

The Exhibit©1997
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Call of Cthulhu

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Introduction

In this adventure, the investigators will be drawn into the action by a series of tragic deaths in and around a major museum. The investigators will face an ancient horror from Africa and they must stop it before it is able to blend into modern society.

Keeper's Background

The following provides the background information for the adventure. Some of this information will be turned up by the investigators as they become involved with the situation.

History

In the 17th century two powerful rival families in Africa were involved in a bitter struggle over a series of past and recent incidents. One family sought an advantage over the other by making deals with the Europeans. The other family also sought such deals, but ended up being betrayed by the Europeans they had unwisely chosen as their allies. Realizing that their defeat would soon be inevitable, one member of this family decided to turn to one last terrible "hope." This family member remembered old tales of horrible beings, known as "wooden vampires" that dwelled in the dark places, sneaking forth to drink the blood of men and animals. Perhaps guided by some evil spirit, this family member located the vile places where the "wooden vampires" dwelt and, in accord with an ancient ritual, invited one of them to return to feast upon the blood of his enemies. One of the "wooden vampires" eagerly volunteered and, in return for promises of a safe and dark place to hide during the day, agreed to bring death to the family's enemies.

True to its promise, the "wooden vampire" journeyed with the young man. During the night, they walked and the "wooden vampire" fed on available animals and, much to the dismay of the young man, on unwary travelers. During the day, the young man slept while the "wooden vampire" curled up inside a large basket

the young man had brought for it.

After days of travel, the young man and the “wooden vampire” returned to the village. That very night, the “wooden vampire” consumed the blood of one of the family’s enemies. Its feedings continued for three nights, until finally the rival family realized they were being plagued by a horrible being and they called in a great shaman. With their wealth, the rival family was able to persuade the shaman to discern the nature of the being that came in the night. The shaman, who was wise in the ways of the beings of night and evil, identified the creature on the fourth night of its feeding and began preparing a trap for it. On the fifth day, the shaman began modifying a set of European iron shackles by engraving them with the proper runes and symbols and imbuing them with power. That night, the “wooden vampire” claimed a fifth victim. On the Sixth day, the shaman was prepared. He and the four bravest warriors of the rival family waited in the hut of the next victim (the “wooden vampire” was killing the family members in reverse order of their status in the family). When the “wooden vampire” appeared, the shaman identified it for what it was (the “wooden vampire” assumes the appearance of others to approach its victims) the four warriors held it long enough for the shaman to place the enchanted shackles on the creature. Trapped by the magic of the shackles, the creature immediately turned to “wood” and was frozen in place. Enraged at the horror visited upon them by their rivals, the rival family set out in a mad frenzy and butchered their enemies as they slept. As a symbol of their triumph, the rival family displayed the “wooden vampire” as a statue in their leader’s hut.

The “wooden vampire” remained with the rival family until 1972. At that time all remembrance of its true nature had been lost and the family had become thoroughly Westernized. The “wooden vampire” was donated to a museum in 1972. It remained in storage until 1991 when it was purchased by an American university. It was displayed for a week during an African awareness event and then put into storage. In 1994 the “wooden vampire” was acquired by the museum which currently “owns” it.

Events at the Museum

After the “wooden vampire” was acquired by the museum, it was put into storage and would have probably been forgotten for a few decades. Unfortunately, a graduate student named Malcolm Mufasta came across the crate of African artifacts that contained it in 1996 while he was working on his dissertation. Intrigued by the statue he brought it to the attention of Dr. David Franklin, who was in charge of setting up a wing dedicated to African and African-American culture and history. Franklin, a knowledgeable scholar, recognized that the “statue” was unique and very interesting, but found it somewhat unsettling once it was fully cleaned and polished. Ironically, it was the fact that he found the “statue” oddly disturbing that finally influenced his decision to put it on display. He figured, correctly, that if it affected him, it would affect others and attract their attention.

When the display was being assembled, Mufasta suggested that the shackles be taken off the figure because, in his opinion, they had obviously been placed on the “statue” by “Euro-philistines.” However, Dr. Franklin correctly pointed out that the engravings on the shackles were native African and he decided to leave them on.

He didn't mention this to Mufasta, but he also wanted to leave the shackles on the figure because it gave him the creeps.

One week before the adventure "officially" starts, Dr. Angela Stane will be hired by the museum as a "diversity and sensitivity" expert. Her first main assignment will be to make the African/African-American wing of the museum more "sensitive." Dr. Stane will immediately come into conflict with Dr. Franklin over the issue of sacrificing historical accuracy for "sensitivity." After a showdown over the "wooden vampire" statue, Dr. Stane will use her influence to have Dr. Franklin removed from the wing project. Dr. Franklin will be reassigned to working on another project, but it will be a minor one and Stane will make sure his old office is given to one of her minions. Mufasta will initially be pleased with Stane, but will soon realize that she is not a scholar and will start trying to find a way to get Franklin back in charge.

Of course, the "wooden vampire" will not be concerned with the politics of the museum. However, it will be quick to take advantage of their results. Shortly after Stane takes over, she will go to look at the exhibits in the African/African-American wing. Using her sharply honed "sensitivity", she will detect the "insensitivity" of some of the exhibits and have them altered. One of the exhibits that will catch her eye is the "statue" of what appears to be a muscular African male with clenched fists (hence the claws are not visible) and a closed mouth (hence, the teeth are not visible) shackled in irons. She will have the staff remove the "statue" so the irons can be taken off. The "statue" will be taken to one of the work areas. Stane will order that the shackles be "cut off with bolt cutters and thrown up with the rest of the garbage" but Mufasta, who realizes that the shackles have historical value even if they are offensive, will intervene. While one of the staff goes to buy a pair of bolt cutters, Mufasta will call a locksmith and have him remove the shackles. Mufasta will hide the shackles in a box in a storage area and tell the worker that the shackles have been removed.

After the shackles are removed, the "wooden vampire" will gradually regain consciousness. However, it will not recover enough to come out of "hibernation" before it is returned to the exhibit area. It will gradually regain its awareness throughout the day and will be sorely tempted by the people passing by, although it will be unable to act. That night, in the darkness, it will recover enough to move. It will break out of the display it is kept in and the noise will attract a security guard, Gus Johnson. The "wooden vampire" will attack the guard, rip out his throat and drain his blood. It will drag the guard's body out into the hall and then hide it in an exhibit that shows African wildlife by a water hole. After that, the "wooden vampire" will scout the museum for a short while and then hide in a storage area to recover further. The guard, is not scheduled to work again for another three days, will not be reported missing until he doesn't show up for work. The museum staff will notice the damage and the missing statue and they will report it as stolen. The police will examine the scene and will be a bit baffled by the way the exhibit was damaged. However, they will theorize that the glass was somehow pulled out or that someone intentionally damaged the display to cover up an inside job. Stane will express some concern that someone inside the museum stole the statue and she will imply that she thinks Franklin was involved.

After the first night, the “wooden vampire” will stalk the museum again, looking for a victim. It will find a custodian, Bill Brown, working at night and kill him. It will conceal the body in a small, portable “dumpster” in the building. The day custodians will dump the dumpster into the outside dumpster and the body will not be found. The night custodian will be reported missing, but Stane will make sure that the police investigation focuses outside of the museum (she will express the opinion that Brown was mugged going home).

On the third night of the “wooden vampire’s” freedom, it will seek another victim. This time it will go after another security guard, Clarence West. It will attack a guard in the African/African-American section of the museum. The attack will result in a fair amount of damage to the exhibits and the death of the guard. The guard’s body will be concealed in the same exhibit as the original victim.

On the fourth day, the morning shift will find the damage and call the police. Once she learns of the damage, Stane will publicly blame “intolerant racists, lashing stupidly out at the greatness of the African past.” The police will consider West a suspect since they will find that his brother was once accused of being involved in a racist group and West will (obviously) be missing. Privately, Stane will accuse Franklin of hiring the security guard to trash the place and leave. Franklin will deny this charges, since he knows they are false. Stane will continue to push the issue against Franklin in the hopes of getting rid of him. Stane hopes to replace Franklin with one of her own friends, who is an “academic” hack and petty opportunist like Stane. Stane will suggest to the police that Franklin is conducting a campaign of revenge against the museum and she will arrange to have him put on “leave” until the matter can be investigated further.

Fortunately for Franklin and the Museum, Mufasta will be disgusted by Stane’s obviously false and self-serving accusations. Mufasta will decide to enlist outside aid against Stane at this point.

Getting the Investigators Involved

Ideally, at least one investigator will either have some academic credentials, connection to law enforcement or private investigation, or be a journalist, lawyer, or rights advocate of some kind. Failing that, the Keeper will need to select an investigator who would be at least a semi-plausible candidate to be brought in to aid Franklin and Mufasta.

Once Mufasta realizes that sometime unusual is going on and Stane starts casting accusations at Franklin, he will decide to take action. Since he is just a graduate student, he will decide to bring in some outside aid. His choice will be one or more of the investigators. The selected investigator(s) can either know Mufasta or his parents, or perhaps know a mutual friend or associate. In any case, Mufasta will contact the investigator(s) and let them know what is going on. The relevant part of the letter is as follows:

...I am sorry to trouble you with this news, but I believe that I would be even more sorry where I to simply let events take their course. At the museum where I conduct my research, there have been a series of problems, some of which may be related. First, a statue was stolen from the museum out of the African/African-

American display area. Second, an unusual number of museum employees have left the museum with no notice. A custodian and two security guards have failed to return to work, for no apparent reason. This in itself is not entirely unusual, but has struck me as odd. The official story is that the custodian was the victim of a crime on the way home and that the first security guard simply decided to move on without giving notice. This is not entirely uncommon, but does seem unusual. Third, there was an incident in which a significant amount of damage to some of the exhibits in the Africa/African-American sections. The police have been told by Stane that the other absent security guard (a Mr. West) was involved in the incident. According to the papers, there is some evidence that West's older brother might have been involved with a racist group at one point. What concerns me the most, however, is that a respected colleague of mine, Dr. Franklin, has been accused of involvement in the theft of the statue as well as the vandalism incident by Dr. Stane, who is an administrator at the museum. Based on my knowledge of Dr. Franklin, I believe he is innocent of all wrong doing and that Stane is attempting to exploit the situation for her own advantage.

Given this situation, I would like to request your aid. I believe that while the police are basically honest, they are being misinformed by Stane. Hence, it is my conclusion that only an outside party, uninfluenced by Stane, can ensure that justice is properly served...

After the investigators receive the letter from Mufasta, the players can decide whether they wish to become involved or not. Naturally, the investigators will need to accept Mufasta's request, if the adventure is going to take place.

If the investigators accept Mufasta's request, they will have to journey to the museum and begin their investigation. When they arrive, Mufasta will fill in more details for them and the investigators can start looking into the matters at hand.

Investigation

The following provides details the Keeper will need when the investigators set about trying to determine what is going on.

The Display Area

The display area is located in the section of the museum that sustained the damage. The repairs in this area will take a few days and while the repairs are underway the area will be closed to the public. If the investigators wish to examine this area, they will either need to acquire official access or sneak in. Stane will not want "outsiders" who are not part of the press getting into the area, but Mufasta would be able to get the investigators in the area, provided they come up with a plausible story. If the investigators chose to wait until the area reopens, all the damage will have been repaired.

If the investigators are able to get into the area, they will see that the exhibits have been damaged. If the investigators carefully check the area and roll a successful Idea roll, they will see some signs that the damage was inflicted in a struggle, rather than being mere vandalism. The police investigators have mostly accepted Stane's opinion that the guard committed the vandalism and some believe that Franklin

might be involved. The police still officially have the investigation open, although they actually have more important cases that are using up their resources and manpower.

If the investigators check the display area where the “wooden vampire” was kept, The investigators might notice that the display appears to have been broken out of rather than into. This is made clear by the nature of the damage to the display (the holders for the plexiglass have been twisted and broken outward rather than inward). The museum will eventually fully repair the display area and put a new exhibit into the case. Hence, if the investigators wait too long, they will have nothing to investigate in this area.

Questioning the Museum Staff

It is likely that the investigators will want to question the museum staff. If the investigators have some of official status (law enforcement, etc.) they will be able to officially request interviews. If the investigators do not have the requisite status, they can still question the staff, but will have a more difficult time of it. Stane will not want people snooping about and it is likely she will become suspicious of the investigators and have the police check them out if the investigators are not careful about avoiding her attention.

The normal staff (custodians, guides, guards and so on) know about the “theft” of the statue and the damage to the museum. They will all be willing to talk about these well known incidents, provided the investigators are civil. If the investigators are friendly and do not appear to be allies of Stane, the staff will be willing to discuss Stane’s accusations against Franklin. Most of the staff do not like Stane and they believe that the charges are baseless. If the investigators are especially persuasive and friendly, they will be able to get the staff to talk about the people who have failed to return to work. The staff members who know the absent people will generally agree that they are not the sort of people to simply leave without any notice. The guards who know West will also say that he showed no signs at all of being a racist or having any interest in committing vandalism against the museum. If the investigators seem like the sort of people it would be safe to talk to and they are persuasive enough, some of the night staff will say that there have been some strange things going on. Some of them will mention strange noises, like something moving about in the museum, and smells, like spoiling meat, as well as seeing things moving in the shadows. Some of the staff think that those who have been seeing and hearing things are simply “nerved up” because of the theft and vandalism.

If the investigators decide to talk to the administrators, they will find them a bit less inclined to talk than the other staff. Those who are allied with Stane will not speak to the investigators, unless the investigators are able to pass themselves off as journalists or legitimate officials. In that case the administrators will simply follow Stane’s lead and say that they suspect the theft and the vandalism might have been an inside job. If pushed by a persuasive investigator, they might let slip that they think Franklin is responsible. The administrators who are not allies of Stane will talk to the investigators if they pass themselves off as officials or journalists or are able to convince the administrators that they are friends of Franklin. These

administrators know about the theft and vandalism and that they suspect that it might be an inside job. However, they do not believe that Dr. Franklin is involved in the matter.

History of the Statue

if the investigators have access to the museum records (Mufasta can get copies, should the investigators think to ask) they can acquire the following information about the statue itself. Additional information relating to the statue is provided in the section on Relevant African Myths and Legends, below. This information is not the same as the information in the display area, which states that the “statue” is a “fine example of the sophistication of native crafts people” and that the “statue” “exemplifies the respect the Africans had for their own bodies and the environment.”

The following is the information in the university database about the statue:

...The statue appears to have been carved from a single block of native wood. The shackles are of iron and are believed to be European in origin. The symbols etched into the iron are clearly not European in origin and are believed to be symbols used by some shamans in African history.

The statue is believed to commemorate the victory of one family over one of their rivals. This is supported by a myth/legend from the area of the statue’s origin and by the fact that the statue has been shackled. The exact date of the conflict, or even if it actually occurred, is unknown.

The statue itself was donated by an African family (legend has it that the family was the victor in the struggle mentioned above) to an African museum in 1972. In 1991 the statue was purchased by an American university and displayed (with shackles). After the week long period of display, the statue was placed into storage. In 1994 the statue was acquired by this museum and put on display this year.

Relevant African Myths & Legends

If the investigators decide to check up on myths and legends surrounding the statue, they will be able to find one source. The book is not terribly common, but any major library would either have a copy or be able to get a copy on loan. The book is somewhat dry, but it is the only source that specifically mentions the relevant incident. It is also considered one of the best sources about African myths and legends, even to this day.

-From Horace C. Nesbeth’s *African Myths, Magic and Legend*, 1921

As with all human societies, the societies of Africa were occasionally plagued with family disputes. Many of these disputes, especially the ones from ancient times, have become obscured by myth and legend. One such myth tells of a struggle between two rival families which ended in the imprisonments of a vampire like being through the use of enchanted iron shackles.

According to the myth, the two families were at an impasse and hence each was searching for a decisive advantage over the other. One of the more enterprising young men decided to follow an old legend and seek out supernatural aid.

According to the myth, the young man recruited a terrible being and carried it back to the village. The horrible being is said to have plagued the young man's enemies for three days, until they enlisted the aid of a powerful shaman. The shaman, who was wise in the ways of the beings of night and evil, is said to have identified the creature on the fourth night of its feeding. On the fifth day, the shaman modified a set of European iron shackles by engraving them with the proper symbols and calling on spirits to enter the metal, transforming it into an item of power, such as a fetish or medicine bundle. That night, the horrible being claimed a fifth victim. On the Sixth day, the shaman was prepared. He and four of the bravest warriors of the rival family waited in the hut of the next victim (the being was killing the family members in reverse order of their status in the family). When the being appeared, the shaman identified it for what it was and the four warriors held it long enough for the shaman to place the magical shackles on the creature. Trapped by the magic of the shackles, the creature supposedly turned to wood and was frozen in place. Enraged at the horror visited upon them the family butchered their enemies as they slept. As a symbol of their triumph, the family displayed the statue in the leader's hut.

Maps

The following describes the areas detailed in the maps. One map shows the relevant exhibition area in the museum. If the investigators decide to check out other areas of the museum, the Keeper will need to provide the details for the players. The other map shows an area of the city sewer. If the investigators decide to check out other areas of the sewer, it will be mostly straight tunnels and junctions.

Display Area

The display area is located in one of the new wings of the museum. The wing is dedicated to African and African-American history and culture. The exhibits in the area include the dawn of humanity, the development of civilizations, the arrival of the Europeans, slavery in America, the Civil War, the Civil Rights movement and more recent events.

The display area that is relevant to the adventure is dedicated to the earlier years of slavery. The exhibit area has a motif intended to convey the feeling that the viewers are in Africa.

1. Doors:The doors are thick oak wood and have been overlaid with African style carvings. During the hours the museum is open the doors are kept open. At night, the doors are closed and locked. The lock is concealed under a carved panel that slides aside and has a STR of 16. Most exhibit areas have their own doors to provide extra security in case someone manages to break in.

2. Display:The display, like the other three (3-5) consists of an indented area protected by plexiglass. The plexiglass can be withdrawn by using a lock switch (a switch that requires a key and works somewhat like a car ignition) in the floor. When the switch is activated the plexiglas withdraws, allowing access to the exhibits. The display is fifteen feet across. This display contains a very detailed

miniature scene showing a slave ship anchored off the coast. The display is highly detailed and shows unique individuals being dragged off to a life of slavery in the New World. A plaque tells about the scene.

3. Display: This display contains a miniature scene showing Europeans taking Africans into captivity. The figures are extremely well done. A plaque tells about the scene.

4. Display: Prior to the arrival of Dr. Angela Stane, this display will show miniatures of Africans capturing other Africans to be sold into slavery. After Stane arrives, the scene will be changed to a scene similar to that in display 3.

5. Display: This display contains a collection of mid-sized African and European artifacts from the time period in question. The case also contains the “wooden vampire,” which appears to be a statue. Prior to the arrival of Dr. Stane, the statue will be wearing the enchanted shackles. Once Stane takes over, she will have the shackles removed, which will start the horror.

6. Display Case: This case contains a variety of small artifacts from the relevant time period, such as weapons, coins, shackles, personal items and such.

7.-9. Computer Kiosks: Each kiosk station has four interactive computer systems that provide a multimedia experience. The kiosks are Macintosh systems running SuperCard™ standalone applications.

Sewer Juncture

The sewer juncture is located under the streets of the city. The sewer is, of course, a rather nasty place complete with garbage, nasty water and worse. Access to the sewers can be readily gained via manhole covers. Sections of the sewers do have lighting, so as to make service work easier, but most areas are dark. There are no alligators or such things in the sewers, but there are rats and there is the danger posed by the potential of injury or drowning. The water in the sewer ranges from ankle deep to chest deep. In cases of excess rain, the water can get much deeper. Unless the players are exceptionally foolhardy, they should be able to avoid being injured or killed by the environment.

The sewer environment is rather spooky and unpleasant, even under the best conditions. Because of the water and the concrete walls, there are plenty of strange sounds and echoes, which makes tracking anything by sound and judging distance by sounds very difficult. The water can also make combat and movement difficult. The Keeper should judge the individual situations as needed.

After it leaves the museum, the “wooden vampire” will take up residence in a sewer juncture near the museum. The sewer juncture consists of a central chamber, which is domed, and has four sewer tunnels leading from it. There is a manhole two junctures away, since the “wooden vampire” wants easy access to the outside world but does not want to have anyone stumble directly into his hiding place.

Once the “wooden vampire” sets up residence in the sewer juncture, it will

construct a platform for itself out of wood and items of debris it finds. The platform will be supported by the pipes on the walls. The “wooden vampire” will also set up similar platforms in other junctures and use them to store some of his victims for later feedings. When the investigators enter the sewer, it is likely they will come across such platforms with dead and rotting victims still chained or tied to them. Such sights might require a sanity roll, at the Keeper’s discretion. The investigators might also find some survivors to rescue, at the Keeper’s discretion.

Action

This section provides some guidelines for the Keeper in running the action part of the adventure.

Discovering the Body

For dramatic effect, the investigators should be present when the bodies of the two guards (Johnson and West) are found. The investigators should be nearby, perhaps talking to one of the staff or Mufasta. Two children will be messing around by the exhibit and one will be pushed into it, disturbing the shallow grave and exposing a hand. The children will start screaming and people will go running to the area. One of the nearby adults, in sort of a “shock trance” will push away some more of the dirt, exposing more of the body. Then the security guards will come to clear people out. They will call the police, who will come and investigate. The police forensics team will determine that the guards were killed and then drained of most of their blood. If the investigators have contacts with the police (or press) they might be able to gain access to the forensics reports.

Naturally, the police will consider the area a crime scene and will treat the area appropriately. That section of the museum will be closed off for at least a day while the police comb the area for clues. Stane will do her best to get some “spin control” on the situation to minimize the bad press for the museum. The police will form the hypothesis that a person or persons unknown broke into the museum, committed the murders, theft and vandalism and remained undetected by somehow hiding in the building. The police will believe that the person/persons is/are insane, based on the damage to the bodies. The police will also suspect that the missing janitor might also be a victim. The police forensics expert will be a bit baffled by the injuries, which appear to be inflicted by some sort of animal. However, the wounds are very unusual and the forensic examiner will note that the wounds are similar to those inflicted by a predatorial animal, but the wound patterns seem oddly similar to human bite marks and scratch marks.

The investigators might be able to use this incident to their advantage. When the bodies are found, Stane will be hard pressed to maintain her claim that Franklin is somehow involved. Franklin is in decent shape, but it is obvious that he would not be up to killing the two guards by hand and ripping them up with his teeth. The investigators might also be able to get the museum to cooperate with them by offering to investigate the deaths discretely.

The press, ever eager to parade horror, blood and death before the public, will try to get as much information as possible. Naturally, the tabloid reporters will flock like vultures and at least one will publish stolen police photographs of the guard’s

hand protruding from the dirt. Unscrupulous investigators might be able to pick up some extra money by selling information or pictures to the tabloid journalists.

Action in the Museum

The police will suspect that the killer might be lurking in the museum, hence they will have the museum closed and will conduct an extensive search of the building. If the investigators have some sort of official status, they might be able to participate in the search. The “wooden vampire” will be carefully concealed during the day and the odds of anyone coming across it are extremely slim. Unless the investigators search every inch of the building themselves or they are able to get the police to do so, the “wooden vampire” will remain undiscovered. If the “wooden vampire” is found, it will base its strategy on the number of people who find it. If it believes it can kill its discoverer(s) quickly and quietly, it will attempt to do so. If it succeeds, it will attempt to find a new hiding place. If it believes it is at a disadvantage, it will remain perfectly still and attempt to pass itself off as a statue. If this fails, it will attack and try to escape.

If the “wooden vampire” is not discovered during the day, the police will post two officers in the museum at night, in case the killer returns. There will also be four museum guards on duty, who will be working in pairs.

If the investigators decide to enter the museum at night without authorization, they will face some dangers. First, the police and the guards will be jumpy, so the investigators might get shot if they surprise the guards or police. Second the “wooden vampire” will seek a new victim that night, and the investigators might become involved.

If the investigators are authorized to enter the museum at night, the guards and officers will be aware that they will be present and hence are less likely to accidentally shoot them. However, the “wooden vampire” will still be a serious danger.

If the investigators do not enter the museum that night, the “wooden vampire” will kill two security guards (Vick Jones and Ralph Simmons). It will stuff their bodies into some empty crates in a storage area. The police will search the museum again and will eventually find the bodies. The police will decide to sweep every inch of the museum during the day and that night six heavily armed police officers will be assigned to the museum. The “wooden vampire” will decide to flee the museum and find the sewers which it will find very appealing.

If the investigators are in the museum at night, it is likely that they will become involved when the “wooden vampire” attacks the guards. The Keeper should allow the investigators to see the “wooden vampire” so that they will have some idea as to what they are up against. The Keeper should set up a plausible scenario in which the “wooden vampire” kills at least one guard, yet manages to escape the museum into the sewers. Of course, if the investigators act brilliantly, the Keeper should not excessively interfere with the outcome.

In any case, the “wooden vampire” will end up in the sewers. The police will continue to stake out the museum, but nothing else will happen there. The attack on the guards will clear Franklin, since the police will have had him under observation because of Stane’s suspicions. Stane will be happy when the “activities”

at the museum come to an end and will reopen the exhibit. Ironically, the violent incidents will increase attendance for a while and Stane will even manage to sell the rights to “her” story and it will be made into a rather bad made-for-TV movie at some point.

Into the Sewers

After the police activity drives the “wooden vampire” into the sewers it will set up a platform, for itself in one of the junctures and then learn the layout of the sewers (which it will take to be caves of some kind). It won’t take it long to determine that the sewers provide access to the surface in various places and it will soon start use them as a way to get around in its search for victims.

After the “wooden vampire” enters the sewers, it will scavenge material to set up a ledge for itself. It will also scavenge material to create platforms and shackles to store people for later feeding.

The “wooden vampire” will take its first victim from the ranks of the homeless, but will not find the blood to its liking because of the victim’s poor diet. It will discard the victim’s body in the sewer. The next night, the “wooden vampire” will select a victim (Rusty Cown) who is (unknown to the “wooden vampire”) using PCP. The PCP will effect the “wooden vampire”, causing it to rip the victim apart and leave the body parts scattered about the alley. The “wooden vampire” will, in its deranged state, kill three prostitutes (Melanie Hart, Janice Kelender, and Latosha Weeks) and drink their blood. It will then attack a cab (driven by Marty Singh) in the street, doing significant amounts of damage to it. The “wooden vampire” will then flee into the sewers, running about madly.

If the investigators have police or press contacts, they will be able to learn that the police forensics team will determine that the new victims (Cown, Hart, Kelender, and Weeks) were almost certainly killed in the same manner as the victims in the museum. The police reports on the cab detail the damage to the vehicle. The police think the cab was worked over with a bat, although the driver will insist that the attacker used his fists. The driver will want to try to sell his story to the media, but he will tell the police (or persuasive investigators) that “Some crazy black man came running out of an alley, naked as the day he was born and covered in blood. His eyes were wide open and he didn’t look right. He started beating on my cab with his fists, putting dents in the metal and breaking the glass. I am so glad to be alive! He then ran back into the alley and I called the police.” The police did a forensic examination of the cab and were able to find blood and tissue samples. The blood samples were identified as belonging to the victims (the blood was smeared on the “wooden vampire”’s hands). Some of the tissue samples will be identified as belonging to the victims but some of the tissue samples are listed as being contaminated, since the DNA appears to be damaged in some manner. If the DNA is carefully examined by a professional geneticist (with a very open mind) he will be able to determine that the DNA is similar to human DNA, but is different in many key respects.

Once Singh sells his story to the media, they will publish it with all sorts of embellishments. Naturally, the authorities will not be pleased with this sort of “publicity.”

While the police will attempt to keep the details under wraps, the tabloid presses

will be having a field day, suggesting that some sort of naked and crazed “Jack the Ripper” killer has come to the city. In fact, one tabloid will call the killer “Naked Jack” and the same will stick. The press will attempt to acquire photos and information using all means necessary. Again, unscrupulous investigators with police access might be able to make some fast money by selling stolen evidence.

The authorities will want to catch “Naked Jack” and put the incidents behind them. To this end, the police will form a special task force. If the investigators are able to convince the police or other authorities that they have special or useful skills, they might be able to get involved legitimately. Otherwise the investigators will probably pursue the “wooden vampire” on their own.

More Victims

Once it recovers from its experience with the PCP, the “wooden vampire” will decide to seek out a different sort of victim. The “wooden vampire” will start entering buildings at night, looking for victims. Over the next few days it will take a victim each night. On one night, it will enter a security building (it will acquire clothes so it can pass better as a human) in an attempt to get a victim. The attempt will fail and the “wooden vampire” will be captured on film. The police will get a copy of the film and create a photo to post around town. Mufasta and Franklin will be horrified if they see the photo, since it will clearly be the face of the missing “statue.”

The “wooden vampire” will seek other victims and will decide to capture them and take them back to the sewer. There it will tie or shackle them to storage platforms for later feeding. Because the sewer is so far underground and most of it is under roads, any cries or screams of the victims will go unheard. Some of these victims will be reported missing

The police will be making a concerted effort to find the killer, although they will never think to look in the sewers. If the investigators come to the police with a story about a statue come to life or some such thing, the police will probably consider them to be unbalanced and will not take such stories seriously. If the investigators persist in trying to persuade the police, they might end up being placed in “protective custody.” If the investigators are able to provide some form of objective evidence (such as the tissue samples, should the investigators learn of them) the police might be willing to listen. However, it is suggested that the investigators be forced to act on their own.

Escape

While the investigators are trying to search for the “wooden vampire”, they will get a lucky break. One of the “wooden vampire”'s victims (Janet Henderson) will escape. Henderson will be taken by the “wooden vampire” from her apartment while she is asleep. She will be reported missing by her next door neighbor (Sarah Wilkins) who plays racquet ball with her regularly. The “wooden vampire” will tie Henderson to one of its platforms, along with two other victims. The “wooden vampire” will glut itself on the other two and then go to rest for the day. Henderson will manage to escape the ropes, inflicting severe injuries on herself in the process. She will emerge from the sewer, stinking of refuse, bloody and dazed. The

investigators should be among the first people to encounter her. She will be babbling madly about the “woodman in the underground drinking people.” It will be fairly clear to the investigators that she has just emerged from the sewers. The investigators will probably decide to take action.

The police will eventually arrive to take Henderson to the hospital. The police will have some difficulty making sense of Henderson as she will become increasingly incoherent, but they eventually will figure out that she escaped from the sewer after being taken away by “Naked Jack.” At that point, the police will send teams in to search the sewers. By that time, the investigators should have already encountered the “wooden vampire.”

Battle in the Sewers

After the investigators find Henderson, they will probably enter the sewer to confront the “wooden vampire.” If the investigators enter the sewer during the day, the “wooden vampire” will be dormant and they might be able to surprise it. If the investigators enter the sewer at night, the “wooden vampire” will be active and probably feeding on a captured victim or setting out to find a new one.

The exact nature of the battle in the sewers is left to the Keeper, but it should be a harrowing battle in the dark full of fear and uncertainty.

Conclusion

The adventure comes to an end when the investigators are defeated, give up or defeat the “wooden vampire.” If the investigators give up or are defeated, the “wooden vampire” will almost certainly integrate itself into modern society and prey on helpless victims with impunity. In this case, any surviving investigators should leave 1D4 Sanity Points for permitting the horror to continue. The players might choose to attempt to hunt down the “wooden vampire” later, but this will prove very difficult once it develops an understanding of the modern world.

The investigators can defeat the “wooden vampire” by destroying it. This will become increasingly difficult as the “wooden vampire” gains an understanding about the modern world. Defeating the “wooden vampire” will net the surviving investigators a 1D6 Sanity Point bonus. The investigators might also be able to gain some useful contacts and allies in the course of the adventure, especially if they are able to rescue victims from the “wooden vampire.”

NPCs

Dr. David Franklin, Expert on African/African American History

STR: 11 Con: 13 SIZ: 12 INT: 13 POW: 13 DEX: 12 APP: 11 EDU: 21 SAN: 65 HP: 13 DB: 0

Skills: Accounting 15%, Anthropology 45%, Archeology 13%, Bargain 16%, Credit Rating 35%, History 91%, Library Use 78%, Natural History 21%, Occult 41%, French 35%, Sneak 15%, Handgun 39%, Rifle 65%

Weapons: None

Description: Franklin is a medium sized black man with gray hair and beard. He is fifty seven years old. Franklin was drafted into the US Army during the Vietnam

war and served on the frontlines. He was badly injured during the war, but recovered from his injuries. After the war ended, he used the G.I. Bill to receive an education and pursued a graduate degree in history. Franklin is a true scholar and is dedicated to the truth. He is respected by most people in his field, but has fallen out of favor due to his failure to endorse all aspects of the recent trends in historical revisionism. Franklin is a fairly religious man and has no doubt about the existence of evil, thanks to his tour of duty in Vietnam. Hence, he will be willing to believe in the existence of the “wooden vampire”, provided there is adequate evidence. Although he is getting on in years, he will be willing to actively aid the investigators.

Malcolm Mufasta, Graduate Student in History

STR: 12 Con: 11 SIZ: 11 INT:14 POW: 12 DEX: 14 APP: 14 EDU: 17 SAN: 60 HP: 11 DB: 0

Skills: Anthropology 6%, Archeology 16%, Bargain 31%, History 34%, Library Use 38%, Occult 12%, Ride 45%

Weapons: None

Description: Mufasta is a medium sized black man with short cut hair and glasses. He is twenty five years old. He dresses very well and typically carries an Apple Newton PDA and a cell phone. Mufasta’s parents are both lawyers, but he decided to pursue a career in academics. Mufasta is currently a graduate student and is finishing up his dissertation in history. While Mufasta has studied some aspects of the occult, he has no real belief in the supernatural and will be very skeptical about any suggestions that something unnatural is going on. Should the evidence prove overwhelming, Mufasta will accept the existence of the supernatural. At heart, Mufasta is a decent person and will be willing to aid the investigators. However, Mufasta is a man of thought and not much of a man of action, hence any aid he renders the investigators will be in that area.

Dr. Angela Stane, “Diversity Expert”

STR: 8 Con: 9 SIZ: 9 INT: 11 POW: 11 DEX: 15 APP: 12 EDU: 16 SAN: 55 HP: 9 DB: 0

Skills: Bargain 55%, Fast Talk 60%, Law 10%, Library Use 30%, History 25%, Persuade 35%, Psychology 45%

Weapons: None

Description: Stane is a small woman with brown hair and brown eyes. She is forty two years old. Stane earned a doctorate in Women’s Study from a mediocre university but was able to ride the wave of “political correctness” to several very lucrative positions, despite her lack of scholarly abilities. Stane is a very cunning and unscrupulous individual whose main concern is furthering her own career. Naturally, she carefully conceals her real motives and attempts to convince people that she honestly concerned with equity, equality, and diversity. While Stane professes a belief in the spiritual (she claims to be a member of Wicca), she has no real belief in the supernatural and will be unable to accept any evidence to the contrary. In a real crisis, Stane will be worse than useless. Her main concern will be concealing any problems and finding a way to minimize any damage to her career. She is a master of passing the buck and fixing blame on others and will use these

skills to her fullest ability.

Typical Security Guard/Police Officer

STR: 13 Con: 12 SIZ: 12 INT: 10 POW: 12 DEX: 12 APP: 11 EDU: 16 SAN: 60 HP: 12 DB: +1d4

Skills: Fast Talk 15%, Law 13%, Persuade 25%, Handgun 30%

Weapons: .38 Damage 1D10 Range 15 yards Shots/Rd 2 Shots 6 HP 10

Description: The typical security guard/cop is between 30 and 50 years of age, in fair physical condition, and of average intelligence. The guards are reasonably competent but are not paid enough to be willing to face great danger or risks. Most of the guards and officers do not really believe in the supernatural. The guards will be willing to aid the investigators, provided such aid falls within their job description. The officers will be more willing to face great danger and risks, since that is in their job description.

Monstrous Beings

“Wooden Vampire”

A “wooden vampire” is a horrid creature that is similar in some respects to the “traditional” vampire. However, the “wooden vampire” differs significantly from the “traditional” vampire.

The “wooden vampire” is native to Africa. Some experts in occult knowledge have speculated that the “wooden vampire” is an offshoot of the human race or perhaps a completely non-human primate species. Others speculate that the “wooden vampire” has a supernatural origin. Whatever the truth of the matter, the “wooden vampire” appears to exist only in parts of Africa. These beings live in small groups in the “dark and shadowed” areas of the country. Naturally, they do their best to avoid detection.

The “wooden vampire” is as intelligent as a human being and is roughly human in appearance. However, its skin is rough and appears wood-like (hence the name). The creature has no hair, adding to its unusual appearance. Where humans have fingernails and relatively flat teeth, a “wooden vampire” has long, wicked claws and a mouthful of needle like fangs. The fangs inflict terrible wounds which bleed freely. A “wooden vampire” has a special organ in its chest and throat that acts as a suction pump for rapidly draining its victim of blood. A “wooden vampire” needs human blood to survive, but it also enjoys the experience of feeding, especially draining a human to death. Most “wooden vampires” revel in inflicting pain and horror on humans and they are quite good at it. Due to some ancient traditions, whose origins are lost in the mists of time, particularly desperate, foolish or wicked human beings can seek out a “wooden vampire” and make a deal with it. Because of the traditions, “wooden vampires” will bargain in what almost approaches good faith, although they will always seek loopholes and ways to turn any agreement to their advantage.

A “wooden vampire” has hearing that is as good as a human beings, a marginally better sense of smell, and excellent night vision.

Like the traditional vampire, the “wooden vampire” is vulnerable to daylight. When exposed to the light of day, a “wooden vampire” sustains 1 point of damage

for each minute of direct exposure. A “wooden vampire” can resist the affects of the sun by consuming its internal blood supply. A “wooden vampire” can reduce the damage to 1 point per half hour by expending 1 “point” of stored blood (see below). A “wooden vampire” is not affected by typical artificial lighting, but would be affected by things like sun lamps or tanning beds. If a “wooden vampire” is reduced to 2 or fewer hit points by exposure to the sun, it will undergo a sudden paralysis and its skin and muscles will automatically transform into a wood-like substance, protecting its organs from the sun. This wood like substance also acts as 8 point armor against physical attacks. However, when this occurs the “wooden vampire” will be helpless and unable to move. It will remain in that state until it is able to regenerate its hit points to 3 or greater. Once this occurs, its outer skin will return to a normal appearance and it will be able to move again. A “wooden vampire” can also enter this state voluntarily and “wooden vampires” tend to do this for protection during the daylight hours. When in this state, a “wooden vampire” ages extremely slowly (about one year of aging for every twenty five years spent in hibernation) and “wooden vampires” can live to be 150 years old.

Like the traditional vampire, the “wooden vampire” feeds on human blood. A “wooden vampire” must consume at least a liter of blood each day to remain active. If it does not consume that much, it will go into a form of hibernation. The “wooden vampire” can avoid going into this hibernation by consuming its internal stores of blood. Each hour it remains alert and mobile costs it 1 “point” of blood.

A “wooden vampire” can consume blood and store it, in a concentrated form, in special organs (where the human liver, large intestines and small intestines would be). Each point of STR a “wooden vampire” drains from a victim by a biting attack gives it 1 point of stored blood. A “wooden vampire” may store a number of points of blood equal to half its SIZ. This stored blood can be used by the “wooden vampire” in various ways. As noted above, this blood can be consumed to help resist the effects of the sun or to sustain the creature. It can also be used to enable the creature to heal rapidly. While a “wooden vampire” will heal as fast a human, it can consume 1 point of blood from its internal storage organs to heal one point of damage. This process requires the “wooden vampire”’s concentration, so it can take no other action that round, except for moving slowly. Further, a “wooden vampire” can use the energy in the blood to appear more human. Each point of blood a “wooden vampire” expends gives it a 20% to pass as a “black” human. This alteration lasts eight hours or until the “disguise” is dropped. Once the “disguise” is dropped, the “wooden vampire” must expend points again to regain human appearance. When its “disguise” is in effect, the “wooden vampire” actually alters its physical appearance (“hair” grows, the eyes look normal, the skin sweats, the fangs become normal teeth, the claws transform into fingernails etc.). The “wooden vampire” assumes the same appearance each time it becomes human in appearance, so it cannot use this ability to mimic specific human beings.

In combat, the “wooden vampire” fights with its claws and by ripping at its victims with its terrible fangs. To use the claws and fangs, it must be in its natural form. A “wooden vampire” can use human weapons (provided it has the skills), but generally prefers to use its natural weapons. In its “natural” form, its outer skin has a rough, wood-like appearance. This material acts as two points of armor.

Characteristics	Rolls	Averages	#1
STR	3D6+6	16-17	19
CON	3D6+6	16-17	21
SIZ	3D6	10-11	13
INT	3D6	10-11	12
POW	3D6+3	13-14	15
DEX	3D6+3	13-14	17
HP		13-14	17
Damage Bonus		+1D4	+1D6

Move: 8

Weapons: Claw 65% Damage 1D4+db, Bite 35% Damage 1d6 + blood drain (1D3 points of STR, victim can regain up to 1D3/day) while in its “natural” form. Can use human weapons.

Armor: 2 points of “skin” when in “natural” form.

Spells: None

Sanity Loss: 1/1D6 Sanity points to see a “wooden vampire” in its “natural” form.

Handouts

Handout #1

-Letter from Malcolm Mufasta

...I am sorry to trouble you with this news, but I believe that I would be even more sorry where I to simply let events take their course. At the museum where I conduct my research, there have been a series of problems, some of which may be related. First, a statue was stolen from the museum out of the African/African-American display area. Second, an unusual number of museum employees have left the museum with no notice. A custodian and two security guards have failed to return to work, for no apparent reason. This in itself is not entirely unusual, but has struck me as odd. The official story is that the custodian was the victim of a crime on the way home and that the first security guard simply decided to move on without giving notice. This is not entirely uncommon, but does seem unusual. Third, there was an incident in which a significant amount of damage to some of the exhibits in the Africa/African-American sections. The police have been told by Stane that the other absent security guard (a Mr. West) was involved in the incident. According to the papers, there is some evidence that West's older brother might have been involved with a racist group at one point. What concerns me the most, however, is that a respected colleague of mine, Dr. Franklin, has been accused of involvement in the theft of the statue as well as the vandalism incident by Dr. Stane, who is an administrator at the museum. Based on my knowledge of Dr. Franklin, I believe he is innocent of all wrong doing and that Stane is attempting to exploit the situation for her own advantage.

Given this situation, I would like to request your aid. I believe that while the police are basically honest, they are being misinformed by Stane. Hence, it is my conclusion that only an outside party, uninfluenced by Stane, can ensure that justice is properly served...

Handout #2

-Museum information on the missing statue.

...The statue appears to have been carved from a single block of native wood. The shackles are of iron and are believed to be European in origin. The symbols etched into the iron are clearly not European in origin and are believed to be symbols used by some shamans in African history.

The statue is believed to commemorate the victory of one family over one of their rivals. This is supported by a myth/legend from the area of the statue's origin and by the fact that the statue has been shackled. The exact date of the conflict, or even if it actually occurred, is unknown.

The statue itself was donated by an African family (legend has it that the family was the victor in the struggle mentioned above) to an African museum in 1972. In 1991 the statue was purchased by an American university and displayed (with shackles). After the week long period of display, the statue was placed into storage. In 1994 the statue was acquired by this museum and put on display this year.

Handout #3

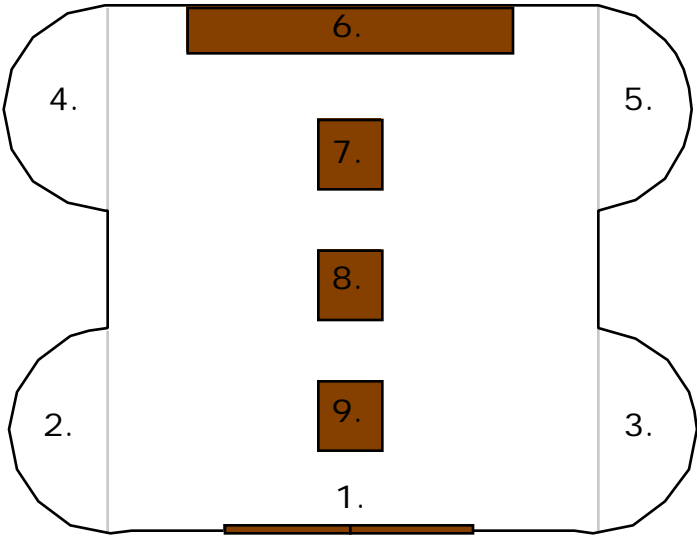
-From Horace C. Nesbeth's *African Myths, Magic and Legend*, 1921

As with all human societies, the societies of Africa were occasionally plagued with family disputes. Many of these disputes, especially the ones from ancient times, have become obscured by myth and legend. One such myth tells of a struggle between two rival families which ended in the imprisonments of a vampire like being through the use of enchanted iron shackles.

According to the myth, the two families were at an impasse and hence each was searching for a decisive advantage over the other. One of the more enterprising young men decided to follow an old legend and seek out supernatural aid. According to the myth, the young man recruited a terrible being and carried it back to the village. The horrible being is said to have plagued the young man's enemies for three days, until they enlisted the aid of a powerful shaman. The shaman, who was wise in the ways of the beings of night and evil, is said to have identified the creature on the fourth night of its feeding. On the fifth day, the shaman modified a set of European iron shackles by engraving them with the proper symbols and calling on spirits to enter the metal, transforming it into an item of power, such as a fetish or medicine bundle. That night, the horrible being claimed a fifth victim. On the Sixth day, the shaman was prepared. He and four of the bravest warriors of the rival family waited in the hut of the next victim (the being was killing the family members in reverse order of their status in the family). When the being appeared, the shaman identified it for what it was and the four warriors held it long enough for the shaman to place the magical shackles on the creature. Trapped by the magic of the shackles, the creature supposedly turned to wood and was frozen in place. Enraged at the horror visited upon them the family butchered their enemies as they slept. As a symbol of their triumph, the family displayed the statue in the leader's hut.

Keeper's Maps

Display Area



Sewer Juncture

