is over.

The ghouls wish to strike out against Roman rule. They now will call storms down upon any ship sailing within reach of Ynys Seiriol. They've begun crossing the sea and lurking around Din Lligwy on moonless nights, to place runes and sigils while raiding the community's burial grounds. However, there were other needs than food, as the young ghouls colony was without females. In Din Lligwy they found several young women they recognized from childhood. They had been captured during the attack ten years ago and taken by the Romans as slaves. A new plan was formed.

These women would be taken back to Ynys Seiriol and kept in the cave, where they would be persuaded to join the ghouls. Once they made the transformation they colony would be able to grow. Besides, in their minds, these women were druid students as they had been. To the ghouls taking them back to Ynys Seiriol was rescuing them and bringing them back home. Currently the ghouls have abducted two of their childhood friends and are holding them captive back on Ynys Seiriol, slowly starving them until they succumb to eating human flesh and following the dark path into Ghouldom.

However, the ghouls had nothing to do with the missing soldiers. Those six men were ambushed and killed by a group of local Ordovices rebels. These “freedom fighters” may try to do the same to the investigators, should they be Roman officials or known friends of the foreign oppressors. They will be opportunistic and strike when the odds are best in their favor.

Involving the Investigators- Investigators could be hired to look into Comrith’s story by local Roman authorities (Meridus Sorio, base commander of Segontium). They could be friends or relatives of some of the missing people, either the soldiers, ship passengers or abducted women. Investigators might also be hired by Dexius Grattus, a Roman Publican (tax collector) living in Din Lligwy to find his young bride (Elvora, one of the abducted women).

Part One – Segontium

Keepers may wish to have the investigators start here, later taking a boat over to Mona. Segontium is a military fort surrounded by a small village, which supports it. This is the closest place of real Roman authority to Ynys Seiriol. Investigators would be assigned solving this mystery by Meridus Sorio, the local base commander.

Meeting with Merius Sorio - Sorio is a military man, coming up through the ranks, a veteran of many Britannian campaigns. He is also a veteran of the Mona campaign and fears a resurgence of, what he will call, the Druid Cult.

If investigators are under his command he’ll simply order them to investigate it. If he is hiring them to do so he will offer the investigators 50 sesterces in coin and another 50 sesterces in equipment and supplies at the start of the investigation. Sorio will pay investigators another 500 sesterces once the mystery is solved.

He’ll say, “If there is anything going on there I want to know about it at once. It’s easy to cut down one tree before it becomes a whole forest.” He’ll warn investigators not to trust the locals as “It’s all nods and smiles until you feel the knife in your back. There has been an upswing in disturbances in the area over the last few years. Watch yourselves but also try not to make things worse. I don’t have the men I need to put down a revolt.” In closing he’ll suggest, “Talk to that madman we picked up before you leave, see if you can get anything useful out of him. Good luck, we’ve tried and come away with little. Crazy as a March hare, that one.” He means Comrith, the only survivor of the recent shipwreck.

Meeting with Comrith – This man is an old fisherman, with weathered skin and very rough hands. A member of the Ordovices tribe who lives in Din Lligwy, Comrith’s life had been until recently, uneventful. Currently the man is insane, suffering from facial tics that turn into whole body tremors when agitated. While Comrith has seen some horrible things on Ynys Seiriol he is also terrified to be in Roman custody.

In his youth Comrith supported the local druids and even bore arms against the Romans ten years ago. He survived and escaped from several battles before giving up his rebellious ways and settling down. Investigators questioning him and making insight rolls may detect that Comrith is holding something back or very nervous about answering questions. About his experiences on the island, he'll tell the truth but omit the strange facts until investigators make successful Persuade rolls to do so. Questioning about his past loyalties however, will cause Comrith to become more and more nervous until he collapses in convulsions

Comrith's story (main facts) – Comrith was hired to take a group of six men over to Ynys Seiriol. One of the men was Roman, but trying to hide it, the others were all large, armed Britons (he thinks they were mercenaries from the Catiaci tribe). A sudden storm came out of nowhere and filled his boat with water faster than they could bail it out. The boat sank a short distance from shore. The men swam for shore but became separated in the storm. Once on the island he tried to find the others in the darkness. He heard screams; cries for help, but never found anyone alive. Comrith only found one man, dead from injuries, his corpse savaged brutally.

The next morning the storm cleared. He climbed to the top of the tallest point on the island, hoping to find the others. On the way there he saw that a circular grove of oak trees had been replanted and large stones erected. He noticed robed figures moving around these stones and trees, and then they noticed him. Comrith ran, they pursued. He got to the beach with four robed men fast on his heels. He swam for it and doesn't remember much after that, only being found wandering the beach.

Omitted facts in Comrith's Story –

1) He heard the mercenaries call the roman man “Ymprydia Eginyn” or “Fast Blade” in Brythonic (the local spoken language), as if it was his name. The man seemed very tough and was obviously in charge of the much larger men.

Investigators who are Roman making a successful know roll will realize that a famous finder, who is currently missing in Britannia, was well known for being a fast hand with a knife. Better known as Junis Cita, this man was currently working for Dexius Grattus, the tax collector in Din Lligwy.

2) The man he found had been torn apart, with severed limbs and gashes all over his body. He saw shapes moving in the darkness and ran off screaming.

3) While hiding and waiting for dawn he saw robbed and hooded figures carry the bodies off, after dismembering them and placing the pieces into wicker baskets.

4) The men who chased him were calling out for him in Brythonic, but their voices were rough and guttural, as if wild animals had be taught to speak.

Part Two – Mona

Hiring a boat to Mona should be quite simple, as there are many boats crossing back and forth on any given day. They can hire local fishermen, ask for passage from a Roman merchant, or join a group of Legionaries shipping out for a patrol from Segontium. The channel is narrow and passage is brief and uneventful.

Once on Mona keepers should give investigators the feeling that Romans are feared and not well liked by the locals. The local Ordovices people will treat the Romans with respect and be careful not to offer any excuse for hostility. However, when Romans arrive their women seem to wander off out of sight, their children are hustled elsewhere and everyone's body language generally becomes tense. Memories of the massacre of ten years ago are still fresh in everyone's minds.

After landing investigators should be able to find Din Lligwy with little trouble. From where they land it is about a three-hour walk towards the northeast. "Keep going until you hit the coast, it should be easy to find" is what most locals would say, while pointing in the general direction. No locals will agree to guide them, claiming they are too busy. Investigators will need to make a successful Navigation roll to reach Din Lligwy in three hours. For every 10 points they fail by they arrive there an additional hour later.

Attack- Some local resistance fighters may attack investigators who end up still traveling to Din Lligwy after dark. They will try to kill any Roman men they find, capture any female Roman investigators (to be sold to Hibernian slavers) and beat senseless any native born Britons with them. These are the men responsible for the missing patrol. If any are captured and questioned they will lead investigators to where they buried the bodies. This will require a successful Persuade roll and a promise from investigators that they won't be executed. Investigators who can recover the bodies of the missing men and bring their murderers to justice receive a 500 sesterces reward from Merius Sorio.

Ordovices Resistance Fighter (1d4+2 in number)

STR 14 CON 14 SIZ 13
INT 12 POW 13 DEX 12
HP 14 DB +1d4

Weapons: Fist (70%, 1d3+db), Grapple (50%), Kick (40%, 1d6+db), Spear (45%, 1d6+db), Long Knife (55%, 1d4+1+db).

Armor: Leather & Ring Jerkins -3 Point.

Skills: Conceal (50%), Hide (50%), Listen (50%), Sneak (50%), Spot Hidden (50%).

Part Three - Din Lligwy

This small hilltop community, normally a rather pleasant place, is currently under a dark cloud. People are afraid and they have reason to be. Investigators who question the locals can learn why. There are Roman citizens here who'll openly speak to Roman

investigators, otherwise the local Ordovices will only speak of these concerns with a successful Persuade roll.

The Cloud over Din Lligwy

- A) Roman soldiers went missing in this area recently.
- B) The army has questioned everyone in Din Lligwy for information.
- C) A local fisherman (Comrith) turned up on the beach insane and was taken by the Romans.
- D) Two Roman-owned slaves have run off, both young women (Vacia and Bel).
- E) The local publican (tax collector) is up in arms at the vanishing of his wife, a native Briton woman he'd owned as a slave but freed and married a year ago.
- F) Cheese, bread, vegetables and beer have all been stolen from various homes and farms in the area. Most think this is the work of bandits.
- G) Various people have said they've spotted dark shapes lurking around the edge of town on moonless nights. No one will admit to starting these rumors.
- H) Several recent graves appear to have been disturbed, but no one has yet unearthed one to check if the bodies were robbed. Most think it the work of grave robbers.

Vacia and Bel – These young women are slaves, descendants of the druids who dwelt on Ynys Seiriol. They were both abducted by the ghouls on Ynys Seiriol and are now imprisoned within their lair. Vacia and Bel are in deep shock, their minds functioning slowly as they try to process the horrors holding them captive. The ghouls have stolen regular food for their captives but are trying to get them to supplement this with human flesh.

The owners of these two slaves will both say they were good, dutiful girls who never caused trouble. One will claim, "Bel was like a member of the family, she'd helped raise my children as if they were her own. We're all very worried about her." The other will say "Vacia was weaving cloth in her free time, earning coins to purchase her freedom. She'd already paid most of it off; another two years maybe we'd have freed her. I don't know why she'd run off now and frankly I don't think she did."

The Publican – The largest and finest house (Roman styled, of course) is owned by Dexius Grattus, the local tax collector. The man owns several slaves and servants, as well as a farm (the day to day running of which he has little to do with). He is very distressed over the "abduction" of his wife (Elvora), and will strongly argue against anyone saying that she may have run off. Grattus will say, "She's a good girl, a smart girl. We're in love. We were trying to have a baby. Someone took her from me!"

He'll admit to having hired Junis Cita and his men to find Elvora and bring her back. Grattus offers investigators 800 sesterces if they can find her and return her home safely. He'll say "Before he left Cita told me he found tracks leading from the graveyard to one of the local homes that were robbed. These tracks then vanished on the shoreline in the direction of Ynys Seiriol. He hired a local to ferry him and his men across and

was never seen again. Cita was convinced that whoever had kidnapped Elvora had taken her there.”

Local Knowledge and Opinion of Ynys Seiriol – This small island, populated mostly by seabirds, is about a quarter mile off the coast with little of value upon it. Most locals will say that Ynys Seiriol is haunted but the ghosts of slain druids. No one lives there now and only druids dwelled there in bygone days.

The Graveyard – Investigators making a successful Spot Hidden roll while searching the local graveyard do find evidence of something digging here recently. Locals will steadfastly refuse to allow anyone to unearth their loved ones, no matter what argument is given. “How could more desecration be a good thing, they have suffered enough insult. We’ll be lucky enough if the town isn’t already going to become haunted. Taking spade to these graves could be what pushes the spirits over the edge.”

Investigators who still wish to do this will need to make Sneak rolls to get into the area after dark. If they manage to unearth these graves they find that all of the recent graves are empty. Wooden plaques covered in Oghams (writings) and knot works have been placed where the bodies should be. Investigators will need to make an Occult roll to interpret these writings. Failing that, investigators will need to find someone who could read them, which would be a man named Otteran.

Enter Otteran - A local man named Otteran can read these Oghams and most locals will direct investigators to him. He is an older man, a grandfather who spends most of his time carving wood. The old man will see the plaque and ask investigators where they found it. Otteran will tell investigators “It’s a prayer to the spirits, a magical ward to keep them at rest and prevent them from haunting a place. I’ve not seen anything like this in ten years, not since the last of the druids fell to the Romans.” Secretly Otteran is a druid, in hiding and practicing his faith in secret. If investigators ask him about Ynys Seiriol, and successfully Persuade him to talk, he’ll tell the following tale.

Otteran speaks about Ynys Seiriol – “In the old days these lands were sacred to the druids. The faith was not what you Roman’s think. You think that it is nothing but blood and fire and darkness, but it was light and peace and justice. I will not argue or defend, you will never understand nor does it matter now. The druids are gone; all discussion would be wasted breath.

If any druids were as the Roman’s thought they were, it was because the Romans made them so. A few did wish to turn to the darkness, to treat with forbidden powers and seeks verboten secrets. Most shunned them and warned them against such a path. They were not killed, for a Druid would never shed the blood of their brothers or sisters, no matter how their opinions differed. When they could not be convinced to turn aside from this course of action they were pushed out lest their taint infect others. Worse still, if they succeeded in calling out that which they could not force back it would be better if such horror happened far away from others.

These druids, maybe a hundred in all, went to the small island right off the coast. They went to Ynys Seiriol, where for years they pursued the same goal as their brothers and sisters in Mona, but in a different way. In the end it mattered not, both failed. The druids of Mona, Ynys Gybi and Ynys Seiriol all fell to Roman swords and Roman fire. Some did escape only to be hunted down afterwards. Many of the students, who were only children, were enslaved, slowly forgetting whatever traditions and art they were taught.

It was the death of an age, Romans, and those of my generation will mourn it until we draw our last breath. There is no reason to argue or debate, wasted words. None remain who would even understand the story. The story has also come to an end, there is no point in speaking any further.”

Part Four – Ynys Seiriol

Investigators will find many things on Ynys Seiriol. They will find the three women missing from Din Lligwy, as well as evidence of the stolen food and beer. Investigators will find a replanted sacred grove, a restored Druid shrine and the half dozen surviving druids responsible for the recent trouble. However, these druids are no longer human, having long ago transformed into ghouls.

Passage to Ynys Seiriol – Investigators will have a bit of trouble finding anyone willing to take them to Ynys Seiriol. Anyone who owns a boat will not risk it, or themselves, in going anywhere near the island. One man in town, named Mider, will offer to sell the investigators a boat for 50 sesterces, but will not help them sail it. It’s an old boat (he’s long ago build a better one) with two oars and a small sail. The boat is in good enough shape for what investigators need it to do. Mider is willing to part with the boat for as little as 35 sesterces, should investigators make a successful Bargain roll.

After purchasing the boat investigators have an easy time getting half way to the island. After that thick black clouds will rise between Mona and Ynys Seiriol, so fast as to be totally unnatural. This storm is being called down by the magic of the ghoulish cult. Investigators will feel the hair on their arms and backs of their necks stand up, as energy fills the very air. Within seconds an extremely violent thunderstorm erupts.

The Storm – Investigators will need to make a successful Pilot-Boats roll in order to get their vessel to shore. If they make this roll they are able to keep the boat afloat until they are in waist deep water. At this point the boat breaks apart from the rough winds and waves, dumping investigators into the ocean. Investigators will be able to wade onto the shores of Ynys Seiriol at this point.

If investigators fail the Pilot = Boat roll the ship sinks while the investigators are about a third of the way from shore. Investigators will then need to attempt a Swim roll in order to make it to shore unharmed. Failing this they will need to either grab onto some of the wooden wreckage of their shattered boat, making a Dex X 4 rolls. Any investigators in metal armor will be at risk of drowning unless the shed said armor

immediately. Investigators who fail their Swim roll will immediately begin to take damage. As the island is not really that far the risk of drowning is slim. Investigators failing their Pilot-Boat roll AND their Swim roll suffer 1d4+2 points of damage.

Unless investigators specifically say they are trying to save their equipment and supplies Keepers should have them make a Luck roll. If investigators fail their Luck roll they'll lose 1d2 items of the Keepers choosing. Investigators who fail their Pilot – Boat roll lose 1d3 random items. Investigators who fail both their Pilot-Boat AND Swim roll lose 1d4+1 items of the Keepers choosing.

Ynys Seiriol – The Island is mostly desolate, with patches of grasses, shrubs and young trees growing here and there. While the shores of the island teem with nesting seabirds (puffins mostly) there are no other animals living here. There are only a few large trees here (see The Grove) and very little for investigators to eat or drink. Investigators looking for tracks on the island will find them, a mess of human prints and as well as strange hoofed prints. These tracks crisscross the island, leading to any of the following places of interest on Ynys Seiriol.

Places of interest on Ynys Seiriol

- 1) **The Ruined Village** – Investigators discovering this place find the remains of a village. The houses have all been burned down; only low stonewalls in large rings remain. Investigators can estimate there were about a dozen of these large houses here, surrounding a demolished shrine. The shrine, a large standing stone more than thirty feet tall, still lies here half buried in the earth. Ivy and moss cover everything and nothing of value can be found.
- 2) **The Hidden Raft** – Investigators following the tracks towards the west side of the island come to an area of heavy brush. If they make a Spot Hidden roll they discover a concealed raft beside a few long poles and makeshift oars. The raft seems large enough to carry three people and is made of driftwood lashed together with rope created from woven ivy vines. The ghouls use this to travel between Ynys Seiriol and Mona.
- 3) **The Mass Grave** – This area appears as a long depression, a trench about two feet deep. The bottom is covered with moss, thin grass and protruding human bones. It extends maybe fifty feet long and about four feet wide. This is where the Romans dragged all of the bodies from their conquest of Ynys Seiriol, burying them in one mass grave before departing the island. The ghouls have been digging them up, eating them and reburying the bones here for nearly a decade. At this point all of the bodies have been devoured. Investigators closely examining the bone here easily notice they've been gnawed upon. Investigators making a successful Spot Hidden roll find a human skull, otherwise, they must make a successful Medicine roll to confirm the bones are human remains.

- 4) **The Grove** – This area is distinctive from a distance for its group of large trees. While the young trees elsewhere on the island are at most about four feet tall, the seventeen trees here are between 18-20 feet tall. As investigators approach the area they'll realize that the trees are all young oaks. It's obvious that they have been planted in a nearly perfect ring, and well tended.

In the center of this ring is a twelve-foot stone monolith. It's concealed by the trees and cannot be detected unless someone enters the ring. The stone is covered with runes similar to the ones investigators may have found at the graveyard back in Din Lligwy. At the base of the stone are offerings, a brown apple, a bowl of sour milk and half a loaf of moldy bread.

Investigators searching the area carefully, and making a successful Spot Hidden Roll, notice a strangely green hillside not far from the grove. These hedges are carefully tended and grown to conceal the entrance to a cave. This cave, where the druid children were once hidden, now serves as their warren (see part Five).

The Ghouls of Ynys Seiriol – The ghouls will stay hidden in their warren most of the time, especially during the day. When they do appear above ground they'll be cloaked and only allow themselves to be seen in the shadows. They may whisper to investigators in the darkness, taunting them while staying just out of reach. They may suddenly appear, only to vanish just as suddenly. The ghouls do this to terrorize intruders, wanting them to feel fear before they finally close in for the kill. However, they will shy away from combating investigators in the open where odds will not be in their favor.

The ghouls will dart away when pursued, diving into tiny burrows leading to tunnels that honeycomb the island. These tunnels are narrow, twisting and pitch black. Any investigators foolish enough to crawl down one of these tunnels will be easily killed. The passages all loop back around allowing the ghouls to attack an invader from behind while they are prevented from turning around in the narrow space. Those following the ghouls down their tunnels will likely bleed to death after having their feet gnawed off.

Part Five – The Warren

The ghouls will stay just out of reach until the investigators find their way into the warren. This is the very cave where the six ghouls were “blessed” by the dark powers ten years ago, where they stopped being human. The ghouls have been busy digging, transforming the single large chamber into a network of narrow tunnels, bolt holes and escape passages. The main entrance tunnel is winding and sloped, preventing investigators proper use of missile weapons for anything further than a dozen feet. At the end of this tunnel, and at the center of the network of passages is the single large chamber, containing a most unusual ghoulish lair.

The Village – Here investigators will find six round stone houses, each a single room, complete with doors, windows and rotting thatch roofs. The houses form a rough circle,

in the center of which stands a 12 foot carved stone monolith. The stone is covered with Oghams that, if investigators are able to interpret, give thanks to “the spirits of death, darkness and rebirth”. The area is eerily lit with a number of oil lamps, burning the rendered fat obtained from the bodies of the Junis Cita’s men. Three of these houses will contain a single human prisoner, the three women kidnapped from Din Lligwy, the slaves Vacia and Bel and the freed woman, Elvora.

The Captives – All three women have been separated in different houses. Each is bound to a large piece of furniture and cannot free themselves. All three women are relatively unharmed. All three also spend their early years living on Ynys Seiriol, although only Elvora is old enough to remember it (Vacia is 15, Bel 16 and Elvora is 22 years old).

Vacia – She is physically very weak and in the worst shape of them all. Vacia realized just what her captives were trying to trick her into eating and took rather drastic action in response. She has refused to eat or drink in an effort to starve herself to death. She’ll be unable to do more than shuffle along unsteadily without assistance.

Bel – Bel is eager to escape and currently has a split lip and a blackened eye. She’s fought her captives at every turn, kicking and clawing at them. Bel is filthy, her wrists cut on the ropes binding her wrists from the constant efforts to free herself. The woman is also insane. Bel is convinced that the men holding her are Irish slavers trying to break her will before taking her to a slave market in Hibernia. This is a delusion her mind has created to protect her sanity.

Elvora – This rather plump and pretty woman not only comprehends just what the creatures holding her are, she knows who they once were as well. Elvora was once a druid initiate, a child of druids who lived in Ynys Seiriol. She was captured before being hidden in the cave with the other children. Elvora found herself in a slaver’s market, eventually being owned by Dexius Grattus, the local publican. She forgot much of her old life, remembering just enough of her training to cast a single spell, Healing. Dexius Grattus purchased her and the two eventually became lovers. A year ago he freed her and the pair married, and for the most part she’s made the best of the path her life has taken. Elvora does love her husband and would happily return to him if possible. However, the ghouls have recognized her as well, a fellow child of Ynys Seiriol who’s “found her way back home”. Of the three captives Elvora is the one the ghouls pack is most eager to transform into one of their own.

The Ghouls of Ynys Seiriol – This ghouls pack is a bit unusual as ghouls go. Their appearance is a bit subtler than most, allowing them to pass a bit easier for human. The ghouls appear as humans with long claws and ears, glowing eyes and elongated mouths filled with sharp teeth. Their feet have also flattened into calloused cloven hooves. Each wears dark coarse hooded robes over their bodies. The ghouls speak in harsh, raspy sounding voices, knowing Brythonic and a handful of words in Latin.

If players attempt to negotiate with the ghouls the pack will speak with them. They will use such an opportunity to explain their origins, speaking proudly of their pack with the dark spirit and the gifts they have received. However they steadfastly refuse to release their captives. In fact, they attempt to capture any female investigators in the hopes of transforming them into ghouls as well.

The pack will defend the village and fight to retain their captives to the death. Every ghoul in the pack is also a spell caster, as they were once initiate druids. Once entering their “village” the ghouls will swarm out of the shadows, attacking with a volley of enchanted throwing spears, spells, and finally tooth and claw.

Should the pack be reduced to a single pair and victory seems hopeless for them these last two ghouls will attempt to escape. They’ll try to rush into the maze of low tunnels branching out from the main chamber of the catacombs. Investigators foolish enough to follow them in will not last long, as all of the tunnels double back into traps (see above).

The Ghouls of Ynys Seiriol

	1) Fenin	2) Desle	3) Manus	4) Artigan	5) Starn	6) Etgall
STR	16	14	15	14	16	15
CON	13	14	18	13	12	13
SIZ	13	12	11	12	14	15
INT	13	10	14	15	13	15
POW	15	12	15	16	14	16
DEX	14	11	12	12	13	15
HP	13	13	15	13	13	14
DB	+d4	+d4	+d4	+d4	+d4	+d4

Weapons: Claws 30%, damage 1d6+db; Bite 30%, damage 1d6+automatic worry
Enchanted Spear 20% / 100%* (*= always hits when thrown), damage 1d10

Armor: Projectiles do half damage.

Spells: Alter Weather (an improved version costing half normal MP), Augur, Bless/Blight Crops, Causes Disease, Curse of the Putrid Husk, Enchant Spear (each ghoul possesses one).

Skills: Burrow 75%, Climb 85%, Hide 60%, Jump 75%, Listen 70%, Scent Decay 65%, Sneak 80%, Spot Hidden 50%; Insight 45%, Natural World 70%, Occult 50%, Own Language – Brythonic 75%, Other Language - Latin 15%, Pilot Boat 35%, Write - Oghams 65%.

Sanity loss: 0/1d6.

Aftermath – After the battle, assuming investigators are successful, they can easily free the captives. Getting back to Mona from Ynys Seiriol is a bit more problematic. If investigators have found the hidden raft (see part four) they can use it to ferry themselves and the rescued captives back to Mona. If they haven’t, they’ll need to find a way to alert the mainland and attract help (rather difficult) or swim for it. Ynye Seiriol is a quarter of a mile from Mona and will require a successful Swim roll. Should

investigators cling to something buoyant (a large piece of wood) they'll get a +15% bonus to this roll. Investigators could always construct some sort of raft themselves with a successful Repair roll. Investigators will need to use local vines and the replanted oaks from the grove (see part four) as these are the only sizable trees currently growing here. Cutting down these trees, and hauling them down to the shore might prove a bit difficult, but hardly impossible for a determined group. However they manage it, investigators eventually manage to reach Mona, returning the kidnapped women to Din Lligwy (who insist on being returned to their master's homes).

Conclusion – Should investigators destroy the ghoulish cult active on the Island of Ynys Seiriol the scenario ends in success. Even if some of the ghouls escape (see above) the diminished pack will no longer be a threat. The remaining pair will eventually find their way onto mainland Britannia and join an existing ghoulish pack. For returning Bel and Vacia the investigators receive 30 sesterces as a reward. For returning Elvora to her home, Dexius Grattus gladly pays the investigators 800 sesterces, as well as giving them a cart; a donkey to pull it and three barrels of locally brewed beer.

Upon returning to mainland Britannia and traveling to Segontium, the investigators are required to report to the base commander Meridus Sorio. Whatever story they give him, so long as they explain that the remaining druids are destroyed and the threat erased Sorio will consider the matter favorably closed. He rewards the investigators the agreed upon 500 sesterces explaining that he'll "Keep them in mind for other assignments". Keepers can use this connection as a springboard for other adventures in Britannia, as Meridus Sorio will forward their name to even higher authorities if something "unusual" should need to be looked into.

A bit of history – The names Ynys Seiriol, now known as Puffin Island, came into use in the 6th century AD. It was named after St. Seiriol, who had established a monastic settlement there (not a bad place of a possible *Cthulhu Dark Ages* sequel, DIBBS!). So of course in the time that this scenario takes place the island went by a different name. However, Ynys Seiriol was used for the island's name anyway. Basically, to the history buffs out there, yes, I know the name isn't historically accurate but I used it anyway. Also, below is an excerpt from *Extrico Tabula*, the Second *Cthulhu Invictus* Companion. It is from Chapter 5, A Guide to Britannia and covers the topic of language.

Celtic Language – *The Celtic people at the time of the Roman conquest spoke Brythonic, one of the six Celtic languages. This would later give rise to the Welsh, Cornish and Breton languages. To the north in Caledonia (Scotland), Hibernia (Ireland) and the Isle of Mann the language spoken was called Goidelic, one of the other Celtic tongues.*

Sanity Awards

For defeating the ghoulish cult of Ynys Seiriol	-	1d6 Sanity Points
For every captive rescued from the ghouls	-	1 Additional Point.

Dedication – This scenario is dedicated to two good friends who’ve always been great supporters of my work. To Joel Jackel - who DEMANDED I write another *Cthulhu Invictus* scenario, so he could play his character again after the final playtest of “A Mortal Harvest”. To Jennifer Hammond – who first portrayed Elvora and feels the loss of places like Mona as keenly as I do, so many centuries ago. It’s friends like these who keep you writing, even when you want to stop. You have my thanks.