

All Nighter

A Call Of Cthulhu 1970s Adventure

A Blood Brothers type Call of Cthulhu Adventure set in February of 1978.

Outline: This adventure can be played by any number of players and can be a fun and unique break from a campaign, or used as a tournament module. The setting of our story is February 6, 1978 in New England. A northeaster is reported early in the morning, but no one seems too concerned. No one is taking into account there will be a full moon and high tide in Massachusetts when the storm hits. It becomes the worst northeaster to ever hit New England and white-out conditions happen for almost two days. The Boston Globe reported:

"In two days of furious weather, the 'storm of the century' ravaged the coastline, smothered the region in over two feet of snow, claimed 54 lives, dismantled 2,000 homes, drove 10,000 people into shelters, and caused \$1 billion in damage.... More than 3,500 cars, trucks, and their cold and frightened drivers were stranded along Route 128 after the blinding snow piled higher than wheel wells, doors, hoods, and roofs...."

When it was over, there were reported snow depths ranging from 27 to more than 50 inches across New England, plus drifts of up to 15 feet. Compounding the disaster were the 20 inches of snow still on the ground in some areas from a storm three weeks earlier.... No driving was allowed for six days, so people skied, snowshoed, tugged kids in sleds, and hitched rides on plows to get where they needed to go. Low on provisions, some feasted on lobsters flung to shore by the surf while others painstakingly rationed dwindling amounts of milk and bread."

The storm started out slowly. Quickly it changed from light snow to a whiteout, and no one was going anywhere for at least two days. No police or medical help could get to anyone. Everyone had to take care of everything themselves. To make matters more difficult many places suffered blackouts for almost a week and others the loss of heat. People froze inside their houses. Your players will face all these difficulties, plus rampaging zombies inside their building.

Game Preparation and Setup: The preparation for the Keeper is a bit more than usual. You will need to roll up 50 zombies before the game, and keep track of them during play. See the Zombie Play section below. You should also design a six story apartment building with two elevators, and access to a roof. In the basement is a laundry room, game room, boiler room and maintenance office. There are ten apartments on each floor. The best way to set up the physical plant is to have five units on each side and a straight hall dividing them. This will give both players and zombies full view of each other.

Game Background: The game begins about 11:30 a.m. in the apartment building. All players have decided to stay home from work and play a new game they love called Dungeons and Dragons. They are planning to play all day and night, passing the storm in the world of Greyhawk. Play opens up with all the players around a table playing AD&D. There should be at least 4 people at the table. More is fine. An NPC must be the Dungeon Master, all players are just that, players. If your game has less than 3 participants playing, use NPCs to fill out the remaining characters. Got that?

The DM Duncan Lee stands up and opens an old leather bound book which he purchased two days ago at a used bookshop for a prop in the game. "Lloth lifts her head and screams...", Lee says, then turns to the book. He begins to recite a chant in Latin. Lee has no idea what this book is and what he is chanting. The book is a 100 year old unholy prayer book, and he is reading Summon the Dead, during a full moon, and high tide. The cemetery across the street has a mausoleum holding 50 bodies waiting for the earth to soften. Presently, they are stirring, animating and becoming aware of the fact they are cold and hungry.

Players will get a big kick out of the spell, especially Lee who has taken about 15 bong hits already this morning. The gaming continues for another hour before the first scream is heard.

Beginning Play: The game is going along quite well when a woman's scream is heard. If the players have also been doing bong hits they may laugh at the screams or be completely wiggled out. It is apparent that a woman is screaming for help. If players run into the hall to investigate, they will bump into a middle aged man with a fairly obvious toupee. This is Father Francis Butera - much more about him below.

The second event will happen right after the bump. The elevator opens revealing a zombie ripping the throat out of a woman with his teeth. She is screaming no more. A laundry basket rolls out; there is clothing everywhere and blood all over the walls. One sanity roll is required here, with a 1d.2/1d.12 Sanity loss for this grizzly sight and zombie. Investigators soon realize screaming is coming from all over the building. The zombie will continue eating away, and will only attack if disturbed. Players' reactions will determine play for a while after this scene.

Back in the Apartment: Fight or flight, both the priest and players will dash back into their homes. It is at this point that players should make idea rolls. Anyone succeeding gets a very strong suspicion the book has something to do with this. Screams are coming from below and above. Players have no firearms in their apartments. Calls to the police or anyone not in the building are usually met with busy signals. A Luck roll is needed to successfully place a call to the police. There is no way anybody can get to the building. Police and firetrucks, as with all vehicles, are useless in this storm. Mother Nature has us at her mercy. Phone lines go dead around 3:30 pm.

Two of the players have an apartment on the second floor. They have a c.b. radio and some baseball bats. The question is whether anyone is willing to risk it. The only link the players have to outside the building is the TV. All Boston stations are broadcasting nothing but weather reports, alerts, and information. Shelters are being listed, but whiteout conditions make the journey impossible. At noon, meteorologists still are not exactly sure what the total snow fall will be. They're guesses are not even close.

The Phone Rings: Father Butera from across the hall is on the line. He tells players he is a priest who came to stay with his mother during the storm. He would like to run across and brainstorm about what to do. His mother can be heard softly crying in the background. If the players agree, the priest will look through the peep-hole and dash into the other apartment. The priest is a decent and compassionate individual. More of a love child without the free lovin'.

He states he can only stay a few minutes because he does not want to leave his mother long. He believes this is some unruly gang of people. However, he cannot account for the obviously decayed appearance of the body. If the players tell him about reading the book, he will ask to bring it across the hall to examine. He then asks if anyone needs to make a confession. He will perform the service if needed, then depart. As he leaves, two zombies exit from the stairs and begin their way down the hall.

Zombie Invasion: Preparation of the zombie invasion is the most tedious part of pre-game planning. You will need to roll up fifty zombies. To give each creature a bit more personality, here are some suggestions:

Constitution: This score dictates how decomposed the body is. High scores show a recently interred body. A low score shows a greatly decayed, and horrendous walking corpse.

Size: Any zombie with a size roll less than 5 identifies a body which is not complete. Perhaps just an upper torso and head, its arms and decayed hands dragging it down the hall. Maybe it's just an arm. A high score of 16+ shows the creature to be bloated, full of gas, and if lit on fire or shot, will explode doing 3d.6 damage to anyone and anything in a 15 foot radius.

Intelligence: Any zombie with 4 or lower Int. score will be fascinated by the colors and patterns of the television. Should they pass by one, they may stop and stare at the screen. Once a hot meal walks by however, they are back into the hunt.

Zombie Raid: Twenty five zombies enter the building at 1 pm. Every fifteen minutes another d 6. will enter. Rolls are needed for every fifteen minutes of game time up to five times. After that all zombies not in the building are blown away and destroyed by the storm. Discount any zombie beyond the fiftieth.

Keepers should pre-game plan on how the creatures will move throughout the building. Keep track of where the beasts are. I penciled them in on maps I made of the building. There are 99 people in the building and there are 7 guns in the place. You must also plan where these items and people are located. Although it sounds daunting, players using sound judgment won't be running all over the building.

The Priest Calls Again: Father Butera calls at 2:30 pm. He needs to come over again immediately. However, two zombies are now in the hall trying to push a door down. Any movement will attract them to the player's and Mrs. Butera's apartments. Players will need to figure out what to do.

The Priest Arrives: Make sure the priest gets to the apartment. He informs players that the tome is some sort of unholy prayer book. He believes that some sort of spell has unlocked a gate to hell. Despite being a priest, Father Butera never bought into the true fires of hell awaiting all sinners. He is now confused and nervous. The other fact he has gleaned through reading is that another unholy prayer exists in the book to send the dead back to hell. It calls for a fire to be cast high above the ground and outside. Chants are conducted while two human skulls are dropped into the flames. This all must happen at sunrise. In no way will the priest participate in this ceremony. If the players feel this is the route to go, the priest will stay in an apartment with his mother and any injured or wigged-out investigators.

Things in the Apartment: Carefully plan out what is in the apartment. Players will have stocked up on food, as they knew a storm was coming. You should not allow guns into the game, as the excitement will dissipate quickly in a shootout with slow moving targets.

Suggested Improv Weapons and Items:

baseball bat
hairspray and lighter
kitchen knives
coat hangers
paint thinner or remover (for the lead figures).

The Race With the Clock: Sunrise will not occur until 6:12 a.m. Players now need to figure out what to do to hold the fort for the rest of the night. As Keeper you will need to design a series of events to take place. For the spell a large metal trash barrel and cover, flammables and two human skulls are needed. How the players go about obtaining these items will probably determine their fate. In the basement are large metal barrels with lids. It will be up to you if zombies invade the floor and begin to attack its residents wholesale.

Casting the Spell: Players will need to concoct a way to bring a barrel to the roof, get its contents on fire, recite the chant, and drop the skulls into the flames, as the blizzard continues full-bore. The winds can get up to 75 miles an hour, and smaller characters may be blown off of the roof if not extremely careful. It will also be up to you if zombies are attacking the party while the spell is cast. Upon completion of the chant, 1 power point is needed for every 4% chance of success, with 25 points bringing a 99% chance of

success.

If the spell fails, it must be tried again at sunrise tomorrow; and another night of horror begins. A successful roll turns the zombies into corpses again, and they drop wherever they are. The bodies then begin to decompose quickly. Players reaching zero Magic Points must be dragged into safety, or die quickly of exposure in the storm.

Characters:

Name: Father Francis Xavier Butera

Occupation: Priest Sex: Male Age: 39

ST: 12 DEX: 12 INT: 14 IDEA: 70

CON: 14 APP: 10 POW: 14 LUCK: 70

SIZ: 11 SAN: 70 EDU: 16 KNOW: 80

Sanity points: 70 Magic Points: 14 Hit Points: 12

Skills: Biblical Lore: 85 Catholic Theology and Ceremony: 92 Climb: 25

Conceal: 20 Dodge: 22 Drive Auto: 30 Hide: 40 History: 45 Jump: 22

Library Use: 60 Listen: 55 Occult: 35 Other Language/ Italian: 85 Other

Language/ Latin: 80 Own Language/ English: 90 Persuade: 77 Psychology: 25

Psychoanalysis: 55 Sneak: 39 Spot Hidden: 44

Firearms: Handgun: 30 Machine Gun: 15 Rifle: 20 Shotgun: 25 Submachine Gun: 15

Hand-To-Hand: Fist/Punch: 20 Head Butt: 10 Kick: 10 Grapple: 25

Name: Edna Butera

Sex: Female Age: 81

ST: 4 DEX: 4 INT: 13 IDEA: 65

CON: 7 APP: 5 POW: 16 LUCK: 80

SIZ: 6 SAN: 80 EDU: 7 KNOW: 35

Sanity Points: 80 Magic Points: 16 Hit Points: 7

Skills: Biblical Studies: 65 History: 55 Know Name of Saint: 88 Listen: 15

Other Language/ Italian: 90 Other Language/ English: 85 Other Language/

Latin: 56 Persuade: 65 Spot Hidden: 55

Name: Duncan Lee

Occupation: Drive Up Fotomat Assistant Manager

Sex: Male Age: 27

ST: 9 DEX: 12 INT: 14 IDEA: 70

CON: 14 APP: 11 POW: 13 LUCK: 65

SIZ: 8 SAN: 65 EDU: 12 KNOW: 60

Sanity Points: 65 Magic Points: 13 Hit Points: 11

Skills: AD&D Rules: 93 Astronomy: 33 DM Game: 77 Electrical Repair: 44

Electronics: 43 History: 48 Library Use: 61 Listen: 33 Natural History:

40 Occult: 35 Own Language/ English: 77 Sneak: 62 Spot Hidden: 51

New Skills: AD&D Rules: This skill allows the character to boast loudly and yell over others successfully proving he or she knows the correct ruling for the situation at hand. A Luck roll is needed to see if the character actually knows the rule.

DM Game: Not just anyone can DM a game. It takes an certain breed of individual to run an RPG. This skill allows the person to make clever props, find obscure references in books, comics, movies and Monty Python skits, while wasting his or her life writing adventures no one will ever play or appreciate. During actual gaming, a Persuade roll is needed every time the DM wishes to speak in order to shut the players up.

Movie Favorites: Here are a few films to check out: Dawn of the Dead, Dead Alive, Erotic Nights of the Living Dead, Evil Dead, Evil Dead II - Dead by Dawn, Return of the Living Dead, Return of the Living Dead II, White Zombie.