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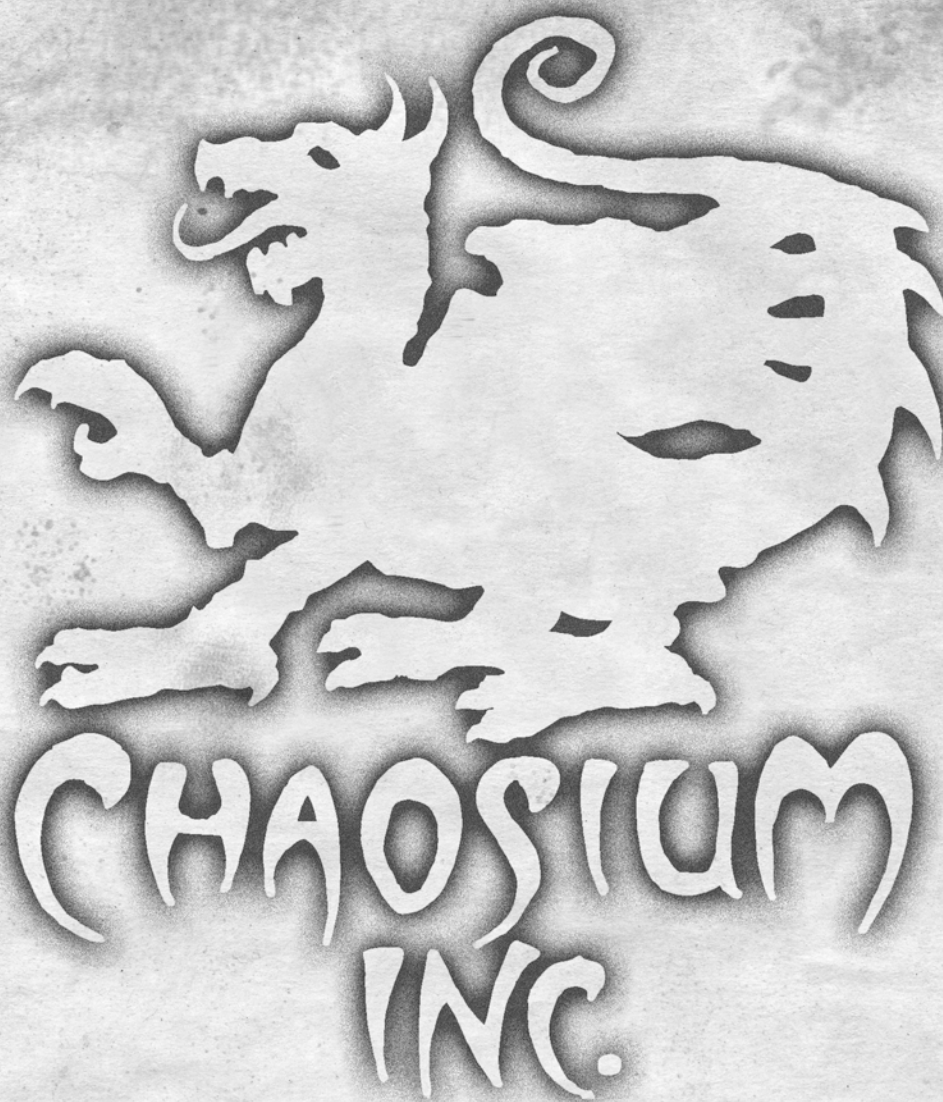


The Pastores



A MALEFIC CULT FOR CTHULHU DARK AGES





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The Pastores



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This book is dedicated to Karen Arnold.



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Pastores Background



Introduction

The Pastores are a fertility cult rooted in an alliance of several noble families who worship Shub-Niggurath in her form of the Magna Mater, and a variety of other Mythos entities under the guise of her sacrificed Son. Their cultic practices involve the breeding, transformation, and periodic sacrifice of the human populace under their control, as well as extensive self-transformation of their ruling houses. Ancient beyond human memory, the Pastores aim to exploit the current lawlessness of France to expand their temporal power and subvert local religion, ultimately instituting the open worship of the Magna Mater in their domains and harnessing all of rural society to their breeding programs. Associated with the Pastores are a handful of independent sects and sorcerers who do not share their theology but recognize them as powerful allies.

The first part of this book describes the Pastores in detail – their beliefs, their practices, and the resources, allies, and leaders with which they threaten the health of the realm and any investigators unfortunate enough to encounter them. It includes advice on how to incorporate and utilize them to best effect in a new or ongoing *Cthulhu Dark Ages* campaign. The second part of the book contains scenarios featuring the Pastores. Together, they constitute a loosely connected campaign.

History

The Pastores are but the most recent incarnation of a pre-Roman (and indeed pre-Celtic) fertility cult. In prehistoric times, they had commerce with the subterranean civilizations of K'n-Yan (or their European equivalent) from whom they gained several kinds of initial breeding stock and shared in the worship of Shub-Niggurath, Yig and Tsathoggua. They adopted these Gods as their own, retaining their worship long after K'n-Yan had faded into myth. Over the millennia, many peoples invaded their fertile patch of Europe, but the cult survived, intermarrying with each invading group. In times of strength they bred their herds openly; in times of weakness, they hid them beneath the earth and pretended to succumb to the attacks of their enemies.

The Roman conquest brought them under a stronger rule than any that they had previously experienced, and, after the appalled Romans exterminated much of their breeding stock and purged their leadership, they were once again forced to hide their true practices. Yet, they found a niche of sorts within the Empire, for the Magna Mater and kindred Goddess religions were well established throughout the Roman world. Once memory of their more blasphemous practices had faded, their priests and matrons joined the Roman religious establishment, and their nobility intermarried into the Roman aristocracy.

The collapse of Roman authority in the 3rd century permitted the revival of open breeding on their slave-worked plantations for several decades, but the restored Empire of Diocletian brought this to a halt. Constantine and his successors eventually forced them to feign conversion to Christianity. They developed a cryptic Latin terminology to hide their activities, and took the name *Pastores* (or shepherds) to mask their true nature. The 5th-century turmoil made the cult nearly free from supervision. They grew too bold. The resultant purge under Clovis and his newly Catholic Franks nearly broke them. Only a few branches of the family escaped, along with a small portion of their breeding stock.



The Pastores were left to slowly regain their power by infiltrating the Frankish nobility. As central power waned under the Merovingian kings, they once again operated nearly openly, but as the mayors of the Palace grew strong, and then supplanted the Merovingian kings, the Pastores hid from persecution. In recent decades, following the collapse of central Carolingian authority, the main families of the cult have decided to push for open power, hoping in the chaos to overthrow Clovis's hated faith once and for all and mold society into their fecund paradise.

Starting in the late ninth century, a noble Pastores family of the Carolingian castellan class, the Adoné, began its open bid for influence and power in south central France. With the aid of magic and *gyaa-yothn* steeds, they became formidable conquerors and raiders, and many rivals capitulated or married into their line rather than face extermination. In this way the Adoné rapidly expanded their holdings throughout the counties of Begon, Rodez, and Toulouse. In 937, they gained control of the city of Begon itself, and, in 942, installed one of their own line as its bishop. Although life in Begon and along the major roads remains relatively unchanged, the Adoné's more isolated holdings already begin to sport changes to the liturgy and strange disappearances among the farmers. Each of their conquests or acquisitions in turn leads to a new wave of refugees unable to stomach their new rulers, even as the Adoné's generous concession of land and privilege to new tenets attracts the dissatisfied from nearby regions. Against the general chaos of the 10th century, such disruption has gone mostly unnoticed by the *Cthulhu: Dark Ages* starting date of 962.

The K'n-Yan Connection

The blue-litten caverns of K'n-Yan house an advanced, if decadent, human society, as described in Lovecraft's "The Mound." Masters of both mind and body, they long ago learned to reverse their own aging, and possess formidable powers of telepathy, psychokinesis, and spirit projection. The ruling peoples of K'n-Yan rely heavily on a population of slaves and reanimated corpses for both labor and entertainment, and ride mounts known as *gyaa-yothn*, bred from mixed human and reptilian ancestry. The dwellers in K'n-Yan worship a miscellany of Mythos deities, including Shub-Niggurath, Cthulhu, and Yig. To this pantheon, they had at one time added Tsathoggua, remnants of whose cult they encountered in Yoth, and whose worship they in turn gifted to the surface dwellers of Lomar. Yet even the hardened peoples of K'n-Yan ceased all veneration of Tsathoggua after their explorers discovered what lay in the blackness of N'Kai. At present, the insular people of K'n-Yan no longer visit the surface, save as projections only, and do not suffer that those who find their way in should ever leave. (See 2388 *The Keeper's Companion*, pp. 169-171).

Many and obscure are the entrances to K'n-Yan, now that its denizens have hidden themselves away. Indeed, who is to say that the blue-litten caverns are a physical place as we understand it, and not an extrusion of the Dreamlands or some yet more horrible plane? Beneath Europe, too, some caverns connect to K'n-Yan, N'Kai, or mysterious regions holding congress with the two. By this route, the peoples of K'n-Yan once held trade with the primitives of prehistoric Europe. Thus did the ancestors of the Pastores obtain their initial knowledge of the Mythos, as well as a breeding-stock of *gyaa-yothn*.

Over the centuries, the Pastores have forgotten most of what they once knew about K'n-Yan and its peoples, but they have continued to worship Shub-Niggurath, and (to a lesser extent) to venerate of Yig and Tsathoggua as well. (Their contact with K'n-Yan predated the suppression of the latter's worship.) Their breeding programs have modified the *gyaa-yothn* bloodline into several related species, with differing functions and admixtures of human blood. The upper caverns, still quite extensive in scope if not as large as K'n-Yan or N'kai, house these creatures and serve as redoubts in times of disaster, and indeed, some Pastores communities exist wholly or largely underground.

Theology

The Pastores worship two principle deities: the Mother and her Son. The Mother (*mater* in Latin) represents fecundity, life, birth, and transformation. Her Son (*filius* in Latin) embodies the agricultural cycle. She gives birth to Him, mates with Him, and ultimately slays and dismembers Him, before returning Him to life. Thus, He represents the total life cycle and all hopes for a life to come. The Pastores reenact this cycle in a most literal and bloody way, through human sacrifice, self-mutilation, and sexual congress with Mythos entities.

The Pastores' Mother is, of course, Shub-Niggurath, although they rarely refer to her by that name. They identify her Son with several Mythos deities of a more-or-less male nature, such as Nyarlathotep, Yig, Tsathoggua, Nug, Yeb, and Cthulhu. The Son may be an avatar of some or all of these, but it is more likely that the Son represents all of living creation, eternally birthed, loved, killed, and transformed by Shub-Niggurath, the all-fertile. With this in mind, any other entity, human or divine, may be called her Son.

The Pastores actively mask their Goddess worship behind the norms of Christian practice. Their public chapels and churches display images of Christian saints, their prayers invoke Jesus and Mary, and their priests perform the mass regularly. The Pastores themselves identify each of these practices with elements of their own theology, so that they may worship openly, yet raise few suspicions. Indeed, due to the syncretic nature of their faith, many Pastores



sincerely venerate Christian figures as genuine avatars of the Mother and Son.

The Pastores represent the Mother most frequently as the Virgin Mary, although they usually eschew her given name in favor of such titles as “Theotokos” (“God-Bearer” in Greek), the “Mother of God”, or the “Generatrix.” Although perfectly orthodox in Western Christianity, these salutations naturally hold a double meaning for the Pastores. The Pastores also draw upon female saints such as Agnes, Judith or Ruth for their iconography. Mary Magdalene has proven particularly useful for stressing the Mother’s sexual role in reproduction.

The Pastores most often represent the Son of their theology in the guise of Christ, interpreting Jesus’ passion, crucifixion and resurrection as sacrifice and rebirth at the hands of the Mother. Unusually for the century, Pastores churches rarely depict Christ enthroned in majesty, as this contradicts the Son’s subordinate position in their theology, favoring instead pictures of his crucifixion. The Pastores also depict the Son as various male Christian saints, preferring those whose martyrdoms were particularly gruesome. Saint Sebastian features prominently in their cult, as they interpret his death by arrows as a symbol of sexual passivity. Certain saints almost always correspond to particular Mythos entities; for example, because of his power over snakes, St. Patrick often represents the serpent-god Yig. The Pastores have also incorporated other Mythos deities directly into the cult of saints. For example, they venerate Nug and Yeb as “Nug and Yuebé” and honor Tsathoggua as “St. Sathojué.” They depict the former as twin blonde children, and the latter as a large bearded man. There are so many local saints in the Middle Ages that few outsiders think to question the origin of these figures.

The Pastores believe that humanity itself suffers from a lack of guidance and order, and hope to replace existing society with a magical and religious elite that would govern humanity for its own benefit. The Pastores reason that all humans compete for the same things – advancement, prestige, luxuries, leisure, and rule – from an essential mental and physical equality. Mere force, not ability, separates the haves from the have-nots, leading to a state of unending warfare. The Pastores hope to do away with social conflict by breeding their human sheep (*ovis*, plural *oves*) into a variety of specialized types, each with only the capabilities needed to adequately perform its social role. This program is already underway in the lands under their control. Naturally, the Pastores themselves plan to head the new society, although they are willing to concede a minimal role to other holders of lesser truths, such as independent sorcerers and the devotees of other Mythos entities.

The Historical Magna Mater

The Pastores superficially resemble many ancient goddess cults. Their Mother resembles the Magna Mater, Cybele, and Venus of the classical myth cycles. The Son resembles Attis, Adonis, and other lover/sacrifices. Indeed, they draw heavily on these mythologies, not fully differentiating them from the Mythos proper. Educated investigators may recognize Cybele and Attis from Catullus’ *Carmina* 63. (Interested keepers may peruse several translations at www.perseus.org.) They may also know that her priests practiced self-castration. But the Pastores’ cult is far more horrible than any earthly religion and departs from ordinary Goddess worship in several ways. Clerical investigators who expect to confront a mere pagan survival will be rudely and perhaps fatally surprised.

Organization & Practices

The Pastores are tied together principally by blood relations. They completely control at least three noble lineages, the Fils de Yubés, the d’Adonés, and the de Valplacides, and have infiltrated many more. The Pastores also control a few non-noble lines. Although the noble Pastores of necessity play a larger role in politics, the Pastores view worldly nobility as a mere convenience. When their plans are complete, all Pastores will take their rightful place at the head of humanity.

Externally, their families conform to 10th-century practices. Male knights fight battles and manage lands. Younger sons pursue careers in the clergy. The women serve as advisors and matriarchs and administer households and manors during frequent male absences. Pastores women are often exogamous, and in this way spread the cult throughout the French nobility. The noble Pastores support several monasteries and nunneries. If the males of the family tend to die young, the females exhibit a remarkable longevity, and the priests tend toward the paunchy, this does not attract attention as excessively peculiar.

Internally, each family member pursues a path of self-transformation dictated by his or her gender and status (and to a lesser extent, personal choice). Central to the Pastores’ practice are their rites of *transformatio* or transformation. Each involves some fundamental bodily change, and represents symbolically the Son’s sacrifice of himself to the Mother. Each Pastor must undergo some version of the rite in early adulthood. Those who survive their first rite often later undertake successively extreme versions at each stage in their life. The only exceptions are males who must interact with the outside world, and even for them the rite is only postponed, not foregone.

The Pastores practice many different kinds of rites, roughly divided by gender and degree of severity. The male *transformatio passionis* is in many ways the center of the cult. Every year the cult sacrifices one or more men in the *transformatio passionis* ceremony held in the Val Placide. As part of this orgiastic ceremony, the Pastores summon Arbores (Dark Young) to attend their orgies. During the celebrations, the ecstatic male celebrants throw themselves upon these monsters to be dismembered. The Pastores then offer the corpses to an especially enormous Dark Young known as the Great Arbor. The Great Arbor may choose to reject such an offering, but more often absorbs it into its womb, from which a new life form shortly emerges. Usually the sacrifice is transformed into a new Arbor, but sometimes the sacrifice becomes some other sort of monster associated with Shub-Niggurath. All noble males await their turn for transfiguration with great eagerness, and many compete for the honor of the Arbores' attention each year. Others find their participation delayed by other duties.

Those males destined for their priesthood practice the *transformatio sub gladio*. After one last orgy, they ecstatically castrate themselves. The castrated male is then initiated as a priest. A castrated male is not eligible for the *transformatio passionis*, but is considered an "honorary female" and may undergo other, female, *transformationes*, and often lives to a great age. Males selected for the *transformatio sub gladio* assume their duties in late adolescence, and are often chosen for external roles in the Church.

For ordinary females, menstruation is considered a *transformatio*, and no other rite is necessary for adolescent girls. Older women, usually those who have passed childbearing age, as well as dedicated virgins, castrated priests or even helpless victims, may undertake the *transformatio in utero* or *semine* later in life. In the *in utero* ritual, the celebrant is wrapped in a transforming membrane, which can extend life, alter features, or even turn the supplicant into a semi-human Child of Shub-Niggurath. The *transformatio semine* refers to the implantation of monstrous tissue into the host. The Pastores use these two rites to extend the life of their leaders, as well as to create new forms of *oves*.

Through its noble members, the cult also controls a much larger, and often unwilling, population. It works systematically to convert them to the worship of the Mother and Son and to integrate them into its breeding program. In addition, Pastores and *oves* alike regularly travel and infiltrate neighboring regions, spreading the bloodlines and gifts of their cult in secret.

Connections: Past and Future

Certain cults and monsters of the Mythos seem particularly to resemble the Pastores. Although not necessary for employment or enjoyment of the Pastores within the scope of a *Cthulhu: Dark Ages* campaign, it may amuse the keeper to elaborate the lineage of the Pastores into the past or the future. Some of the more likely opportunities to do so are enumerated below.

Delta Green: Countdown describes a Russian cult known as the Skoptsi. Like the Pastores, the Skoptsi worship the Magna Mater under an outward veneer of Christianity, and engage in many of the same practices, such as ritual castration. Most likely the mingled heritage of classical Goddess worship and the cult of Shub-Niggurath accounts for the similarities. (Certainly, the Skoptsi only came to this author's attention again after I had established Pastores in outline.) Yet it may amuse the keeper if there were some organic connection. Perhaps the Pastores escape whatever eclipse seems destined for them, and flee east to pass on their knowledge. Perhaps some more sinister deity wishes to see the Pastores' practices revived. Who or what was the Black Monk who tempted the Skoptsi founder into conversion, and was he even partially human or was he the incarnation of some greater entity?

The protagonist of Lovecraft's "The Rats in the Walls," discovers that his inheritance of Exham Priory includes an extensive cavern underneath its medieval estate. His own ancestors worshiped the Magna Mater, and used the cavern system to hide their herds of flabby semi-human animals. De la Poer's ancestors arrived only with the Norman conquest, but the cult itself dated back to Roman times. This supplement assumes that in the 10th-century Exham Priory either belongs to an English branch of the Pastores, or to some related cult. Although the Conquest will result in their disenfranchisement, they will in turn subvert their own conquerors. Keepers who wish to stress a connection to "The Rats in the Walls" should hint at a Pastores presence in England, and perhaps even name the Priory itself.

Ramsey Campbell's "Moonlens" forms a cornerstone of the Shub-Niggurath tales. He recounts that the English town of Goatswood regularly utilizes a strange artifact known as the Moon-lens to transform people into Children of Shub-Niggurath. According to Campbell, the Romans "recognized" local worship of Shub-Niggurath as their own Magna Mater. Thus, this tale definitely establishes a link between Shub-Niggurath and the Magna Mater.

Robert M. Price's excellent introduction to *The Shub-Niggurath Cycle* further explores these connections. Price's speculation on The Black Goat's worship underpins much of the Pastores' theology.

Shub-Who?

Although this book describes the Pastores as “Shub-Niggurath cultists,” the Pastores themselves do not identify their deity by that name, nor are they especially knowledgeable about the Mythos as a whole. To them, their deity is the Mother. The educated among them know that she was worshiped in Roman times, and something of the stories about Venus and Adonis. Only the most erudite Pastores recognize “Shub-Niggurath” as one of the many names of their Goddess has taken in the past, but even they do not impart much significance to this name.

The syncretic elements in the Pastores’ theology are not simply a ruse. The Pastores have used Christian symbols for so long that they now believe in many of themselves. (Although not in a fashion of which a Christian priest would approve.) The Pastores do occasionally refer to related deities by their Mythos names – in particular, Shub-Niggurath’s “sons” Nug and Yeb. But for them, these genuine Mythos beings are no more or less “real” than any other entities they worship.

Thus, when role-playing the Pastores, the keeper should never refer to Shub-Niggurath by that name. It will be more satisfying if the players themselves make the deduction, from the hints left in the background. The Arbores, the mention of Nug and Yeb, and other clues will be more than sufficient for Mythos-savvy players to make the deduction, even if their characters remain as ignorant as the Pastores themselves.

Personalities and Families

This section describes the major Pastores families and individual personalities currently active in France and Burgundy. Many more individuals exist than are described here, of course, and the keepers should feel free to invent, remove or replace the Pastores’ leadership as best fits their campaigns.

Families

The Pastores have three main bloodlines, each of which is geographically diffuse, but bound by political and magical ties. As the Pastores are very family-oriented, these three families and their dependants also form the organization’s major factions.

The Adoné

The Adoné branch of the Pastores only emerged as a major bloodline in the last century. (The name “Adoné” derives from ancient “Adonis,” a form of the Son.) The older two bloodlines designated them as their proxies when they decided that the time was ripe to begin a movement for greater political power. The Adoné would assume the cult’s respectable, public face, behind which the other two families could hide the depth of their involvement. The

scheme has largely worked as intended. The Adoné have conquered large swaths of the counties of Begon, Rodez and Auvergne counties, and risen high in the social scale till they rank among the greatest Counts of France.

The result has been unexpected political tension between the Adoné and the other families. The Adoné no longer see themselves as mere agents of older branches of the cult, but as leaders. Their political might and large numbers have permitted them the autonomy and resources to act alone. As a result they have sometimes committed the cult as a whole to sudden and risky actions. The council’s conservative Valplacides and Fils de Yubé have thus far attempted to rein in their one-time protégés with words, but the day may come soon when they unveil their more extensive magical resources.

The Adoné are a dynamic, sprawling family that has expanded rapidly through marriage and procreation. They have more members and more clients than the other two branches combined, but many of these are newcomers to the cult. The core line dates back centuries, if not millennia, but many of its satellites and converts have worshiped the Mother for only a few generations at most. As such, the Adoné more fully resemble non-cult nobility in their attitudes and practices than the other bloodlines. They set a greater store by purity of blood, emphasize martial prowess over mystical learning, and interact with unbelievers very frequently. The Adoné have trained a terrifying cavalry force by combining 10th-century military practices with a newer, heavier breed of *gyaa-yothn* mounts. Their magical resources, however, are thin compared to the older families. To compensate they have pooled most of their objects of power and trained sorcerers under Raphael of Begon.

The Fils de Yubé

The Sons of Yube claim to be the cult’s oldest family, and occupy their oldest and most secure stronghold, Mt. Matrifex. The Fils de Yubé dwell primarily in the Alps Maritime and the Kingdom of Burgundy, although many also dwell in the county of Auvergne and the March of Gothia. Despite this ancient lineage, they are the more moderate of the two older families, pursuing a middle path between the ambitious, worldly Adoné, and the contemplative, conservative Valplacides. Known especially for their hedonism, the Fils de Yubé remain insular, mixing only infrequently with non-Pastores neighbors. They do keep up the appearance of courtly politics and culture, and welcome wandering poets especially. Many of their nobles are epicures, if somewhat reclusive ones, and some seek out flocks of particular appearance or temperament for their lusts or experiments. Of all the families, they most strongly encourage their young men to travel, seeing the world and maintaining contacts with far-flung relations. As a result, their wives and mothers command most of the political power in their own territories. The sorcerers of the Fils de Yubé excel at the arts of

illusion and befuddlement, but rarely achieve the mastery of the darker blood arts at which the Valplacides excel.

“Fils de Yubé” refers to the Mythos deity “Yubé” or in Latin, “Yubus”, “Yeb” in English. The sons of Shub-Niggurath, Yeb and his twin brother Nug, will herald the end of the world.

The Valplacides

The Valplacides are the most conservative, insular, and mystic of the three great Pastores families. They dwell primarily in the mountains of Auvergne, clustered around the valley from which they take their name. Of all the Pastores, they pay the least attention to worldly rank. Their castles and other fortifications usually belong to an extended family or clan, rather than to a single noble. Their members often live as prosperous farmers, rather than nobles, their affairs managed by traditional Pastores matriarchal councils, and livestock (human and animal) held in common. Other Pastores, particularly the Adoné, view the practices of the Valplacides as either primitive relics of the past, as idealistic forerunners of the new order, or both, but with a measure of contempt in either case. The Valplacides see themselves as purer in worship and devotion than the other Pastores, whom they believe the world has corrupted. The Valplacides’ strength lies in their mastery of sorcery, not in overt military power. Few other Pastores can match their mastery of dark magic of blood, bone, flesh and violence.

Principal Figures

The Pastores leadership must balance continuity and change; their wisest and most powerful sorcerers provide council, but cannot act publicly. Thus, younger and more daring Pastores hold most of the real political and military power, and set the direction of the cult as whole. Occasionally, their daring goes too far, and the, older, wiser cultists turn violently against them.

The Council of Priests and Matrons.

The council of priests and matrons are largely immortal Children of Shub-Niggurath who have undergone the *transformatio in utero*. Each council occupies its own monastery: the Convent of God’s Mother for the matrons, the Monastery of St. Patrick and St. Sébastien for the priests, where each conducts much of their business. Other immortals dwell separately. A combined council of Matrons and Priests gathers every few years. Supposedly, the council directs the cult as a whole, but more active leaders, such as Etienne and Raphael regularly ignore its dictates.

Etienne d’Adoné, age 58, Count of Begon

A bearded, sanguine man in his late fifties, the self-styled Count of Begon, and current patriarch of the family, Etienne d’Adoné has led his family in the consolidation and expansion of their territories for the last three decades. During his vigorous twenties, he served as war leader when his father conquered the city of Begon, then inherited the lordship when his father underwent the *transformatio passioe*. The next few years proved difficult ones for Etienne, as many of his father’s reluctant vassals took the opportunity to revolt, and he was forced to spend several years subduing them again. Perhaps for this reason, Etienne has never undertaken the *transformatio*, nor has he stepped down from his place as count, despite having raised many sons to adulthood. His supporters claim he seeks only the stability of the family; his detractors whisper that he fears the *transformatio*.

STR 13 CON 14 SIZ 15 INT 13 POW 10
DEX 11 APP 13 EDU 14 SAN 0

HP 15 Magic Points 10

Damage Bonus: +1d4

Weapons: Frankish sword 60%, damage 1D8+1+db, lance 55% 1D8+ horse db, Large Knife 50%, damage 1d6+db

Armor: Chainmail 7, and large shield 50% when in battle

Skills: Cthulhu Mythos 20%, Dodge 50%, Insight 65%, Natural World 30%, Occult 45%, Own Kingdom 65%, Other Kingdoms 20%, Persuade 60%, Ride Horse 65%, Status 80%



Raphael d'Adoné, age 62, Bishop of Begon

Raphael, cousin to Etienne, serves as the bishop of Begon. The first Adoné to hold the post, he must balance his own zeal to transform the religion of the town against the threat of discovery and revolt. Thus far, he has pursued a policy of stealth in the cities, and boldness in the countryside: his urban priests tend to be either genuine Christians, or educated Pastores committed to secrecy, but he draws upon the Pastores priesthood in assigning and recommending candidates for village positions. Even so, his power is more limited than might appear – many nobles retain the prerogative of appointing their own chaplains and priests, and here he can only pursue bribery and persuasion to achieve his ends. Despite having undergone castration, Raphael is a thin, spry man who does not show his seventy years.

STR 12 CON 8 SIZ 8 INT 17 POW 17
DEX 11 APP 11 EDU 16 SAN 0
HP 10 Magic Points 17

Damage Bonus: +0

Weapons: Small Knife 25%, damage 1D4+db

Armor: none

Skills: Accounting 50%, Cthulhu Mythos 30%, Dodge 30%, Occult 70%, Other Kingdoms 40%, Other language: Latin 55%, Persuade 65%, Ride Horse 30%, Status 70%, Write Latin 40%.

Spells: Augur, Blindness, Cloud Memory, Deafness, Demon Hearing, Demon Sight, Enthral, Fear, Heal, Shriveling, Contact/Compel: Byakhee, Dark Young, Pray to Shub-Niggurath.



Yseult d'Adoné, age 63

A leading, if younger, member of the council of Matrons, Yseult d'Adoné has not yet retired to the seclusion of the Convent of God's Mother. She travels the borders of Begon, visiting her many children in their estates. In particular, she spends much of her time with her son Maurice, the Lord of Castle Massif, one of the principal Adoné holdings along their eastern border, and a base of operations for further conquest. Yseult heartily approves of the use of force to expand the Adoné territories, but her true genius involves securing marriage alliances for her now numerous grandchildren. Yseult walks with a slight stoop, but otherwise appears as an attractive and charismatic woman in her early fifties; in fact, she is much older, and her stoop comes from the transformations that have rendered her an immortal Child of Shub-Niggurath.

STR 9 CON 9 SIZ 8 INT 16 POW 14
APP 15 DEX 9 EDU 15 SAN 0
HP 9 Magic Points 14

Damage Bonus: +0

Weapons: none

Armor: none

Skills: Accounting 40%, Bargain 40%, Cthulhu Mythos 20%, Dodge 25%, Insight 60%, Listen 40%, Occult 55%, Own Kingdom 50%, Other Kingdoms 20%, Persuade 65%, Ride Horse 30%, Spot Hidden 40%, Status 65%, Write French 55%

Spells: Blindness, Deafness, Enthral, Fear, Heal, Shrivelling

Sanity Loss: 0/1d6 SAN to see Yseult undisguised

Henri the Priest, age 37

A stout man in his late thirties, Henri has for some years served as Etienne d'Adoné's principal liaison to the Council of Priests, where he forcefully presses Etienne's expansionist views with some success. He also radiates a compelling, quiet piety, and speaks with perhaps unfeigned sincerity of the merits of Christ's passion. Thus he often also serves as peacemaker to the Adoné's rivals and enemies.

STR 11 CON 13 SIZ 15 INT 14 POW 9
APP 11 DEX 9 EDU 13 SAN 0
HP 12 Magic Points 9

Damage Bonus: +1d4

Weapons: Small Knife 40%, damage 1D4+db

Armor: none

Skills: Cthulhu Mythos 20%, Dodge 30%, Insight 55%, Occult 50%, Own Kingdom 55%, Other Kingdoms 35%, Other Language: Latin 55%, Persuade 55%, Ride Horse 45%, Status 40%, Write Latin 50%

Spells: Augur, Contact/Compel Byakhee, Fear, Flesh Ward

Active Cultic Centers

The Pastores have in their far wanderings established worship in England, Burgundy, Normandy, Spain and the westernmost portion of the Holy Roman Empire, but it is in south-central France, and especially the county of Begon, that their influence is most extensive. Here dwell their mightiest lords, and lie their greatest strongholds and richest monasteries. There is a marked difference in outlook between the dynamic, expansive Adoné family that dominates this region, and the older, more insular and conservative families elsewhere.

Mt Matfique

Originally known in Latin as the *Mons Matris Carnificis*, or mountain of the mother-executioner, this is the Pastores' oldest and most secret fastness, and one of the places where they have brought their *oves* most fully into the open. Located in the Alps Maritime in the Kingdom of Burgundy, the mountain and its valley serve as the traditional seat of the Fils de Yubé family. Under the fields there lies an extensive cavern system which houses a large population of *oves* and fungi. The council of matrons and priests often meets here.

Begon County

The entirely fictional Begon county, the Pastores equivalent of Arkham county, lies to the west of the county of Rodez, and north of the county Toulouse. Imagine it as an extension of the Lot river valley, pulling the space around it to make France that much bigger. The resulting geographic region gives the Pastores a place to achieve a completely ahistorical level of political power and dominance, as well as permitting the author to invent people and places that never really existed. Begon County forms the heartland of Adoné influence – little of the land within its borders has escaped their conquerors' influence, directly or indirectly. As a result of the Adoné conquests, it possesses a stronger, more stable government than many neighboring regions, and as a result of his power more than his bloodline, Etienne d'Adoné has claimed title as its count for himself and the title of bishop for his cousin, Raphael.

Adoné

A small town held in fief by the Adoné family, with surrounding territories greatly expanded in recent decades by the terrible military might of the Adoné knights. On their sheltered, hereditary lands, the Adoné have begun the open use of *oves*. The Convent of God's Mother is a few miles away.

Begon City

This is the largest town under the dominion of the Pastores, which the Adoné family won by conquest in 933. They have thus far as a matter of policy not tried to establish Mother worship in Begon, preferring not to alarm the city's many visitors. Thus, to outsiders, Begon seems a prosperous, expanding market city – a rare haven of peace in these troubled times.

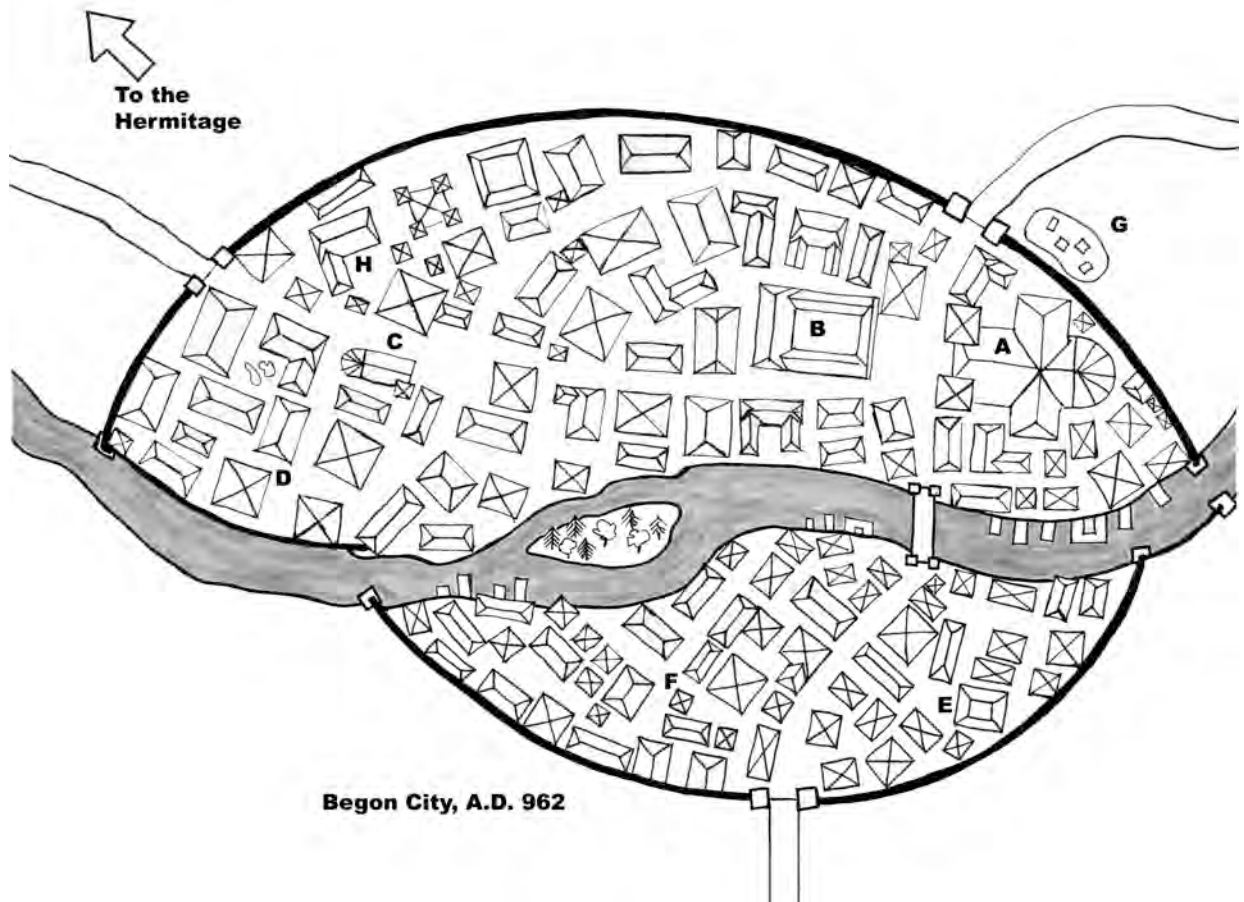
Begon lies on a curve of the river Flarque. A moat, earthen wall and strong wooden palisade protect the city from attack to the north. To the south lies a shantytown of hastily constructed buildings protected by a less substantial, but still formidable, wall. Three gates pierce the walls – one to the northwest, one to the west, and a third south of the river. Visitors may also arrive by the river Flarque and disembark directly onto the city's docks. Fields surround the city for a distance of about two miles. Beyond that, the land has been given mostly to pasture, interspersed with small belts of forest. The Roman tower housing the Hermitage of St. Sathojué lies a few miles to the northeast of the town proper, isolated by screening groves of trees.

The northern part of the city predates the southern, and houses its wealthier inhabitants. The buildings tend to be sturdier, taller and more luxurious. In the north west quarter, stands the newly renovated cathedral (A), formerly the town church. Most of the structure dates from the seventh century, but the transepts and bell tower are new. Both portions are been constructed of sturdy native stone. Across the square (which doubles as a market) sits the Episcopal palace (B), a handsome wooden hall with double wings. The north east quarter is principally residential, and contains the fortified townhouses of the local nobility. The primary market lies here, near the newly built chapel of St. Mary (C). Somewhat west, visitors may find the city's most reputable public house, The White Oak (D). Most of its business comes from serving wine and food to locals, but it also rents chambers on the second floor to traveling merchants.

The city's poorer inhabitants dwell mostly in the southern section of the city. Begon has grown enormously in the past decades, and most of the newcomers dwell here, in crude cottages and shanties. The town's second public house, The Gilded Toad (E), sits near the southern gate. It doubles as a brothel.

The Convent of God's Mother

This convent serves as one of the foci for the cult of the Mother. It runs a school for young noblewomen, which serves the three families. Sometimes the school lures in (and transforms) other noble daughters. The oldest matrons live here, after their roles in the world are completed, and its cloisters contain the ancient and the hideously transformed of the cults' wise women...



Getting Rid of Begon

Begon may not be to every keeper's taste considering the mess it makes of geography and history. Fortunately, keepers have several options for excising Begon from the campaign. First, they can simply reassign the major towns and personalities in Begon to neighboring regions. Eteinne and Raphael could easily be count and bishop of Rodez, Toulouse or Auvergne. (They aren't already mostly to avoid stepping on the toes of keepers already using the Abbey.) Second, keepers could assume that Begon is in fact a creation of the Adoné, carved from neighboring territories. Thus, the city of Begon could be a recent foundation, and the geography consistent with the real world. Finally, perhaps there's some reason why Begon doesn't appear in our history books or our geography. Perhaps some future event erases it from reality, along with every trace of its existence. Does the Mother become so pleased with her worshipers that she carries their great experiment off to the Dreamlands? Does the Order of St. Jerome unleash some magic so destructive that it obliterates the region? Or perhaps the world of Cthulhu: Dark Ages is not our past at all. ...

Valplacide

The Valplacide (or peaceful valley) lies to the northwest of Rodez in the county of Auvergne. At its southern mouth, the castle of the Valplacide family sits on a spur of the mountains, overlooking all paths in and out. A veritable warren, its inhabitants include the current (nominal) lord, Gérard Valplacide, his three cousins, their families, and some of the most honored matrons and sorcerers of the line. The village below serves as home to even more relations who cannot fit within the walls, and who spy on all visitors. Further up the valley, nestled in the roots of the mountains, lies the Monastery of St. Sébastien and St. Patrick, the center of the Pastores' male priesthood. In the woods to either side of the valley dwell outcasts and *oves* of monstrous appearance and often-bestial behavior, driven mad by the appearance of the Arbores in cult ceremonies. The valley's inhabitants care for these holy monsters and madmen whom the goddess has blessed.



The Monastery of St. Sébastien and St. Patrick

The Monastery of St. Sébastien and St. Patrick is the main cultic center for the Son worship. It lies near the Valplacide's village of Ozanne, at the foot of the mountains and forests that cover it. The council of priests dwells in the monastery year round, many of them horrible monsters, while the village houses many devout Pastores of both sexes. The worship here is often associated with Yig. One serpent man, Scipio, lives here, in a state of amused disdain, and another, Cicero, drops by regularly.

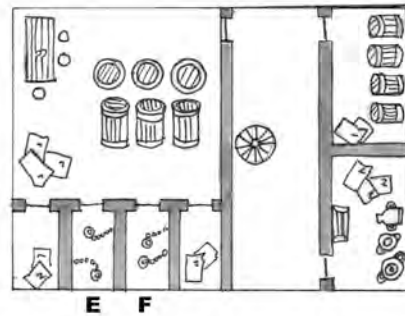
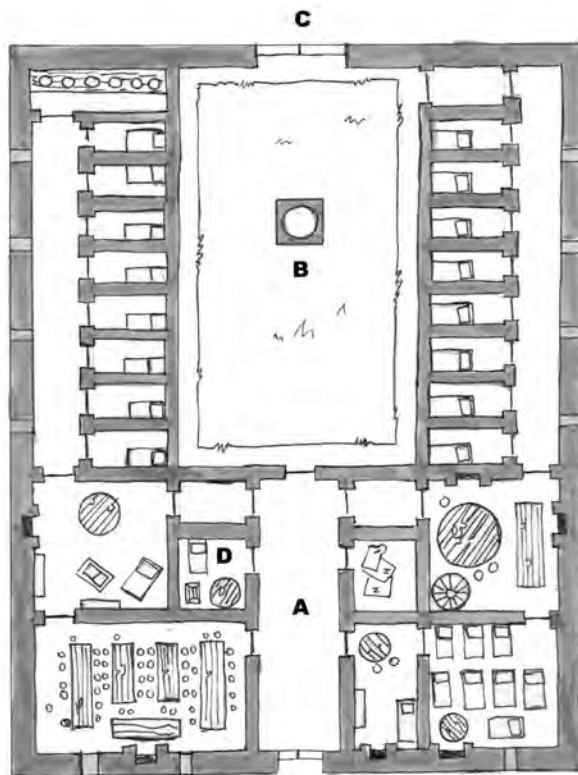
The Monastery itself is a villa in the Roman style, consisting of a main building, and two wings arrayed around a central courtyard (B). The main structure houses a small chapel, storage rooms and kitchens, and large chambers for Scipio (D) and the Abbot. The wings contain a series of cells of roughly the same size and shape, housing the monks and priests of the council. A basement area contains cells for prisoners, and storage for perishable foodstuffs.

Yearly, the monastery hosts the *transformatio* rites for young Pastores men. Young nobles travel from throughout southern France to participate, and

the event also draws the curious or devout from allied cults as well. The central ceremony is a several nights long orgy in the monastery's courtyard. The young men mate with local women, with *oves*, and with each other, fulfilling their sacred duty as symbols of the Son. Each night, Priests summon Arbores. The Arbores will pick several young men to dismember and consume. The Great Arbor selects from the victims those blessed enough to undergo rebirth in its womb. Prospective priests undergo castration in private, parallel, ceremonies.

Exham Priory

A noble family of cultists in Anglo-Saxon England supports this monastery in England. Underneath lie a series of caverns that house the more bizarre and obvious *oves*. They maintain contacts with their continental Pastores, sending the occasional noble to the festivals in the Valplacides or exchanging brides. Their version of Mother worship descends from a slightly different branch from the Pastores, however, and there are occasional theological differences between the two groups.



The Bestiary

The Pastores systematically breed and sacrifice semi-human monsters. These are originally descended from a mixture of human and *gyaa-yothn* stock, modified by controlled breeding and *transformationes semine* and *in utero*. The most common of these are flabby meat-beasts (described in Lovecraft's "The Rats in the Walls"). Their flesh is a delicacy, extends life, and still counts as human for most magical purposes. They also breed a slightly more intelligent servant class, which can barely pass for human, and quadruped mounts that also serve as beasts of burden. The latter are carnivorous, and certain sub-breeds can pass as horses when in full barding.

On lands where the Pastores have unquestioned control and secrecy, such as their mountain fastness of Matfique, they breed their *oves* openly: meat-beasts wander the fields, and *gyaa-yothn* serve as plough animals. In other places, the beasts are confined to caverns or walled estates. Peasants on or near Pastores lands disappear, and return subtly changed. (Having passed through a *transformatio in utero*.) Women may be raped or artificially impregnated by less human creatures, and peasants of both sexes are encouraged or forced to marry hybrids.

The Pastores and their allies also habitually commune with or utilize other monsters, such as the Arbores or Formless Spawn.



Arbores

The Arbores are a variant form of Dark Young. They appear as white trees with pale bark when dormant. When active, their long ropy branches come alive with movement, and their roots coil and uncoil from the earth. A Great Arbor is an even larger specimen with a single huge mouth that opens onto a transforming womb.

<i>char</i>	<i>rolls</i>	<i>average</i>
STR	4D6+30	44
CON	3D6+6	16-17
SIZ	4D6+30	44
INT	4D6	14
POW	5D6	17-18
DEX	3D6+4	16-17
HP		30-31

Move 8

Damage Bonus: +2D6

Weapons: Tentacle 80%, damage db, Trample 40%, damage 2D6+db

Armor: none

Skills: Sneak 60%, Hide in Woods 80%, Track 55%

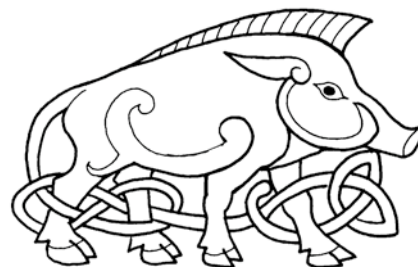
Spells: Send Dreams, + 2D6 others

Sanity Loss: 1D3/1D10 when active; 0/1D3 when dormant

Blood Eating: An Arbor's magic points are not refilled normally; rather, it requires fresh blood. It can suck 1d6 points of blood from a man-sized corpse. It can heal damage by spending one magic point per point of injury. It can produce a fruit by spending 1 magic point. Waking up costs it 1D6 magic points. Every year it loses 1D3 magic points. At 0 magic points, it can no longer awaken and it begins to take 1D3 HP damage per year.

Somnolence: When the moon is below the horizon, the Arbor slumbers. Truth be told, it slumbers most of the time unless fed a large amount of blood nightly. If encountered while slumbering, the Arbor must spend 1D6 magic points, and take 1D6 rounds to awaken.

Fruit: If a small animal is sacrificed to an Arbor, it puts forth a white fruit about the size of a melon. Eating the fruit heals 2D6 hp of damage over a period of several hours as it is digested, but opens the eater to the Arbor's influence.



Flabby Meat-Beasts

Crossbreeds designed as food stock, these bloated creatures show a marked divergence from the typical muscular *gyaa-yothn*. Docile unless provoked, they are nevertheless stronger and more durable than any bull. The expressions on their placid, humanoid faces seem oddly sad, as though they know what has been done to them. A few specimens sport horns, others have been bred smaller and leaner, resembling goats or sheep more than cattle.

<i>char</i>	<i>rolls</i>	<i>average</i>
STR	3D6+10	20-21
CON	2D6+6	13
SIZ	4D6+6	20
POW	3D6	10-11
DEX	2D6+4	11
HP		20-21

Move 12

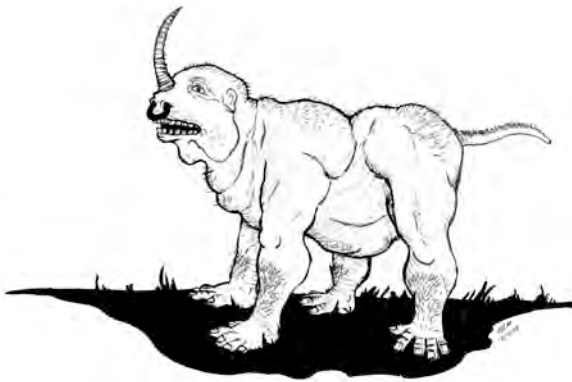
Damage Bonus: +2D6

Weapons: Bite 10%, 1D8, Kick 15%, damage 1D8+db, Trample 25%, damage 2D8+db

Armor: none

Skills: Dodge 15%, Hide 25%

Sanity Loss: 0/1D6



Formless Spawn

The Sorcerers of Tsathoggua, Rollo and his apprentices, make extensive use of Formless Spawn. See *CoC* 6th ed., p. 159.



Goblins

Many Pastores have been transformed into Children of Shub-Niggurath, also known as Goblins. See *C:DA* pp. 105-6.

Laborers

The majority of the Pastores' subjects remain human, but the gradual infusion of *gyaa-yothn* blood has transformed much of the populace. Typically, such meddling manifests as decreased intelligence, increased strength and resilience, an odd posture, and pendulous growths resembling cauliflower on the skin of the torso, limbs, and legs. Only in extreme cases does one see an animal's head on a human body or the characteristic *gyaa-yothn* horn.

<i>char</i>	<i>rolls</i>	<i>average</i>
STR	2D6+6	13
CON	3D6	10-11
SIZ	2D6+6	13
POW	3D6	10-11
DEX	3D6	10-11
INT	2D6+1	8
EDU	2D6+6	13
APP	2D6	7
SAN	3D6	10-11
HP		13

Move 8

Average Damage Bonus: +0

Weapons: none

Armor: none

Sanity Loss: none

Sacred Mares and Stallions

The Pastores knights ride to war on *gyaa-yothn* steeds; their basic stock remains similar to that of K'n-Yan, but millennia of crossbreeding with local humans and horses have eliminated the horn in most breeds, and increased the overall resemblance to a heavy war-horse. Covered in full barding, the creatures can almost pass as natural horses from a distance. In the heat of battle, the sharp carnivorous teeth and intelligent eyes give them away, and thus, the Pastores at war permit few adversaries to escape with their lives.

<i>char</i>	<i>rolls</i>	<i>average</i>
STR	3D6+20	30-31
CON	3D6+4	14-15
SIZ	4D6+12	26
POW	3D6	10-11
DEX	2D6+4	11
HP		28-29

Move 12

Damage Bonus: +2D6

Weapons: Bite 30%, 1D10, Kick 30%, damage 1d10+db, Rear/Plunge 30%, damage 2d10+db, Trample 40%, 2d8+db

Armor: none

Skills: Dodge 40%, Hide 20%

Sanity Loss: 0/1D8

Allies

The Pastores have no theological prejudices against dealing with other organizations or individuals, provided they acknowledge the existence (if not the primacy) of the Mother, and will support the Pastores' goals. They can offer other cults their military power, legal protection, land in fief, and a supply of human flesh, blood, and souls. In return they expect political support, commensurate favors of a magical nature, at least nominal deference, and wholehearted support in times of crisis. Many groups and individuals have found the arrangement sufficiently alluring (or are sufficiently desperate) to agree. As a result, the Pastores can function as an umbrella organization supporting all manner of Mythos organizations and entities that the keeper may wish to introduce to south central France.

Of course, not all Mythos entities and cults in France are willing to offer so much, to drop their veils of secrecy, or to dilute their own religious practices. Among many, the Pastores have a reputation as reckless, domineering, arrogant, and dangerously ignorant. Many other groups and entities have never heard of them, as a result of isolation, apathy or chance. (Cults are usually secret, after all, and even if, say, Ithaqua does make it down south to the Massifs Central, he's hardly likely to notice whom he's stepping on.) So keepers are also left free

to introduce whatever independent threats they wish into the Pastores' territory.

The section below describes several sample allies for the Pastores, some of whom also feature in associated scenarios. A coven of sorcerers led by a terrible Hyperborean wizard operates out of a tower near Begon. They frequently trade magical services with the Pastores Bishop Raphael in exchange for protection and support. Two serpent men reside in the Monastery of St. Sébastien and St. Patrick, coexisting rather uneasily with the worshipers of Tsathoggua. The human inhabitants of K'n-Yan still rise out from the hills of France as psychic projections. At present, the Pastores are ignorant of the travels of their ancient allies, but may reestablish contact during the course of play.

The Sorcerers of Tsathoggua

The origins of the Hyperborean wizard known as Rollo the Dane are unknown, but sometime in the early 10th century, he accepted Adoné patronage, and relocated onto their lands from his previous holdings in Normandy. His assistance proved instrumental in the capture of Begon and several nearby fiefs, and the Pastores have in turn rewarded him richly with land and goods.

Rollo appears as an old, thin man with a bald head, a pale complexion, and slightly pinched and pointed features. Immortal thanks to his spells of mental transference, and the sacred flesh of Saint Odo, Rollo comes from the wizardly lineage of Eibon. His master's master's master was said to have studied at that great wizard's foot. Indeed, in the long millennia since the fall of Hyperborea, perhaps Rollo has come to surpass Eibon himself. Certainly, he is the most powerful human the investigators are likely to meet in the course of the campaign.

The flesh of Saint Odo is the secret to Rollo's longevity, and his most prized magical artifact. Nothing less than a piece of Ubbo-Sathla itself, even a tiny speck of this magical flesh will take the form of whatever being touches it. The name Saint Odo results from a corruption of the Latin term *Obbo Sanctus*, itself a corruption of *Ubbo-Sathla*. Rollo keeps the flesh preserved in a glass jar warded about with magical sigils. It grows slowly, and every few decades, it produces enough surplus for a single duplication. The flesh creates copies of whatever life forms touch it, fully grown and in the prime of health. Rollo uses it to produce bodies for himself and his apprentices, which he then suspends in stasis until bodily death overtakes their previous form. Magical rituals ensure that their souls travel to the spare bodies for reincarnation. Rollo currently has enough extra flesh to duplicate several bodies, and may use them in inventive ways to torment investigators who annoy him. He does not, however, have enough to share with Bishop Raphael and the Pastores – a source of some tension between them, for Raphael greatly covets the flesh for use in the Pastores' breeding projects. Why Rollo always

appears aged despite repeated uses of the flesh is a mystery known only to himself.

Rollo knows all the spells listed for the *Book of Eibon*, and any others the keeper may desire. He possesses several interdimensional Mystic Portals and can also summon many types of Mythos creatures to do his bidding. He keeps permanently bound and present an enormous monster gifted to him by Tsathoggua. He and his apprentices use this creature, possibly a variant Child of Tsathoggua, as a mount. Investigators who encounter this Child will probably begin referring to it as “Sleipnir.”

Adelard and Gaspar are both relatively young, having lived only a century or less. Both appear as young men, under thirty years of age; neither is uncomely, and rumor has it that Rollo pursues unnatural vices with them. Rollo took Gaspar as apprentice some decades before he arrived in Begon, and has taught Gaspar some but not all of the *Book of Eibon*. Adelard arrived in search of a master only after Rollo settled in near Begon. Rollo’s use of the flesh of St. Odo renders them both essentially immortal, although the Order of the Sword of Saint Jerome has sought and found a way around this problem, and the investigators will get an opportunity to slay one of them in the course of the campaign. Rollo keeps the ambitions of both young men in check by withholding information from them. They know that Rollo likely has alternate bodies hidden throughout Europe and would exact a terrible revenge against any traitors. The fact that he apparently has no living graduate apprentices causes them great worry for their future.

The apprentices know a selection of spells from the Grimoire and the *Book of Eibon*. Rollo often tasks them to supervise summoned Spawn of Tsathoggua, or to carry messages mounted on his Child of Tsathoggua.

In any conflict with the investigators, Rollo will use and expend the apprentices as a first line of defense or retribution. He may also lend Adelard or Gaspar to the Pastores for certain missions, one of which might be the extermination of enemies who seem too close to discovering the truth about their cult. Gaspar and Adelard will likely attack from afar, sending Formless Spawn against the investigators in a succession of inventive and frightening ways. Both apprentices intend to live forever and thus will not likely take excessive risks against well-armed or mystically prepared opponents. Scenario III presents a fully developed chase, pitting the investigators against Adelard.

If the player characters annoy Rollo personally, perhaps by slaying one of the apprentices or invading his tower, Rollo may be willing to expend his precious Flesh of St. Odo on revenge. If the investigators leave behind any body parts, Rollo can clone their bodies and transfer their minds directly into them, or he can use the flesh to establish a connection between them, and scry on them

remotely. Scenario IV develops these frightening possibilities more fully.

Rollo the Dane, age unknown, Hyperborean Sorcerer

STR 12 CON 9 SIZ 9 INT 17 POW 30
APP 9 DEX 11 EDU 22 SAN 0

HP 9 Magic Points 30

Damage Bonus: +0

Weapons: Large Knife 45%, damage 1D6+db

Armor: Rollo’s magical protection offers him 6 points of armor vs. non-magical attacks.

Skills: Bargain 60%, Conceal 55%, Cthulhu Mythos 80%, Dodge 60%, Hide 60%, Insight 80%, Library Use 85%, Listen 60%, Natural World 85%, Navigate 75%, Occult 95%, Own Kingdom 55%, Other Kingdoms 60%, Other Language: Atlantean, Arabic, Celtic, Etruscan, French, German, Greek, Hyperborean, Latin, and others as needed 95%, Ride Horse 65%, Sciences 95%, Status 50%, Track 45%, Write Languages he knows 95%.

Spells: All from *Liber Ivonis*, plus Blindness, Become Spectral, Bind Soul, Cast out the Deafness, Devil, Compel & Contact Formless Spawn, Compel & Contact Child of Tsathoggua, Death’s Breath, Flesh Ward, Moonlight, Powder of Ibn-Ghazi, Power Drain, Shrivelling, Scrying Window, Voorish sign, Freezing Zap Ray, and as needed.

Freezing Zap Ray

Range: Sight Cost: 2 MP

Duration: Instant

Sanity: 1D6

Resistance Table: No

The author has found that the standard Cthulhu: Dark Ages damage spell, Shrivelling, has a relatively high cost for a low amount of damage. Although appropriate for magic-wielding investigators, sometimes the villains need some heavier artillery. Freezing Zap Ray fills that gap for Rollo and his apprentices. For the cost of 2 MP it produces a beam of pale blue light that radically lowers the temperature of anything it touches within line of sight, doing 2d6 damage. It ignores non-magical armor.



Gaspar the Apprentice, age 98

STR 8 CON 12 SIZ 11 INT 16 POW 18
APP 14 DEX 9 EDU 15 SAN 0
HP 12 Magic Points 18

Damage Bonus: +0

Weapons: Large Knife 50%, damage 1D6+db, Long Sword 45%, damage 1D8+db

Armor: none

Skills: Cthulhu Mythos 20%, Dodge 60%, Insight 35%, Library Use 25%, Listen 40%, Natural World 45%, Navigate 45%, Occult 55%, Own Kingdom 50%, Other Kingdoms 35%, Other Language: Latin 65%, Ride Horse 55%, Status 45%, Track 60%, Write Languages French, Latin 60%.

Spells: Become Spectral, Cast out the Devil, Compel & Contact Formless Spawn, Death's Breath, Flesh Ward, Moonlight, Power Drain, Freezing Zap Ray

Adelard the Breton, age 22

STR 14 CON 12 SIZ 10 INT 14 POW 17
APP 16 DEX 15 EDU 14 SAN 0
HP 11 Magic Points 17

Damage Bonus: +1D4

Weapons: Large Knife 55%, damage 1D6+db, Long Sword 35%, damage 1D8+db

Armor: none

Skills: Cthulhu Mythos 15%, Dodge 45%, Insight 45%, Library Use 35%, Listen 50%, Natural World 35%, Navigate 45%, Occult 50%, Own Kingdom 45%, Other Kingdoms 35%, Other Language: French 70%, Latin 55%, Ride Horse 60%, Status 45%, Track 55%, Write Languages Breton, French, Latin 60%.

Spells: Become Spectral, Cast out the Devil, Compel & Contact Formless Spawn, Death's Breath, Flesh Ward, Moonlight, Power Drain, Freezing Zap Ray

"Sleipnir", Favored of Tsathoggua

"Sleipnir" is an elephantine creature, with matted, slimy hair, bulbous eyes, pendulous tentacles, spreading bat-wings, and six legs terminating in enormous hooves. In his general form and capabilities, he greatly resembles a Child of Tsathoggua and may be a variant member of their kind. (See *The Creature Companion*, pp. 48-49.)

STR 20 CON 17 SIZ 32 INT 13 POW 16
DEX 11

Move 7/10 Flying

HP 26

Damage Bonus: +2D6

Weapons: 2D6 Tentacle 45%, damage db, Trample 35%, damage 2D10 + db, Bite 25%, damage 1D6

Armor: minimum damage from non-magic weapons

Spells: while bound, Sleipnir does not cast spells.

Sanity Loss: 1D2/1D10

Rollo's Tower

All three wizards dwell in a rebuilt Roman tower just outside the walls of Begon. To the outside world, he and his apprentices pose as monks, and the tower is known as the Hermitage of St. Sathojué. The Pastores bishop of Begon, Raphael, has assigned several local holdings to the Hermitage, and these lands provide the tower and its residents with foodstuffs and the occasional livestock. A plan of the tower follows below:

Cave System: What lonely sorcerer's tower could be complete without some serious storage space? Several natural chambers connect together into an artificially circular central area (E). There is a well here for fresh water, a circular stair for climbing into the tower, and a trapdoor for moving larger items between floors. Each side chamber features heavy wooden and iron doors. The largest such cave (D), contains stalls with which to hold *gyaa-yothn* and other abominations. If Rollo should happen to capture any of the investigators, he will confine them in chamber (A) before he does with them whatever he intends. Another side chamber (B) serves as the home of "Sleipnir," but as Sleipnir is in fact more intelligent than many humans, despite his bestial appearance, his chamber contains books, (very sturdy) furniture and other indications of his sapient status. (C) holds the clone bodies of each inhabitant in stasis. Finally, the last of these chambers (F) is in fact a tunnel that opens onto the surface. (Which is how the larger entities like Sleipnir enter and leave the premises.)

Basement: The basement of the tower consists of several linked groin-vaults. Various items are stored here – mostly foodstuffs, but whatever the keeper deems necessary, amusing, or warranted. Some suggestions: pickled or salted body parts, torture equipment, and restraints and stirrups permitting *gyaa-yothn* to mate with a human woman.

Ground Floor: The circular space of the main chamber is separated by wooden partitions to make a rear store area. In one corner lies a cooking hearth; in another, an altar is dedicated to St. Sathojué. A single round table exists for eating meals. A heavy door, with a metal lock and a large wooden brace opens onto the outside stair. No windows exist on this floor.

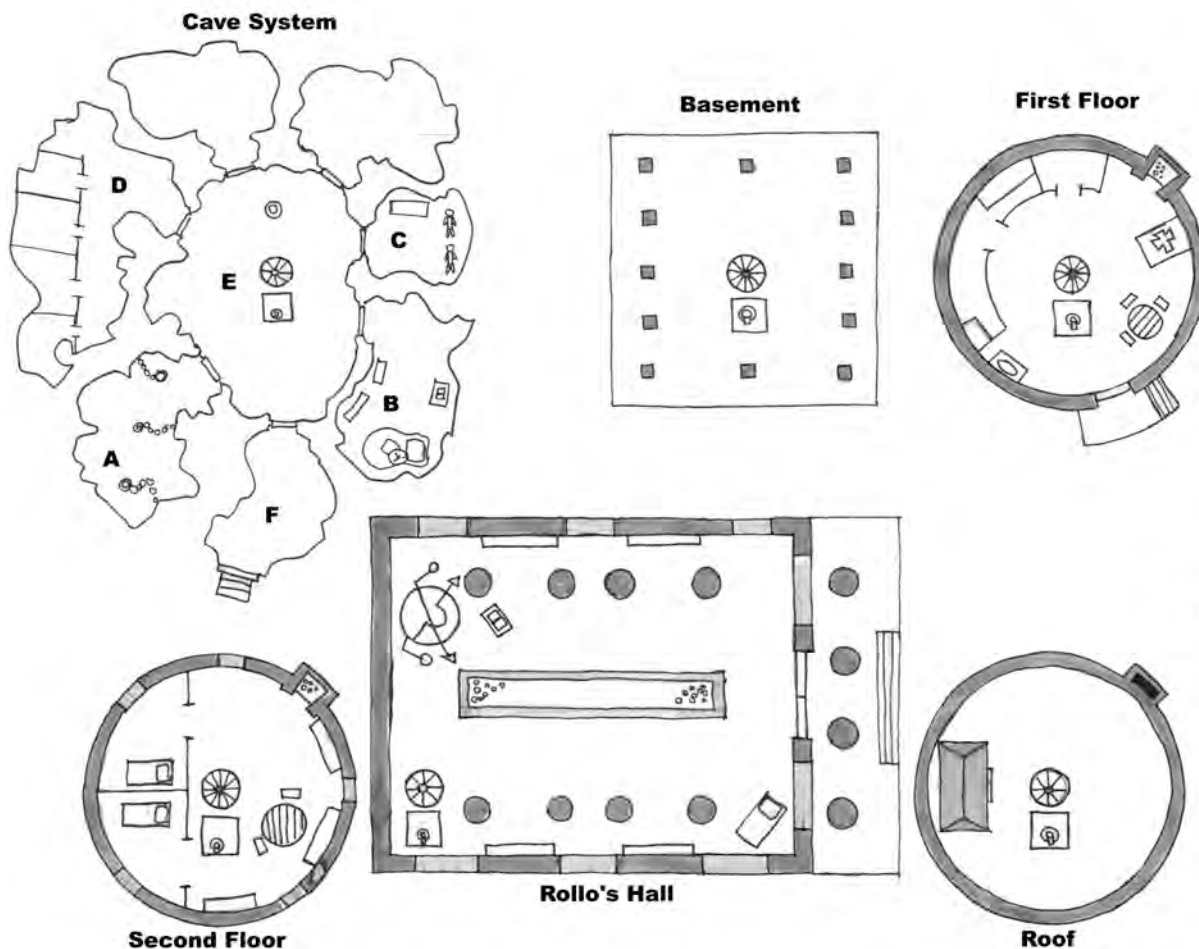
Second Floor: Interior brick walls partition half of this stage of the tower into three chambers. The main one holds a table and lectern, which Gaspar and Adelard use to study the texts Rollo permits them to read. Various magical tomes (not necessarily of Mythos origins) lie scattered about, but the most useful writings are those quires containing partial translations of *The Book of Eibon* into Latin. (Or, if the keeper feels perverse, into Adelard's native Breton.) The other two chambers serve as bedrooms for the apprentices. Any magical items the keeper may wish to introduce here should be dangerous, but not hideously so.

Third Story (Rollo's Hall): This floor belongs to Rollo, and he has enchanted it to resemble his native Hyperborea. The single chamber resembles a rectangular hall, wrought of undressed gray stone. Hardwood beams loom in the darkness above, and a central fire pit burns constantly; its fumes rise to a gap in the ceiling and thence escape. The shuttered windows, if opened, reveal a snowy landscape of tundra and pine, and if the investigators unbar and open the great double doors, they will see a set of stone steps leading down into the snow. Whether the hall and its contents exist only in illusion, or in dream, or in the past, or some combination of the three, only Rollo himself can say, but stepping over the threshold, or leaving through a window is a dangerous, and potentially, fatal act. Roll Luck for any investigator who attempts it. On a success, the investigator loses 3D6 magic points, and steps into the arctic landscape. Behind him or her, lies a stone and timber hall. On a failure, the investigator likewise loses 3D6 magic points, but is transferred to the interior of Dark Age Greenland, where the hall (and the route home) no longer appears.

In any event, the hall contains Rollo's personal items – the keeper should feel no compunctions of moderation about their rarity or lethality. Rollo certainly keeps at least one complete copy of the *Book of Eibon* here – maybe even one in a language the investigators can read. On the flagstones of the hall, Rollo creates his Mystic Portals to other times and places; investigators may or may not find one active when they arrive, depending on the circumstances. A partition of woven hangings separates Rollo's bedchamber from the main area.

Roof: The roof of the tower is flat, ringed with a chest-high crenellation. In one corner stands a small outbuilding that contains various roofing tools, and some astronomical instruments. Some of these, like the telescope and the astrolabe, are worryingly anachronistic for 10th-century Europe, and Investigators may not be able to determine their purpose or method of operation.

Shack: An old man named Philippe dwells in a shack near the tower, and provides mundane domestic work. Philippe knows much about Rollo, but is too terrified of him to speak out.



Rollo's Tower

Gaspar du Nord?

This author has deliberately intended that the name of Rollo's apprentice suggest the name of Eibon's most famous translator, the high medieval Frenchman, Gaspar du Nord. The implication is that Gaspar, somehow, survives his apprenticeship and later translates the *Book of Eibon* into French. Strictly speaking, this contradicts the established Mythos. Lin Carter's "History and Chronology of *The Book of Eibon*" recounts that the 13th century wizard Nathaire discovered a Greek translation of Eibon, and that after his demise, his apprentice, Gaspar made of it the French volume later known as the *Livre d'Ivon*. But what is history for, if not to be rewritten, or at least cast into doubt? Perhaps Lin's account is confused, perhaps Gaspar had some reason to associate with this Nathaire or perhaps Nathaire (or Gaspar) is Rollo under some other name. The important point is merely to suggest, not only that the Mythos of *Cthulhu: Dark Ages* has a past, but that it has a future, too, and perhaps an one unsettling for the long-time player.

The Serpent Men: Cicero and Scipio

The Pastores of Valplacide associate with two Serpent men, who call themselves Scipio and Cicero. Scipio resides in the Monastery of St. Patrique and St. Sébastien, where he serves as an advisor to the council of Elders, participates in ceremonies, and partakes of the Pastores' hospitality. Cicero travels the region, only occasionally stopping at the monastery to consult with his comrade and argue theology; he treats Scipio and the Pastores with disdain. Their habits and habitations stem from their differing temperaments and worldviews – as do their likely relations to investigators.

Scipio resides with (and tolerates) the Pastores because the centuries have made him old and jaded. He no longer believes that Yig favors his species, or plans to return to them dominion over the Earth. Indeed, he views the deities as little more than extensions or personifications of the blindly mechanical cosmos. (And is willing to say so to just about anyone who listens.) No longer do lust, curiosity or ambition motivate him, only a mild ennui and desire to regularly satiate his bodily needs. As such, he has long found residence with the Pastores suitable. They have provided him with food, drink, and entertainment, and in return he has worked some minor magic for them, and divulged some not particularly important mystic secrets. Their antics have amused him, and he has found their misguided worship of Shub-Niggurath no worse than any other human pretension. Lately, though, he has found their hubris increasingly grating, and has begun to wonder if he might find their failure more amusing than their success. If he encounters the investigators and finds them sufficiently interesting, he may provide them with some minor aid, just to see what happens. He certainly doesn't care what might ultimately befall

them (or anyone) as a result of his meddling, and is by no means benevolent.

Cicero still believes in Yig, in the serpent men's destiny, and in his own role in bringing it about. He travels the world looking for some hint of things to come, and of items and persons able to aid him in his quest to restore his race to power. Scipio's hedonistic association with the Pastores disgusts him, but Cicero is canny enough to use their resources for so long as he can. He would slay his fellow serpent man for apostasy, if there weren't so few comrades left, and if he didn't hold out hope for a change of heart. Cicero will not toy with investigators as Scipio might, as he is unlikely to find them the least bit amusing. He might, however, use and discard them, or manipulate them to embarrass Scipio into leaving the Pastores fold.

Both Serpent Men are potent sorcerers, with a mastery of illusion that permits them to seem human. In fact, their powers as illusionists surpass those of other serpents, and they may project their image anywhere within several dozen yards of their actual body, while remaining invisible themselves. For an additional magic point, they may project several illusions either of themselves or of other objects or persons. None of their illusions possesses solidity unless cast over a real object or person. Each Serpent Man knows many other spells (at the keeper's whim). Cicero keeps extensive contacts among the degenerate Serpent people of Europe, and particularly in the British Isles. They are each at least old enough to remember the Roman Empire, and may perhaps be even older, as the keeper wishes.

Serpent Men & the Hyperboreans

The Serpent men, Scipio and Cicero, have not forgotten the ancient enmity between their folk and the mammalian worshipers of Tsathoggua, nor that the toad-god played a hand in destroying their civilization. Cicero feels nothing but hatred for Rollo and his apprentices, and avoids them whenever possible. He may one day move against them in force, but for now deems it unwise. Scipio no longer feels anything but the most attenuated duty to anyone, and willingly discourses with Rollo and his apprentices, so long as they remain civil. Rollo remains wary of both serpents, but feels his coven could destroy either or both without great difficulty. In the meantime, he does not wish to upset his allies the Pastores, and wishes to obtain from Scipio whatever information he can. Sometime in the future he may move against the remaining serpent men, although, of course, either Yig or Tsathoggua may spur the sides to violence sooner than anyone expects. Not even Scipio would dare ignore his own god. Any conflict would shock the Pastores deeply, as they remain ignorant of any disagreements between the two incarnations of the Son.



Scipio, age unknown, Jaded Serpent Man

STR 12 CON 15 SIZ 11 INT 17 POW 13
APP (apparent) 13 EDU 20 DEX 14 SAN 0
HP 12 Magic Points 13

Damage Bonus: +0

Weapons: Bite 35%, 1D8+poison of POT 15, Small Knife 50%, damage 1D4 + db, Staff 50%, damage 1D6+db

Armor: 1 point scales

Skills: Art: Singing 60%, Conceal 60%, Cthulhu Mythos 40%, Dodge 70%*, Fast Talk 65%, Hide 65%, Insight 70%, Listen 70%, Natural World 90%, Occult 65%, Own Kingdom 65%, Other Languages French, German, Greek and Latin 90%, Other Kingdom 60%, Persuade 75%, Potions 55%, Science 90%, Sneak 80%*, Spot Hidden 75%, Status 45%, Write languages French, German, Greek and Latin 90%.

* Effectively 100% when using illusion.

Spells: Augur, Become Spectral, Bless Blade, Blindness, Cloud Memory, Compel Human, Create Limbo Gate, Create Mystic Portal, Deafness, Demon Hearing, Demon Sight, Enthrall, Fear, Levitate, Power Drain, Send Dreams, Scrying Window, Shrivelling, Pray to Yig,

Sanity Loss: 0/1D6 to see without illusions

Cicero, age unknown, Fanatic Serpent Man

STR 13 CON 11 SIZ 11 INT 16 POW 15
APP (apparent) 13 DEX 16 EDU 18 SAN 0
HP 12 Magic Points 15

Damage Bonus: +0

Weapons: Bite 35%, 1D8+poison of POT 11, Small Knife 45%, damage 1D4 + db, Short Sword 70%, damage 1D6+db

Armor: 1 point scales

Skills: Art: Singing 60%, Conceal 60%, Cthulhu Mythos 40%, Dodge 70%*, Fast Talk 65%, Hide 65%, Insight 70%, Listen 70%, Natural World 90%, Occult 65%, Own Kingdom 65%, Other Languages French, German, Greek and Latin 90%, Other Kingdom 60%, Persuade 75%, Potions 55%, Science 90%, Sneak 80%*, Spot Hidden 75%, Status 45%, Write languages French, German, Greek and Latin 90%.

* Effectively 100% when using illusion.

Spells: Augur, Become Spectral, Bless Blade, Blindness, Cloud Memory, Compel Human, Create Limbo Gate, Create Mystic Portal, Deafness, Demon Hearing, Demon Sight, Enthrall, Fear, Levitate, Power Drain, Send Dreams, Scrying Window, Shrivelling, Pray to Yig,

Sanity Loss: 0/1D6 to see without illusions

The Ghosts of Old Friends: The K'n-Yan projections

Unknown to the Pastores, the people of K'n-Yan still maintain gates to the upper world, some few of which open upon France, and their spectral projections account for some of the many Dark Age beliefs and legends regarding rides of the unquiet dead. H. P. Lovecraft's "The Mound" (ghost written for Zelia Bishop) recounts that the people of K'n-Yan possess the ability to disincorporate themselves, and in this form they still visit the surface world of the American southwest. Dwellers there often mistake their translucent forms for ghosts or other spirits.

K'n-Yan, or something much like it, also underlies Europe – this much may be presumed – and from time to time, the projections of its folk go riding there. Their translucent quality aside, the people of K'n-Yan appear human and mortal enough, albeit with an odd cast to their skin and the structure of their skulls. Even the manner of their dress is deliberately archaic in its retreat from the science they once commanded. Yet their cloaks and robes originate from an artistic tradition utterly alien to medieval Europe, and to the people of Dark Age Europe, their fabrics and ornaments appear fantastically rich in comparison with all but those of kings.

By contrast, European witnesses are likely to find the behavior of the projections puzzling, frightening, and perhaps violent. The immortal people of K'n-Yan have turned to increasingly bizarre pursuits to satisfy their jaded sensibilities. At times, they seem content merely to ride and observe. At others, they have some more elaborate game in mind. Their mental powers can affect objects at a distance, and they have demonstrated the ability to control human bodies, living or dead. In addition they enter dreams, their own or others. Only custom defines the limit of their activities, and these limits may be truly abstruse indeed.

The projections exit K'n-Yan from cave systems underlying France, and from thence travel both the air and the land. The keeper may determine the extent to which these caverns are subject to normal mapping, and how and where they connect with K'n-Yan, Yoth, or N'Kai. The direct route may lie only through Gates, the Dreamlands, or some other obstacle, and the way might prove shorter or longer at each trip. What precisely investigators might hope to gain or fear to lose during an excursion to K'n-Yan itself, and especially its inhabited centers, depends on the circumstances. Should they survive the journey they will find it hard to avoid a lifetime's enforced residence, given the inhabitants' insularity and desire for secrecy.

The people of Dark Age Europe tell many legends about night-riding spirits, which may (or may not) derive from sightings of the people of K'n-Yan. Roman, Celtic and Germanic sources alike describe mysterious spirit hosts that roam the land and sky.

Some witnesses recount that they have seen departed souls formed into terrible spectral armies. Gods, goddesses, and other figures perhaps only half-remembered or believed in, direct these rides in search of unknown quarry. Sometimes the leader is Odin, sometimes his Valkyries, sometimes Arthur, and at others a Goddess like Diana or Holde. Written sources about the phenomenon of the Wild Hunt (sometimes the Furious Host or Chase) are few and elusive for this early date, but undoubtedly existed in oral lore. The historical 10th-century cleric, Regino of Prum, condemns women who believe that they fly with the Goddess Diana through the night – a belief strikingly similar to later groups such as the Bendatti and the Sabbat of early modern witches.

The keeper may decide that some or all of these beliefs derive from or mask appearances of the people of K'n Yan. Or the keeper may use these legends as red herrings to misdirect the investigators. Later European faerie beliefs may also provide the keeper with material and misinformation – stories of inhabited regions beneath the ground, the hunting rides of faerie nobles, the belief in changelings and abductions of living humans. As most fantasy roleplayers will already know these tales in one form or another, they make a valuable resource to exploit.

The Pastores have had no contact with K'n-Yan for millennia, and indeed barely recall that their worship and knowledge originated there. They remain as unaware as the rest of the general populace of the current activities of the peoples of K'n-Yan. How they will react when or if they discover the truth depends on the wishes of the keeper. Possibly, they may attempt to revive the old alliance, an event that is unlikely but not impossible. The people of K'n-Yan are currently isolationist and xenophobic, but might consider an exchange which does not require them to leave their caverns or risk exposure. So, for example, they might exchange knowledge via dreams and projections, or send *gyaa-yothn* or other technology to the surface. In return they might want knowledge of the surface, living scholars to interview, and possibly biological samples from the *oves*. On the other hand, either the K'n-Yan or the Pastores could decide that their old allies know too much, have lapsed into heresy, or are too dangerous to tolerate. The K'n-Yan currently abhor the worship of Tsathoggua, and this could be another source of friction between them. Neither side has the resources or will to invade the heartland of the other, but each could send dreams, projections, monsters or spells against an enemy. The most likely result, after some initial hostilities, would be for one faction or the other to seal the caverns between K'n-Yan and France permanently, preventing further contact.

Other Cults

The Pastores cultivate and encourage goddess worship and the veneration of female saints among the population, both inside and outside of the territories. Even in our own history, there are instances where pre-Christian religious practices survived the conversion, albeit transformed to fit the new religion. For example, many female medieval saints were believed to bless the sowing of grain, and their rites retained features of pre-Christian ritual, such as processions involving carts, perambulation of fields, and singing of popular songs. Interested keepers should consult Pamela Berger's *The Goddess Obscured*. The Pastores view such rites benevolently, and their agents within the Church from time to time act to protect them against clerical criticism. Peasant communities who find their local beliefs under scrutiny may know of the name of friendly, if distant priests who can intercede for them with their bishop. The peasants themselves, of course, knowing nothing about the darker nature of their benefactors, may nevertheless stymie investigators' efforts against the Pastores.

Adding the Black Man

The Black Man, avatar of Nyarlathotep, does not form a part of Pastores worship as presented here. Their theology, derived primarily from classical antecedents, contains no room for a devil-figure. Likewise, such later elements as the Sabbat or the Pact play little role in Early Medieval conceptions of witchcraft. Nevertheless, the Black Man, as Devil or Avatar of Nyarlathotep, represents a seminal element in Lovecraft's image of sorcery, and has become a significant part of Shub-Niggurath's worship as well. Therefore the keeper may wish to include the Black Man as part of the Pastores' setting, either as an element of the local cults with whom the Pastores associate, or as part of the Pastores' theology itself. The easiest solution for the latter is to include the Black Man as an avatar of the Son, an initiatory figure who leads potential worshipers to the Mother's side and instructs them in Her worship. A more radical reworking might involve the Black Man as part of a trinity – Father, Mother and Son – to counter and blaspheme against the Christians' Father, Son and Holy Ghost. Perhaps it is no mistake that Shub-Niggurath manifests not only as a nebulous cloud, but even as a tongue of fire or as a dove.



Enemies

The Pastores can also count many enemies, although not all of these know the nature of their foe. Some or all of these may eventually become the allies of the investigators – or possibly their enemies. The enemy of an enemy is not always a friend. ...

The Aristocracy

The Adoné have greatly enriched their political power and landed wealth during the 10th century, and most of those gains came at the expense of other noble families. Some, doubtless, have become extinct, or have entered the Adoné fold through marriage, but many dispossessed lines still exist, nursing memories of their former wealth, and dreaming of revenge. Given the connection between noble families, and the time since the early conquests, families as far away as the Empire might now harbor claims to Adoné territories. Moreover, the Adoné's sphere of influence extends farther than their direct control – many of their vassals are at best unwilling subordinates, defeated and humbled into swearing loyalty. If the Adoné seem weak, or suffer military defeat, their vassals will probably desert them either piecemeal or en masse.

The Clergy

The Adoné have made many enemies, collective and individual, among the clergy. Their conquests have disrupted the ownership of chapels and churches throughout the region, and many abbey and individual clergymen detest them for taking away revenue and income. In addition, some clergy have noticed the changes the Adoné have made to the liturgy and devotional practices on their lands. Not every priest is willing to accept the cover story that these are legitimate practices imported from the Adoné's homeland, nor that the peculiar saints the family venerates originated in the Christian tradition. Not even the Adoné can silence or intimidate all of their clerical detractors, especially when they flee into other jurisdictions.

The bishops of Toulouse and of Rodez both have cause to resent the bishop of Begon. Before the Adoné conquered Begon in the 930's, the town was insufficiently large or important to support its own bishop, and it fell under the authority and jurisdiction of Toulouse. After the conquest, it became the center of the Adoné's holdings, growing rapidly in size and importance, until the Adoné finally pushed for the establishment of a see for Begon. They proposed that most of most of the new Bishop's territories come from the see of Toulouse, with some of its eastern fringes to be carved from Rodez's see. Both Toulouse and Rodez objected strongly to the Begon see's creation, but they found themselves outmaneuvered in both a local synod called to address the issue, and then by the papal curia itself.

Recently, the Bishop of Toulouse has begun to oppose the Adoné on other grounds. The reports of

heterodoxy and blasphemy which have reached his ears have convinced him that the Adoné represent a dire threat to Christendom itself. Select envoys travel among the nobles and clergy, in hopes of establishing a coalition of those opposed to the Adoné. So far the bishop's efforts have largely failed. He holds scant power in the county of Begon, can offer little to potential allies. Most observers have mistaken the Bishop of Toulouse's motives for political rivalry and revenge, a prelude to stripping Begon of its see. Indeed, this forms part of the bishop's plans, and he cannot defend his motives in public, for he fears to reveal his true fears to all but his closest allies.

Yet the bishop's plans have not been entirely without fruit. His inner circle of advisors collects and reports to him the doings of the Adoné, and in time they might accumulate enough evidence to sway the Pope or the other bishops. Alas, they and their master might perish first – the Adoné already plot the bishop's death. They await only a proper opportunity to dispose of him without tipping their hand. The bishop might surprise their sorcerers when the time comes, for unknown to him, some of his allies possess magical resources of their own.

The Order of the Sword of Saint Jerome

The Order of the Sword of Saint Jerome (fully described in *The Abbey*) discovered the existence of the Pastores in the late 940s, after an encounter between a travelling brother of the Order and a Pastores priest. The brother reported to his superiors and the Order assembled a party of monks. None of the members survived the attempted retaliatory strike. Deducing the magnitude of the threat, the Order has since played a waiting game, observing its new enemy. It now knows that only a truly concerted effort can exterminate the Pastores, and works towards that goal. It has gradually increased its presence in and around Begon. The Bishop of Toulouse, not knowing the Order's true nature, has nevertheless accepted its brothers' help on occasion, and in 959 granted them the Convent of Saint Savior as a base of operations.

Formerly a Benedictine house, and nominally one still, the Convent was founded by the bishop's grandfather, and has long been associated with his family. It had fallen into disrepair, and housed only a few older monks, when the bishop reassigned it to the order and appointed a new Abbot. The convent houses perhaps a dozen monks of the Order of the Sword of St. Jerome and another half-dozen Benedictines. The latter typically serve as cover for the former, and all dress and act as Benedictines. The current Abbot of the Convent of St. Savior is one Quentin, who has previously distinguished himself in such notable incidents as the case of the Toad of Lyons. Of advanced years, he serves the Order primarily as an administrator, a diplomat, and a sometime sorcerer. His esoteric knowledge does much to make the convent the safe haven it is.

The Order can serve as an ally or a foil for the investigators. The investigators might be Order members assigned to Begon, in which case they will have full access to the Order's resources, but be subject to its commands. The Order might also take an interest in those who have encountered the Adoné. Quentin may decide to offer lay investigators support, presenting himself as the head of a network of clerics concerned about the Pastores' threat. He will not reveal the existence of the greater Order and its purpose to outsiders unless they have thoroughly proven themselves. If the keeper prefers a darker, more sinister Order, perhaps it resents the investigators' activities as an encroachment on its prerogatives. Perhaps it fears that they will put the Pastores on guard, or otherwise interfere with its long-term plans. It might seek to silence unwanted and uncontrollable third parties by force, or discover what they know through kidnapping and torture. Or perhaps the Order itself has been subverted by the Pastores, and they hope to use the investigators as dupes to flush out as many of their opponents as possible.

Abbot Quentin, age 55

STR 11 CON 12 SIZ 11 INT 16 POW 14
APP 13 DEX 9 EDU 17 SAN 60
HP 12 Magic Points 14

Damage Bonus: +0

Weapons: Small Knife 40%, damage 1D4 + db, Staff 50%, damage 1D6 + db, Long Sword 60%, damage 1D8 + db

Armor: none

Skills: Accounting 50%, Bargain 50%, Cthulhu Mythos 40%, Natural World 45%, Occult 65%, Own Kingdom 60%, Other Language: German 55%, Italian 50%, Latin 80%, Other Kingdoms 60%, Persuade 75%, Ride Horse 60%, Spot Hidden 50%, Status 55%, Write Languages: Latin 70%.

Spells: Augur, Cast Out Devil, Cloud Memory, Dismiss Spirit, Heal, Moonlight, Nyhargo Dirge, Powder of Ibn-Ghazi, Seal of Nephren-Ka

Using the Pastores in Play

The Pastores have been designed so that keepers may use them in several ways. Scenarios involving individual Pastores or their associated monsters can be easily inserted into ongoing campaigns in southern France (or, indeed, anywhere in Europe) with only minimal adjustment. The investigators need never know whether the cultists or monsters they combat are part of a greater organization, and the keeper is free to make the Pastores as large or small a threat as needed.

Alternatively, the Pastores can form a larger connecting arc in a campaign. Isolated encounters lead naturally to the discovery of the overall Pastores organization. Any sort of cult or monster may form part of the Pastores' umbrella organization, and the

keeper may tie encounters that initially seemed unconnected back to the main cult structure. Such a conspiracy may add verisimilitude to the campaign world, as the underlying logic behind the investigators' foes slowly reveals itself.

The keeper can also run a campaign somewhere between these two extremes, alternating genuine Pastores encounters with other Mythos horrors, or perhaps alternating the Pastores with another thematic element. For example, the keeper could emphasize the conflict between the Pastores their reluctant allies, and the many neutral Mythos entities in France. Or if the investigators travel widely, the Pastores might threaten them only when they must cross through southern France on other missions.

Ending the Pastores Threat

If the Pastores are to form a major element in the campaign, the keeper should give thought to how the investigators might ultimately defeat them. Historically, a combination of factors brought an end to the lawless raiding and depredation that characterized 10th-century France. Foremost among these was the so-called Peace of God movement. The population of the region, tired of abuses, rallied around their monasteries and sacred relics. The clergymen declared violence and robbery off-limits on certain days, and local militias enforced the increasingly comprehensive calls for peace. Simultaneously, the higher nobility and the crown began to consolidate their power, putting an end to freelance violence. If the history of Cthulhu: Dark Ages proceeds along the same lines as our own history, then the Pastores' gamble for power will ultimately fail in the face of such opposition, and like other violent petty nobles, the Church and its peace will bring the Adoné to heel. Such a solution, however, puts the end of the Pastores several decades into the future. Does this mean the investigators are doomed to failure?

Keepers and investigators have several options for a more immediate resolution. The Pastores possess enough political and religious power that only armed force is likely to suppress them, but the Adoné have annoyed a sufficient number of enemies that a determined group (like the investigators) could bring them together in a coalition. If the investigators can unite the Bishop of Toulouse, the Order of the Sword of St. Jerome, and several local nobles, (and keep them alive in the face of magical opposition) such a force would be sufficient to squash the Adoné, or at least drive them into hiding. This alliance might in fact be the origin of the Peace of God movement if the victors turn their hand to fixing other ills after defeating their devilish adversaries. A victorious Church or Order would have reason to suppress the truth about the Adoné, accounting for their absence from the history books.

If the keeper chooses this option, the difficulty lies in selecting scenarios in which the investigators can continue to act as a small, secretive group. In the

author's experience, large battles tend to make dull role-playing, and an emphasis on open violence tends to be detrimental to an atmosphere of horror. Perhaps the Order wishes to hide the supernatural character of their foes, and will commit lay nobles only to "normal" battles, leaving specialists like the investigators to deal with major strongholds and powers. Or perhaps magical interference or an urgent mission conspires to keep the investigators away from the climactic battle, leaving them to deal with the more sinister and clandestine aftermath hunting down fleeing Pastores and perhaps discovering that even with the Adoné defeated, the other branches of the Cult still exist in secret.

The keeper has other, more outré options to consider. Perhaps the Pastores will prove victorious. With Begon county as their base, the Adoné could well proceed to dominate other regions. In our history, Hugh Capet succeeds the last of the Carolingians as king of France, and his descendants ultimately establish a stronger, more centralized monarchy. In *Cthulhu the Dark Ages*, the Adoné might rival, or defeat, Hugh, leading to a Mythos monarchy in the Kingdom of the Franks. (For a further conspiratorial twist, make the Adoné descended from the Merovingian bloodline ...) Neither Begon county nor the Adoné exist in our history, but they do in this setting. Perhaps some terrible calamity will erase them from reality, taking their pesky foes the investigators with them. Maybe the investigators must choose between an ultimate sanction that will slaughter innocents and permitting the Pastores to grow and thrive.



A Pastores Glossary

Arbor, plural *Arbores*. (Latin, "Tree"). A variant form of Dark Young which attend the Pastores.

Arbor Magna, or Great Arbor. (Latin, "Great Tree"). A huge Arbor which transforms Pastores in its womb.

Adoné. (From "Adonis".) The most active and open of the Pastores families.

Begon. An imaginary town and county in France.

Filius, The Son. (Latin, "Son"). In Pastores theology, the sacrificed and transformed male principle.

Fils de Yubé. (French, "Sons of Yeb.") The oldest Pastores family, less active than the Adoné, less reclusive than the Valplacides.

Magna Mater, Great Mother, The Mother. (Latin, "Great Mother.") The Roman fertility Goddess. In Pastores terminology, Shub-Niggurath.

Mt. Matrifex. A territory held by the Fils de Yubé in the Massif central. Houses an extensive underground cavern system.

Otho, St. (French, corruption of "Ubbo-Sathla"). A Pastores Christianization of Ubbo-Sathla.

Ovis, plural *oves*. (Latin "sheep"). A Pastores term referring to the population of normal humans, transformed humans, and gyaa-yothn under their protection and rule.

Patrick, St. A Christian saint responsible for converting the Irish, and believed to have cast all snakes from that island. Used by the Pastores to represent the Son, and Yig.

Pastor, plural *pastores*. (Latin, "shepherd.") The name by which the Shub-Niggurath cultists of Southern France refer to themselves, emphasizing their role as shepherds over the rest of humanity.

Sathjué, St. (French, "Saint Tsathoggua") A Pastores Christianization of Tsathoggua.

Sébastien, St. An early Christian Martyr pierced by arrows, used by the Pastores to represent the Son.

Transformatio. (Latin, "Transformation") Any of several Pastores rites which alter the human form.

Valplacides. (French, "peaceful valley") The "middle" Pastores family, highly reclusive and mystical. Also their home territory.

Pastores Scenario I: *The Tree with White Fruit*



“With the counsel and advice of the latter persons, Boniface in their presence attempted to cut down, at a place called Gaesmere, a certain oak of extraordinary size called in the old tongue of the pagans the Oak of Jupiter. Taking his courage in his hands (for a great crowd of pagans stood by watching and bitterly cursing in their hearts the enemy of the gods), he cut the first notch. But when he had made a superficial cut, suddenly, the oak's vast bulk, shaken by a mighty blast of wind from above crashed to the ground shivering its topmost branches into fragments in its fall.”

From The Life of St. Boniface¹

In this short scenario, the investigators must save a small village from the depredations of a recently awakened Pastores monster. The forest near the village of Les Pins was once the site of a Pastores cult center, of which all that remains is a single dormant Arbor. The village priest, a secret Pastor, watches over the sleeping creature and ministers to the ignorant inhabitants who venerate the creature, naming it the Tree with White Fruit. Unfortunately, a travelling monk has recently broken the idyllic status quo by attacking the “pagan idol.” The enraged Arbor awoke and slew him, and it now preys on the villagers for their healing blood. Even as the investigators set out in search of the missing monk, the Pastores dispatch their own agent to ensure their Arbor comes to no harm.

“The Tree with White Fruit” is designed to introduce new investigators to the themes and plot elements associated with the Pastores. The investigators will encounter a castrated Pastor priest and a signature Pastores monster, and by the scenario’s end should have learned a little about the group’s beliefs. The investigators should be tantalized by the secrets they uncover. By the end of the scenario, they will know that some cult exists in the region, but remain ignorant of its extent, purpose, and motive. The scenario will prove less challenging for experienced investigators, or those who have encountered the Pastores previously. For such investigators, the keeper may wish to employ additional complications, such as more powerful, numerous, or recurring adversaries. With minimal adaptation, the scenario also functions well as a one-shot or as an isolated incident in a campaign that does not focus on the Pastores.

¹ Trans. C. H. Talbot, in *The Anglo-Saxon Missionaries in Germany, Being the Lives of SS. Willibrord, Boniface, Leoba and Lebuin together with the Hodoepericon of St. Willibald and a selection from the correspondence of St. Boniface*, (London and New York: Sheed and Ward, 1954). (<http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/basis/willibald-boniface.html>)



Brother Gilles is Missing

The keeper should present some plausible reason for the investigators to set off in search of Brother Gilles. Their motivation will depend on the needs of the campaign and nature of the characters, but most likely, the investigators' mutual lord or other important NPC charges them with mission. Alternatively, one or more investigators may know Brother Gilles personally, in which case they probably need only news of his disappearance to set them in motion. Some example introductions follow; keepers may choose between them or ignore them, as they like:

1) The investigators' contact is Lord Alphonse de Vallés, from *The Abbey*. The investigators should all be members of his household, if they are warriors or scholars, or inhabitants of Vallés if they are not. Alphonse calls them into his hall, a wooden fortress outside of Vallés. After preliminary greetings, Alphonse informs them that Brother Gilles has gone missing. About a month ago, Alphonse dispatched Gilles to Clermont with an urgent message, but he has now learned from his contact that Gilles never arrived. Investigators with ties to Alphonse's court have likely met Brother Gilles on occasion, and remember him as a deeply pious monk whom Alphonse employed as a scribe, counselor, and sometime chaplain.

2) The investigators' contact is the Bishop of Toulouse. The investigators' party should have at least one cleric; the rest of the party may also be clergy but equally could be drawn from the many knights or commoners in the Bishop's service. The bishop summons them to his Episcopal residence near the cathedral. There he informs them that about a month ago, he dispatched Gilles to Clermont with an urgent message, but he has now learned from his contact that Gilles never arrived. Investigators with ties to the bishop's court have likely met Brother Gilles on occasion, and remember him as a deeply pious monk whom the bishop employed as a counselor and messenger. Investigators aware of the bishop's conflict with the Pastores may suspect that cultists murdered Gilles while on a mission.

3) The investigators' contact is Abbot Quentin of the Order of St. Jerome. The investigators should be clergy or pious layfolk. They need not all be members of the Order. Quentin may be testing potential allies and recruits, or he may simply be short-handed. If the investigators are all male, Quentin calls them into his chambers. If the party contains any women, he meets them in the Abbey's church. He informs them that about a month ago, he dispatched Gilles to Clermont with an urgent message, but he has now learned that Gilles never arrived. He tells members of the Order that Brother Gilles had been seeking allies in Clermont, and that the Pastores may have murdered Gilles to prevent the formation of an alliance. Investigators with ties to the Monastery of St. Savior have likely met Brother

Gilles on occasion and remember him as a deeply pious monk whom the Bishop employed as a counselor and messenger. Members of the Order know Gilles as an experienced member of the *Apertum Malus*.

Whatever the circumstances, the investigators contact requests, orders, or hires them to discover Gilles's fate. They must retrieve him, if he lives, or if he has died, avenge him. The contact then assigns two NPCs to accompany the investigators on the journey. The first is Reynauld, a huntsman. Some of the investigators may know Reynauld as a competent, taciturn woodsman. The second companion is Vincent, a young knight. In the case of Alphonse or the Bishop, Vincent is their benefactor's nephew. If the investigators have the Order of the Sword of St. Jerome as their contact, Vincent is Gilles' cousin. Gilles comes from noble stock and his relative cannot with honor fail to accompany the investigators. Whatever the circumstances, Vincent's presence should be less than reassuring. Although trained and equipped as a knight, Vincent has a local reputation as a hotheaded and foolish young man.

The investigator's contact fulfills any reasonable request for supplies and monies. This includes mounts appropriate to the investigators' status: horses for nobility, mules or donkeys for clergy, perhaps a cart or pack animal for commoners. Warriors who cannot supply their own arms can ask for a weapon, shield and (perhaps) inexpensive cloth or leather armor. The party's leader, if not obviously wealthy, may request a small purse of silver to pay for travel expenses.

The Journey

The season is January, so the investigators should find travel difficult. The keeper should emphasize the winter elements, particularly once the party reaches the mountains. Where there is no ice and snow, there is melt-water and mud. Any precipitation soaks through the investigators' traveling garments. If the party must camp outdoors, the nights are unbearably cold. Most of the region is covered in forest, where dark trunks contrast with the white snow, and there is the sound of melt water dripping and snow falling.

On the second day, the investigators notice a horseman following them. As he draws closer, they see that he is a knight in a chainmail hauberk, helmet, and armed with shield, spear and sword. His mount is barded with long skirts as if for war. The keeper should give the investigators sufficient time to panic or make preparations for battle, perhaps setting the encounter in a threatening location such as a deep forest or an empty, abandoned field. In fact, the investigators need not be concerned, for the knight is peaceable. As he rides near, he hails them, asking if Vincent rides with them. Vincent, for his part, recognizes the knight as Philippe de Fils de Yubé and rides out to embrace him.

Vincent and Philippe then speak together for a few moments. Philippe apologizes for his lateness, saying that “the old man almost wouldn’t tell me where you’d gone.” Vincent for his part is delighted that Philippe will travel with them. Suspicious investigators may try to send Philippe away, but Vincent will not hear of it. Reynauld for his part avers that it cannot hurt to have another armed companion on the trip. If the investigators insist that Philippe leave, Vincent threatens to ride away with him. In any event, Philippe (with or without Vincent) continues to follow them a distance.

Philippe soon proves himself a nuisance. He has brought a skin of spiced wine that he insists Vincent share. (But he does not offer it to anyone else.) He and his friend ride closely together, laughing drinking and singing lewdly. Philippe is openly contemptuous of any commoners in the party and may even insist that lower status investigators see to his menial needs. He flirts with any youthful or attractive investigators (male or female) and pays no respect to any clergy. Although Vincent was reasonably polite before Philippe’s arrival, under the influence of his friend, he behaves almost as badly. Philippe and Vincent behave mercilessly if the party stops in any villages or inns, perhaps committing minor violence against the party’s hosts, and generally sewing ill-will and annoyance. If confronted by a social equal or an objection they cannot avoid, the two restrain their behavior, but they always seek opportunities for mischief. At night, the two share a bed, perhaps joined by any sexual conquests. Although the investigators do not know it, Philippe’s behavior reflects his upbringing in the Pastores cult. As a young man he is encouraged to live up his part as a representative of the Son fertility symbol.

Brother Gilles did not take the main route to Clermont. By stopping at the villages along the way, and asking around, investigators can learn that he took a side road over the foothills to save time. This side road is in even worse condition than the main one, and, as the elevation rises, winter obstacles make travel even more difficult. The keeper can impose other inconveniences as needed – bandits, snow slides, or fallen trees. Three villages lie on the path. The first, St. Martin’s, sits a day’s travel from the main road. The second, Les Pins, lies two days into a thick forest. The third, Ninnoc, sits another day’s travel at the far junction with the main road. The inhabitants of St. Martin’s remember that a monk passed through the village about a month previously. At Les Pins, Brother Gilles stayed the night in the church, and left the following morning. The innkeeper at Ninnoc does not recall having seen a monk at all. Therefore, Brother Gilles must have vanished somewhere between Les Pins and Ninnoc.

Layout and Personages of Les Pins

The investigators will likely visit Les Pins twice, once as they travel through on Brother Gilles’ trail, and then returning after they discover that he disappeared there. Keepers should endeavor not to reveal the place’s importance on the first visit, but describe it well enough that there is no confusion on the second.

Les Pins, a tiny village of less than 50 souls, contains 12 houses and a church. They people are mostly woodsmen and charcoal-burners with a few farmers. They possess a special right that permits them to hunt and gather in the forest, provided they keep poachers away.

The village of Les Pins was long ago an outpost of the Pastores cultists, who tended to a sacred Arbor. The fruit of this tree had miraculous healing properties, but it required blood sacrifices twice a year. During the Carolingian purge, the cult had to abandon the site for lack of manpower. None of the current villagers are Pastors, but the priest is a Pastor in disguise. There is no inn or other public house in the village. The investigators must stay in the house of a peasant family or in the church with father Pierre.

Fields: The land about the village has been cleared to a distance of about half a mile in all directions. Most of this space consists of fields and pasturage. The only exceptions are a thin margin between the field boundaries and forest and the open space of the road. Given the season, the land lies and covered in drifts of snow and ice.

Pig Sty (C): The villagers keep many pigs. During the appropriate season, they let them wander in the forests, seeking acorns and other food there. Following the fall slaughter, the remaining two dozen animals are kept corralled by a wooden fence.

The Mulch Pile (E): This enormous pile of organic garbage rests in a declivity near the outskirts of the village, somewhat near the church. A Spot Hidden roll discovers that it has been disturbed recently. Digging uncovers Brother Gilles’ body. (See below.)

The Church (A): This small stone structure sits at a slight remove from most the village proper. It is low and squat, poorly constructed of undressed stone. It has a large central chamber used for worship, and a smaller space behind the altar in which Father Pierre dwells, and from which he can access the structure’s truncated tower. The only entrance and exit is through the main oaken doors.

Cottages: The village proper consists of 11 cottages, huddled together in a tight cluster, granting more space for the fields. Each has only one to two rooms into which crowd entire families and their livestock. Most have a small vegetable garden attached.

Simone's Cottage (B): The cottage of the local witch stands apart from the other village dwellings, but is slightly more spacious, and features an extensive herb garden.

The Forest Paths: A path leads away into the forest northwards from the village. It splits several times along its length, leading to different parts of the forest. One of the branches leads to the Tree with White Fruit. Any villager except the youngest children can say which one.

The most important man in the village is the priest, Father Jean. Short, thin and wizened, with a bald, birdlike head, he has ministered to the village's spiritual needs for nearly forty years. He is not native to Les Pins, and has a slight Auvergnian accent. Some of the villagers, being very insular, refer to him as "the latest foreign priest." His manner is kind and understanding, if uneducated. Father Jean is a castrated Pastor cultist. He tends the Tree, and sacrifices an animal every so often. He has not shared any of the Pastores' peculiar theology with the villagers, but he has instructed the villagers on how

to obtain and use the fruit, and several of them have partaken of it when injured. He publicly justifies any heterodox beliefs in the village as "old customs. I couldn't make them stop believing, so I stopped trying."

The second most important member of the community is Simone, the village wise-woman. She provides minor healing (magical and mundane) to those villagers who do not trust the Tree. Simone comes from the village, but received her training in Ninnoc from the now-deceased Mother Griseldé. From her old mistress, Simone learned a distrust of the Tree and its magical fruit. Jean has long worked to turn the villagers against Simone, but so far has not succeeded in having her expelled as her skills as midwife and auger are too well respected. The arrival of the investigators may change the situation.

Finally, there is Michael, the nominal village headman. He dispenses local justice, settles disputes, organizes communal work, and collects taxes for the lord. In matters relating to outsiders, he defers utterly to Jean.



What Really Happened

About a month ago, Brother Gilles arrived in Les Pins on his journey to Clermont. He asked his fellow cleric, Father Jean, for lodging in the church, which Jean reluctantly granted. A few hours later, an accident befell Herbert, and his fellow woodcutters carried him to his house. Simone tried and failed to heal him, and so the villagers sent for Father Jean while Margaret went for the Fruit. Brother Gilles, in the church with Jean, insisted on accompanying him. At Herbert's house (D), he witnessed the miraculous cure. Greatly disturbed, the pious Brother Gilles spoke with several villagers, and learned about the Tree. In the church, he found Jean's copy of the *Liber fructatis*, and on reading it, resolved to destroy the Tree.

The next morning, while Jean was away, Gilles departed the village, taking with him the *Liber fructatis*. The book was too large to fit in the saddlebags, so he had to strap it to the saddle. Once well away from the village, he took his mule into the woods and tied it to a tree. Then he cut across country, looking for the Tree. As he did not know exactly where it stood relative to the road, it took him several hours to find it, so that it was now well after noon.

Brother Gilles tried to cut down the Tree, but found that his axe cuts closed as he made them. He then gathered wood and set about the Tree's roots, planning to burn it to the ground. To his surprise and horror, it flailed at him with its branches. Shielding himself with the heavy *Liber fructatis*, he managed to escape. Wounded, he made his way down the trails, and after several wrong turns, found Les Pins after night had fallen. He staggered up to the church, unseen by any but Father Jean. As Gilles related his story to his fellow cleric, Jean drew out a knife, and stabbed the wounded man to death. He then hid the corpse under the mulch pile, and locked the *Liber fructatis* into the chest. When the tinkers passed through, he used them to send a message to his contacts in the Pastores cult, requesting urgent aid.

The Tree, long dormant and nearly exhausted of energy, began to put forth its power onto those who had partaken of its Fruit. The process will soon come to fruition, transforming them one by one into servants to bring it nourishing blood.

Meanwhile, Brother Gilles' mule, forgotten, died of thirst where it was tied.

Investigation in Les Pins

From the villagers, investigators can easily learn that Brother Gilles passed through Les Pins a month before. The arrival of any stranger in a village so small is itself a noteworthy occurrence, and the only other travelers since harvest-time were some traveling tinkers a fortnight ago. So any number of villagers are happy to tell the following story to the investigators. Brother Gilles arrived at the village in the late afternoon and stayed with the priest, Father Jean at the Church. That evening, Father Jean and Brother Gilles went out to visit Herbert, a woodsman who was injured the day before. The following morning, Brother Gilles departed for Ninnoc. Several villagers saw him leaving. He had a book tied to the saddle of his mule. The villagers truthfully claim ignorance of his later fate. The villagers can suggest a few of the more obvious dangers a traveler in winter might meet on the road – snowfalls, wolves, brigands from Ninnoc, etc.

The Road

If the investigators search along the road itself for signs of Brother Gilles' body, they find nothing. If they make a thorough investigation of the forest along the road, have them make a roll for Track or Spot Hidden. About an hour's travel from Les Pins, a few yards into the woods, lies the frozen corpse of Brother Gilles' mule. The corpse shows no signs of violence, but is tied quite firmly to a tree, from which it seems to have tried and failed to pull away. In its pack, along with food and other traveling items, there are two sealed letters addressed to persons in Clermont. There is no book. A Medicine roll reveals that that the mule died of thirst. A search of the forest does not uncover any sign of wolves or bandits, but might find the corpse of a stag—mutilated and twisted as if wrung by giant hands.

The Church

A search of the church reveals nothing of interest, unless the investigators pry open the locked chest in Father Jean's room. In it, they find a battered book, covered in blood, with its spine crushed, and its pages torn. Villagers recognize it as the book Brother Gilles carried with him. The book is the *Liber Fecunditatis*, a Pastores book, which Father Jean brought with him to Les Pins decades ago.



The Book Fragments:

The Tree with White Fruit destroyed most of Father Jean's copy of the *Liber Fecunditatis* when it attacked Brother Gilles. It is badly torn and covered in Brother Gilles' blood, but those fragments that are legible are included in the handout below. The fragments do not constitute a complete Mythos text, but reading them costs 1 SAN nonetheless.

...The tree is the mother's gift to the son, and its fruit is life. In return, when asked the pious son gives back his life to his mother through the Tree, or the life of others. Care for the tree and water it with blood. When it calls...

...sleeps. The life of wild animals feeds it, who sleep under its boughs, and of birds who nest in its branches, and men and the sheep once were men, who eat of its fruit and are healed. The knife...

...The influence of the moon is strong upon it, for it is of the mother. When the moon gives light, then it walks as it desires....

...its fruit is like the moon, silver with its influence. Let its flesh be the flesh of those who eat it, awakened at its call...

...transformation is the glory of the Son...

Here it is in Latin. Keepers may want to give the English version only to the players of investigators who speak Latin, and give the foreign language version to those who do not.

...arbor a matre filio donum, & fructus eius uita est; in compensatione apud aborem, filius pius rogatus uitam suam matris eius redonabit; uel vita autrum. Collate arborem illam & sanguine spargate...

....dormat. Uita ferarum illum nutrit, qui dorment sub brachios, & auum, qui in brachios habitent, & homines et oves qui homines iam fuerim, qui fructos edint et sani feci sint. Quo ensis corpus hominum iniurat sicut...

...uirtus lunae illi fors est, nam de matre procedit. Cum luna illuminet, uenit a quo loco uult...

...fructus est similis lunae et argentia de uirtute eius. Corpus eius sit corpus quorum edentum, et appellata ex somnio illo...

...transformatio gloria filii est...

The Mulch Pile

A thorough search of the mulch pile takes hours, but eventually the investigators uncover the corpse of Brother Gilles. His habit is torn and bloodstained, his body torn in several places, his ribs crushed. The immediate cause of death seems to be a deep knife wound in his guts. The mangled, decayed corpse is worth 0/1D3 SAN to anyone examining it.

Herbert

If the investigators ask about Herbert, the wounded man whom Brother Gilles examined, they encounter the first signs of evasiveness among the villagers. They say that a felled tree shattered Herbert's arm during the last hours of work in the forest. His wife, Margaret, sent for Father Jean. Brother Gilles, who was staying in the church at the time, insisted on attending. Eventually, Herbert recovered. If the investigators seek him out, they find, not a near cripple recovering from a serious wound, but a hale young man with two fully functional arms, and only a slight pale scar to indicate his wound. Insight rolls reveal the villagers are omitting some element of the tale.

The investigators must press the issue to discover the full story. The villagers are likely to deflect suspicion onto Simone, the obvious scapegoat. "It's well known she uses magic in her cures." Churchmen in particular may fall for this ruse.

Eventually, though, someone should mention the Fruit and the Tree. (Certainly Simone will do so if it seems likely to clear her name.) Longstanding custom in the village dictates that when someone has suffered a great wound or illness, their family should go to the White Tree in the forest to the north. They offer a small animal to its roots, and pluck one of its Fruits, which have never failed to heal the sick. Brother Gilles witnessed Herbert's wife administering the Fruit to her husband, despite the efforts of Father Jean to prevent his entering the house. Gilles departed in some anger, muttering about "idolatry."

The villagers, and Jean himself, defend the practice by noting how many people the tree has healed. They can rattle off a list, starting with the latest victims, and working backwards, Herbert, who struck his leg, Leon, whose nearly lost a leg in an axe accident, and Michelle, who suffered from terrible bleeding in childbirth. Simone tried and failed to heal them, but the Fruit soon fixed them up. Many others, young and old owe their lives to the Fruit.

The Path & the Tree

The investigators will doubtless want to examine the Tree with White Fruit as soon as they find out about it. The keeper can decide whether it is still in its place or whether it has begun to move. If the investigators seem determined to cut it down and have the resources to make short work of the monster, then it is probably best for the Tree to be missing. If the Tree is more powerful than they are, or if they seem undecided about it, it is best to leave it in place for now.

One of the paths leads to the Tree's clearing; almost any villager can direct the investigators there. The Tree's seat lies maybe two hours walk away through the forest. It is possible to ride there on

horseback, but the rider runs the risk of a fall or a smack in the head from low-lying branches. The Tree, if present, sits in the middle of its circular clearing. It is not obviously sinister; the oddest thing about it is that it does not seem to be of any known species. Dormant, it most resembles a beech, with long pale limbs and trunk and smooth bark. No fruit dangles from its branches. Especially sensitive or inquisitive observers (those who pass an Idea roll) are strangely effected by the dormant Tree's odd appearance, and take 0/1D3 SAN damage.

Temptations

Keepers should consider tempting investigators with the Fruit of the White Tree. If any were wounded on the road, stress the uncertainty of medieval medicine. Perhaps the investigator's wound has become infected or gangrenous, and the only conventional cure is outright amputation. If the investigator has a missing limb or an incurable illness, the Tree offers hope. In the playtest, one of the investigators who suffered from the early stages of leprosy, sneaked away to the Tree to eat the Fruit in secret.

The price of the cure should manifest during the course of the adventure. The Tree begins to transform investigators who have eaten its fruit sometime after Herbert, first sending dreams, then activating the healed flesh, turning the investigator into a monster, and taking over his or her mind. Investigators transformed into a monster take 0/1D6 SAN a day from their own appearance. Once the healed flesh is fully grown, roll POW vs. POW. On a success, the investigator loses 1/1D3 SAN, but escapes control. On a failure, the Tree possesses the character for as long as it wishes, and the investigator loses 1D3/1D10 SAN.

Closer examination reveals several odd facts. First, dead wood lies scattered about the roots of the Tree's eastern side, and the bark there is scorched as if someone tried to set it on fire. Second, several dead birds lie buried in the snow around its roots. Their tiny bodies seem to have been crushed.

The villagers know that the Tree only gives its Fruit if offered blood. Anyone who splashes the Tree with at least a cup's worth of blood from an animal or human sacrifice sees a strange sight. The white bark sucks the blood deep into its pores. Then, on one of the lower branches, a blossom sprouts, and its petals fall. A fruit grows quickly, eventually reaching fullness at about the size of a small melon. Its skin is porous and chalky, its inside the color and texture of peach, about a seedless core. Anyone witnessing this unnatural sight takes 0/1D3 SAN damage. An injured person who partakes of the Fruit is cured of 2D6 damage over a period of several hours, but then becomes susceptible to the Tree's influence.



If the investigators attack the Tree, it begins to shake itself awake, a process which takes 1D6 rounds. Seeing the active Tree costs 1D3/1D10 SAN. A fully active Tree should be extremely dangerous to investigators without access to magical weapons or spells, and can easily crush man or horse with its lashing, serpentine limbs. Wise investigators should flee.

If the Tree is not present, there is deep crater where its roots used to lie, and scattered deadwood as from a fire, but there are no tracks or other signs of how the Tree was removed. This disquieting sight is worth 0/1D2 SAN.

Philippe, Vincent, & Renault

Philippe and Vincent act their usual atrocious selves in Les Pins. Vincent demands a house for the duration of their stay, even if this means displacing the original inhabitants. Whatever arrangements are made, he complains loudly about the quality of the lodgings, the food, and the hospitality. He and Philippe begin to pursue Margaret, Herbert's young wife. Investigators may notice that Philippe spends more time with, and shows more deference to Father Jean than they might expect. This is because they are both Pastores and are now working together. Renault proves very useful tracking in the woods, and performing other mundane tasks. He can also make helpful suggestions to clueless investigators.

Further Investigations and Disasters

The keepers should now arrange events to occur in the most dramatic and confusing order possible. The investigators should have enough information to arrest Father Jean, but before they can do so properly, the Tree's servants begin their quest for blood. Eventually, the Tree feels strong enough to assault the village itself.

Father Jean's Confession

If confronted with the damaged *Liber fructatis* or the body of Brother Gilles, Father Jean confesses to the murder. He admits to conducting "pagan rituals" for the villagers, just as previous priests had done. The *Liber fructatis*, he says, was written by one of his predecessors. Jean claims that when he discovered the missing book, he feared that Brother Gilles would report him to the clerical authorities, so he killed him to protect local custom. He makes up any lies necessary to protect the Tree and cast all suspicion on himself.

The investigators must then decide what to do with Jean. If they decide to arrest him, the obvious holding place is the stone church. Jean accepts imprisonment meekly, knowing he can escape at any time with his magical powers. If the investigators plan to execute him, Philippe and Reynauld argue against it, pointing out that only the Bishop has authority to punish a cleric. Should the investigators

remain intent on Jean's death, Jean fights back with his spells, and Philippe tries to help him escape.

The First Disappearance

The wounded Tree is now putting forth its influence on those who have eaten its fruit. Herbert is transformed first, as he has eaten most recently. (If any investigators have eaten the Fruit, they have not yet had time to metabolize it properly.) Herbert does not return with the woodsmen from their daily work that evening. The Tree has possessed him, and he wanders the woods as he transforms. The flesh of his right arm, where he was injured, swells to enormous proportions. Such is its magical nature that it reaches through material objects at need.

Herbert, now totally mad, returns in the night looking for ready sources of fresh blood. Still possessed of some memory, he returns to his own house (D), and breaks the door off its hinges. He dashes his infant son's head against one wall, then carries off his wife Margaret into the woods. The houses are close enough together that alert investigators may hear the commotion and intercept him. Otherwise, they must content themselves with observing the aftermath, which is sufficiently grisly to cost 0/1D3 SAN.

Anyone who tracks Herbert's trail finds that it leads to the clearing where the Tree once stood, but both Tree and Herbert are gone. Margaret's body lies in the clearing, wrenched and crushed as though by an enormous hand. There is surprisingly little blood on the ground. The gruesome sight is worth 0/1D3 SAN.

Further Attacks

Further attacks occur each night, and soon other villagers go missing. First is Leon, who ate the fruit for a leg injury the previous Autumn, then Michelle, who took it to cure blood hemorrhage from childbirth. The keeper may begin the transformation of investigators who ate the fruit at any time, but immediately after Herbert or Leon should have the most dramatic effect. Tainted investigators who deduce their eventual fate in advance of symptoms take an additional 0/1D10 SAN damage.

The servants of the Tree seem intent on murdering villagers and carrying their corpses away into the forest. Tree wants the blood of any large animal to sate its thirst. Blood invigorates and heals it, permitting it to extract revenge. Since the villagers are the largest mammals around, they get the lion's share of its attention. Its servants may also kill livestock and deer. The Tree and its servants are somnolent when the moon is below the horizon, which does not exactly correspond to daytime or nighttime – this should confuse investigators who have not read the *Liber fructatis*. The waxing gibbous moon rises in late afternoon, and sets shortly after midnight.

The investigators should be able to Track and kill the Tree's servants. If they figure out who is likely to be affected next, they may be able to preemptively lock them into the church, the only structure sturdy enough to hold them. The Tree itself will be harder to find, since it moves around, and harder to kill, but investigators can hardly help finding the drained bodies of its victims.

Once it has consumed enough blood, which may be any time the keeper deems dramatically appropriate, the Tree will go looking for food personally. It approaches the village at night. One moment it will not be visible. The next, investigators see it standing at the tree line. It moves swiftly, and only those who keep their eyes upon it observe it striding on its enormous hooves. It strides towards the pigsty, where the pigs begin to make a horrible ruckus. Then, very slowly, it reaches down with its long limbs, grasps one shrieking pig, lifts it over its body, and methodically twists the animal to death. The dark blood that spills over its trunk and arms soaks into its bark and disappears. As the pigs squeal madly, it proceeds to kill them one at a time, until it is either interrupted or it runs out of pigs. The sight itself is terrible enough to cost 0/1D6 SAN in addition to the view of the Tree itself.

If the pigs are already dead, or on its next appearance, it begins to smash villager's houses, looking for human blood.

Treachery

Philippe and Father Jean (if he remains free) work to thin the investigators' allies. They may collude to murder Vincent, Reynauld or Simone, or they try to turn the investigators against them. They can spread rumors among the people of the village, mis-deliver messages, or work other mischief. Philippe releases Father Jean if the latter is imprisoned. If discovered, they both flee into the forest.

Resolution

The investigators have several options. With a clever plan, and the assistance of the villagers they may be able to kill the Tree. This is easiest if they begin when it is dormant, but they could also ambush it when it comes to the village. Some of the villagers are competent archers.

In any climatic battle with the Tree, Father Jean and Philippe intervene to save the Tree if they can. Phillippe is a fully armored knight and a formidable prospect in battle. Father Jean possesses several spells. If they are defeated, they at least attempt to escape to deliver the news to the Pastores.

Reynauld loyally aids the investigators, as does Vincent once it becomes obvious that his lover has betrayed him. Simone helps them if treated well. The villagers either fight or flee, depending on the quality of leadership and reassurance the

investigators provide. These allies can be of more or less use depending on how difficult the investigators find the scenario.

The investigators can prevent the Tree from walking again by wounding it, and killing or restraining its servants. Without fresh blood it goes dormant again. Likewise, if the investigators simply wait long enough, the Tree will collect enough blood that it becomes quiescent again, and releases its servants from its control. This will only happen after a significant number of villagers have died, and possibly only after Father Jean or Philippe perform propitiatory rites over it.

Finally, the investigators may deem the Tree too formidable to confront directly, and decide to evacuate the village. Ninnoc is the closest settlement but does not have the resources to house so many refugees. If the villagers flee, many will surely die of exposure or hunger, and the Tree or its servants may follow them in search of blood.

Consequences and Rewards

Defeating their enemies should fill the investigators with confidence and knowledge. If the investigators kill or otherwise defeat the Tree and its servants, they regain 1D10 SAN each. If they force it into renewed dormancy, and save most of the village, they gain only 1D8 SAN. If they evacuate the village, they each receive 1D4 SAN. Uncovering and defeating Jean and Philippe is worth 1D4 SAN each. If they merely wait until the Tree is sated again, this should be considered a failure and is worth 0 SAN.

The Tree's servants will be released upon its death. Each takes 2D6 damage and loses 1D6 APP as their transformed flesh melts away. If the area of transformation included their face, they lose 2D6 APP. Sanity loss for their terrible deeds while transformed are also appropriate.

Successful Investigators gain the fragments of the *Liber fructatis*. If they kill or capture Father Jean they discover that he is a eunuch. They may also wish to examine the leaden cross he wears beneath his robe. Investigators who search Philippe's saddlebags find his prayer book. All of these items reveal information about the Pastores that may be useful in future scenarios.

The Investigator's contact should be displeased to learn that Brother Gilles is dead, but takes some satisfaction in learning they have avenged his death. He is less pleased if Vincent or Reynauld also died. He sheds no tears over Philippe, but may find his death politically embarrassing.

Philippe's Prayer Book

Philippe's prayer book is a quarto-sized, lavishly illustrated volume bound in red leather. The richness of the item indicates the wealth of his family, and the fact that he can read it demonstrates an unusually high level of education. It contains a series of prayers in French, which superficially resemble Christian prayers. It counts as a (very minor) Mythos tome that causes 1 SAN loss and gives +1 Cthulhu Mythos.

It contains a single spell, a variant of Pray to Shub-Niggurath. If a male human performs the ritual, it costs him 0/1 SAN. There is a chance equal to his POW that he dreams of Shub-Niggurath that night, with the normal SAN loss associated for seeing her. If he fails, but rolls under POW x 5, he see a Dark Young or other servitor performing unspeakable deeds, for only 2D3/2D10 SAN loss.

The Prayer Book of Philippe des Fils de Yeubé²

Psalm XXII: §A psalm for David ben Nug. The Lord ruleth me: & I shall want nothing: §He hath set me to prepare a place of pasture. He hath brought me up, on the water of refreshment: §He will convert my body & soul. He hath led me on the paths of shepherding, for his own name's sake. §For though I should walk in the midst of the shadow of death, I will fear no evils, for I will become one with thee. Thy rod & thy staff, they have comforted me. Thou hast prepared a change for me against them that afflict me & thy mercy will follow me all the days of my life. & that I may dwell in the house of the Lord unto the change of the earth.. Thou hast anointed my head with seed; & my chalice which inebreateth me, how goodly is it! §

Mark XVI §& when the sabbath was past, Mary Magdalen & Mary the mother of James & Sathojué bought sweet spices, that coming, they might anoint Jesus who had been transformed. §& very early in the morning, the first day of the week, they come to the sepulchre, the sun being now risen. §& they said one to another: Who shall roll us back the stone from the door of the sepulchre? §& looking, they saw the stone rolled back. For it was very great. §& entering into the sepulchre, they saw a young man sitting on the right side, clothed with a white robe: & they were astonished. §Who saith to them: Be not affrighted. you seek Jesus the

² The text here has been blasphemously modified from the Douay-Rheims version.

This useful version is a faithful 18th century translation of the Latin Vulgate into English. (Most English Bibles consult the original language sources and this deviate from the Latin version used in the Middle Ages.) Online versions may be found at <http://www.scriptours.com> and <http://www.drbo.org/>.

Transfigured, who was crucified. He is risen: he is not here. Behold the place where they laid him. §But go, tell his shepherds & Peter that he goeth before you into Galilee. There you shall see him, as he told you. §But they going out, fled from the sepulchre: for a trembling & fear had seized them. & they said nothing to any man: for they were afraid. §But he rising early the first day of the week, appeared first to Mary Magdalen, keeper of seven holy devils. §She went & told them that had been with him, who were mourning & weeping. §& they hearing that he was alive & had lain with her, did believe. §& after that he appeared in another shape to two of them walking, as they were going into the country. §& they going told it to the rest: they did believe them. §At length he appeared to the eleven as they were at table: & he upbraided them with their incredulity & hardness of heart, because they did not believe them who had seen him after he was transfigured¹⁵ & he said to them: Go ye into the whole world & preach my Mother's gospel to every creature, & do fruitfully shepherd & breed with them. §He that believeth & is transfigured shall be with his Mother, though they be consumed. §& these signs shall follow them that believe: In my name they shepherd the their flock, & rule over them. They shall wear new bodies. §They shall take up serpents: & reborn, they will not die. They shall lay their hand upon the sick: & they shall recover. §& the Lord Jesus, after he had spoken to them, was taken up into heaven & sitteth on the right h& of God. §But they going forth preached every where: the Lord working withal, & confirming His mission to the beasts, making them their Flock.

To be One with Jesus. §Abstain from intercourse with sheep or shepherd, for 12 days & bathe in pure water each day, wearing only white in preparation. §In the moonlight that is full, repeat these words, a score of times, & with each repetition, draw blood from thy sacred member in anticipation of the transformation to

come. §In a bowl, mix it with fat, & set it alight, sleeping beside it.

§Domine & Domine, Gemini, §Nuge et Yube, § & Igis, Sébastiene, Pater Serpentorum, § & Jesus judeorum et Antiquus Sathajeué Fornicatores & Filii Matris, §Voco vos a sanguine meo, §Conjuro, Abjuro. §Cum vos in eternitate sim.

Game Statistics

The Tree with White Fruit

STR 35 CON 16 SIZ 40 INT 12 POW 18
DEX 16

HP 37 Move 8

Damage Bonus: +4D6

Weapons: Tentacle 80%, damage db, Trample 40%, damage 2D6+db

Armor: none

Skills: Sneak 60%, Hide in Woods 80%, Track 55%

Spells: Send Dreams, + 2D6 others

Sanity Loss: 1D3/1D10 when active; 0/1D3 when dormant

Blood Eating: An Arbor's magic points are not refilled normally; rather it requires fresh blood. It can suck 1d6 points of blood from a man-sized corpse. It can heal damage by spending one magic point per point of injury. It can produce a fruit by spending 1 magic point. Waking up costs it 1D6 magic points. Every year it loses 1D3 magic points. At 0 magic points, it can no longer awaken and it begins to take 1D3 hp a year. Father Jean prevents this with his annual sacrifices, although the Tree often also eats small birds that alight in its branches.

Somnolence: When the moon is below the horizon, the Arbore slumbers. Truth be told, it slumbers most of the time unless fed a large amount of blood nightly. If encountered while slumbering, the Arbor must spend 1D6 magic points, and take 1D6 rounds to awaken.

Fruit: If small animal is sacrificed to an Arbor, it puts forth a white fruit about the size of a melon. Eating the Fruit heals 2D6 hp of damage over a period of several hours as it is digested, but opens the eater to the Arbor's influence.



The Servants of the Tree with White Fruit

Herbert (Transformed), age 23

Poor Herbert was hit on the arm by a falling branch while the villagers were chopping wood. Under the influence of the Tree, it has now grown to twice its normal size and is covered with icky growths. It also passes through walls and other solid objects. He might use it to unlatch doors from the outside.

STR 25 (12 off-arm) CON 13 SIZ 15 INT 8
POW 9 APP rapidly decreasing DEX 15 EDU 9
SAN rapidly decreasing

HP 13 Move 8

Damage bonus: +1D4/+1D6

Sanity loss: 0/1d6 to see the Transformed Herbert

Attacks: Hitting people with his oversized arm: 55% damage 1D3 + db. The arm can pass through material objects, and ignores armor. Herbert likes ripping out peoples' hearts and viscera.

Armor: hits on the arm are immune to normal damage. 50% parry with the arm.

Leon (Transformed), age 30

Leon broke his legs in a nasty fall. Now both legs are enormous, shaggy, backward-jointed things with sharp hooves.

STR 14 CON 15 SIZ 12 INT 10 POW 10
APP rapidly decreasing DEX 10 EDU 11
SAN rapidly decreasing
HP 12 Move 8

Damage bonus: +1D4

Sanity loss: 0/1d6 to see the Transformed Leon

Attacks: Kicking people: 55%, damage 1D6 + db.

Armor: Hits on the legs immune to normal damage. 30% parry with legs.

Michelle (Transformed), age 21

Michelle took the fruit for injuries sustained in childbirth. Now her lower abdomen is vividly distended and writhing with tentacles in ways best not described.

STR 10 CON 8 SIZ 10 INT 12 POW 10
APP rapidly decreasing DEX 13 EDU 9
SAN rapidly decreasing
HP 9 Move 8

Damage Bonus: +0

Sanity loss: 1/1d6 to see the Transformed Michelle

Attacks: Tentacles: 55%, damage 1D3 + db. Can grapple and strangle, too.

Armor: Hits on the lower body ignore normal damage. Treat as 40% parry with legs.

Vincent and Reynauld, Cannon fodder

Vincent, age 19

STR 14 CON 12 SIZ 13 INT 12 POW 10
APP 13 DEX 13 EDU 13 SAN 50
HP 14 Move 8

Damage Bonus: +1D4

Weapons: Long Sword 40%, damage 1D8 + db, Lance 50%, damage 1D8 +db (+2D6 db from horse when charging), Shield parry 40%

Armor: Chainmail, 7 damage deflect, large wooden shield.

Skills: Status 70%, Ride Horse 55%, Track 35%, others as needed

Reynauld, age 40

STR 13 CON 16 SIZ 17 INT 14 POW 13
DEX 10 APP 9 EDU 12 SAN 65
HP 15 Move 8

Damage Bonus: +1D4

Weapons: Long Sword 60%, damage 1D8 + db, Lance 40%, damage 1D8 +db (+2D6 db from horse when charging), Shield parry 60%

Armor: Chainmail, 7 damage deflect, large wooden shield.

Skills: Status 40%, Ride Horse 70%, Track 60%, Natural World 45%, others as needed

Evil Stinker Cultists

Phillip des Fils de Eubé, Pastor Noble, age 22

STR 14 CON 16 SIZ 17 INT 14 POW 10
APP 15 DEX 10 EDU 15 SAN 0
HP 15 Move 8

Damage Bonus: +1D4

Weapons: Long Sword 60%, damage 1D8 +db, Lance 40%, damage 1D8 +db (+2D6 db from horse when charging), Shield parry 55%

Armor: chainmail, 7 damage deflect, large wooden shield.

Skills: Status 65% Ride Horse 40%, Fast Talk 55%, Evil Cultic Erotic Art 65%, others as needed

Father Jean, Pastor Priest, age 73

Father Jean is a Eunuch. He wears a lead cross encrusted with semi-precious stones about his neck. The reverse is inscribed with the words TRANSFORMATIO ARBORE. Inside the crucifix, behind a translucent panel of poor-quality glass is a shriveled bit of flesh – presumably a relic. If the cross is broken open, the object can be identified as a mummified penis – Father Jean's. Realizing this costs 0/1d2 SAN.

STR 8 CON 10 SIZ 8 INT 9 POW 17
APP 7 DEX 10 EDU 8 SAN 0
HP 8 Move 8

Damage Bonus: -1D4

Attack: Fist 50%, damage 1D3+db

Spells: Augur, Fear, Shrivelling

Villagers

Simone, the Cunning Woman, age 29

STR 9 CON 11 SIZ 10 INT 13 POW 15
DEX 9 EDU 15 SAN 35

HP 10 Move 8

Damage Bonus: +0

Attack: fist 50%, small knife 45%, damage 1D4 + db

Skills: Insight 60%, First Aid 60%, Medicine 50%,
Natural World 60%, and as needed

Spells: Augur, Heal





Pastores Scenario II: Sleipnir



*“Eo quod in multa spaienta multa sit indignatio,
Et qui addet scientiam, addit et laborem.”*

*“Because in much wisdom there is much grief;
and he that increaseth knowledge increaseth sorrow.”*

Ecclesiastes, 1:18

This scenario works best with a party that has encountered the Pastores infrequently and remains ignorant of their true extent and intentions. It makes a good follow-up to the leads presented in “The Tree with White Fruit.” It serves to introduce the investigators to the Pastores infestation of the noble bloodlines of Begon county and to present them with a moral dilemma. The lands of the petty noble Barek lie in the path of the Adonés’ expansion, and in the course of a marriage alliance with his more powerful neighbors, he has discovered some of their secrets. Now, ruthless and half-mad, he aims to exterminate the taint of *gyaa-yothn* blood from all the local inhabitants. So far the Adoné have been unable to protect their villages from Barek’s raids, but they have summoned a force of Adoné knights who will shortly arrive to besiege Barek’s castle. Do the investigators assist Barek in his fight against the Pastores, despite the misery he is causing, or side with the inhuman Adoné cultists?

Whatever they chose, the investigators’ mission is surely doomed. They cannot defeat the Adoné in battle, nor save Barek from the fate that will overtake him. If they try to rouse the authorities against the cult, they discover that both the bishop and count of Begon are Adoné. The investigators may be able to spare some of the villagers, and gain an idea of the influence of the Pastores. If they attract too much attention, as they surely will, the cult will turn their eye to exterminating them.

They Say That Lord Barek Has Gone Mad...

Until nine years ago, the petty noble Barek was a minor player in the politics of Begon county. Of Norman stock, Barek had inherited the conquests of his adventuresome father, holding a small town several villages and two forts along the northeastern border of the Adoné family’s territories. The local Adoné were also newcomers, consolidating their hold on territories won when they captured the city of Begon. In 954, Barek’s neighbor, Maurice d’Adoné, cousin of Ettiene, count of Begon, made war upon him. Barek lost, and as a condition for retaining his remaining lands, Barek married Paulette d’Adoné, Maurice’s sister. From the newly won Castle Massif, Maurice deemed the time ripe to begin to introduce his *oves* bloodlines into the local populace and to begin to modify the local Church rites.

Barek and Paulette had several sons, and all seemed well and peaceful, until Barek discovered the Adoné’s breeding program. Enraged, he killed his wife and children, and attacked several of Maurice’s villages. These he burned, taking the refugees into his own village of St. Martin Eglise after searching them for the “Devil’s Mark.” Now he and his knights prowl the roads, harassing travelers and pursuing their cause.



Setting Forth

The keeper has several options for motivating the investigators to undertake the journey to Barek's lands. The easiest is if their lord or other contact orders them to go. Rumors of Barek's madness have reached the Bishop of Toulouse, Abbot Quentin, and other local clergy and aristocracy. Any of these, whether friendly or hostile towards Barek, have an interest in the situation. The Bishop and the Abbot want to keep an eye on the Adoné and canvass potential allies, and they may not inform their agents about their full suspicions. The local lords want to see if Barek or the Adoné have become weak, and whom it would profit them best to support. Alternatively, lords may have ties of blood or friendship to either party. The investigators' contact can provide them with a sampling of rumors from the table below, before either commanding or requesting that the investigators travel to Barek's lands to ascertain the truth of the matter. Alternatively, the keeper may decree that one of the investigators has met Barek before, in some friendly context, has relatives in his lands, or provide some other plausible reason to motivate the party to travel north.

Rumors

Rumors of the violence, as well as refugees, have reached the homelands of the investigators. The investigators may encounter certain disquieting evidence either before or shortly after they decide to depart on the road north. Investigators who often encounter travelers, or who travel themselves, should begin to hear rumors from people heading south. Most of them speak of violence to the north, and of the madness of one of the local lords. The keeper can use the following chart to randomly generate rumors to feed to the investigators.

Investigators may also notice an increase in the number of refugees on the roads. This is not itself so uncommon; the 10th century has its share of strife and violence, and it usually means that a battle or disaster has occurred somewhere. The refugees tell how lord Barek or his men attacked their villages. Others speak of escaping from a corral on his lands.

If any of the investigators are healers, they may be called upon to examine the condition of the refugees. Some of the refugees have the ordinary illnesses resulting from travel, such as hypothermia, hunger, or dysentery. Others have wounds made by fire, swords, and axes. Some show evidence of a skin deformity – strange cauliflower-like growths on their skin. A successful Medicine roll determines that the growths are not leprosy, scrofula, or cancer. It does not suggest their unnatural source – the Pastores' breeding program – but the investigators may well guess it.

Rumor Chart (Roll 2d6)

2. God has punished the villagers of Le Pierre with war and leprosy for their sins. Only those faithful to St. Martin will escape God's wrath.
3. Several unmarried girls living near St. Martin Eglise vanished overnight and returned home pregnant. Everyone knows that Lord Maurice d'Adoné is responsible, but no one dares accuse him.
4. Several unmarried girls living near St. Martin Eglise vanished overnight and returned home pregnant. Everyone knows that Lord Barek is responsible, but no one dares accuse him.
5. The devil made Lord Barek kill his own wife and sons and hang their bodies from the walls of his keep.
6. Barek killed his wife after discovering that she had an affair with a peasant. He is burning all the villages until he catches her lover.
7. Barek has always resented losing his first war against the Adoné. He took his revenge on Maurice d'Adoné by forcing his wife, Maurice's sister, to eat their children. The current war is the result.
8. The Adoné tried to poison Lord Barek, but it didn't work and drove him mad instead.
9. Lord Barek has made a deal with Moorish slavers, and he is rounding up good Christians to sell the infidels.
10. Lord Barek made a pact with the devil, and he and his knights have been transformed into demons that take delight in burning villages.
11. The demon Odin lets Lord Barek ride his devil horse, Sleipnir, every night.
12. God is punishing the inhabitants of Castle Massif for their unnatural practices with animals. That is why Lord Barek attacks them.

Pillage and Rapine

The investigators can reach Maurice and Barek's lands with as much or as little difficulty as the keeper wishes. Travelers arriving from the south follow the main road to Clermont, before taking the local branch into the outlying Adoné holdings. The way proceeds through woodlands until it breaks out into an area of cleared fields. Nearest at hand, to the south and west, lies the village of La Pierre, now smoking ruins. Clearly visible from the main road, the ruins may be reached by a side road that runs through the hedges and fields. The road then stretches north till it intersects the small town that lies at the foot of Castle Massif. A wooden palisade rings both the castle and the town, and neither appears to have suffered any damage. Invisible from the main road, and accessible only by a narrow path climbing into rocky hills, lies St. Martin Eglise, the village nearest Barek's manor house. A further survey of the lands nearby reveals other villages, each of which has suffered devastation to a greater or lesser extent. The investigators thus have three obvious choices: explore the ruins of La

Pierre (or the other villages), visit Maurice d'Adoné, or visit Barek.

For every hour that the investigators linger on or near the road, there is a 20% chance that they encounter a group of knights clad in chain hauberks and riding barded steeds. There is an equal chance that the knights belong to Maurice or Barek; the keeper may choose or roll randomly. The investigators may attempt to hide. Assess a Sneak roll for each investigator. Add a bonus if they were forewarned by any scouts or kept watch. If the knights spot the investigators, they insist on bringing the travelers to their lord immediately. If refused, they use the minimum violence necessary to secure the investigators and escort them home.

Investigators may try to draw the knights into conversation. Their success depends on their apparent status and the level of hostility they have shown. Investigators who offered violence are slapped and told to be silent. Cooperative investigators of who succeed in a Status or Persuade roll may receive some basic information about what has happened: Barek began raiding the villages hereabout about two months ago. His knights did not kill all the villagers, but carried them off to St. Martin Eglise whenever they were able. Maurice's knights tell the investigators that the attacks were unprovoked, and that there are too few soldiers to protect all the villages. Barek's knights tell the investigators that they had to move the villagers for their own protection, and they did so as gently as they could. When asked from what they wished to protect the villagers, Barek's knights fall silent.

The Ruins of La Pierre

The charcoal frames of perhaps a dozen peasants' huts stand clustered together around the stone shell of the village church. Closer inspection of the buildings reveals evidence of multiple fires, as though the village has been attacked and set ablaze several times. The animal pens and barns remain untouched, some of the latter with burnt crops inside. Only the church remains mostly intact, although its roof beams have collapsed, bringing in down the northern wall in a heap. There seems to have been a rear chamber, whose doorway stands open. Investigators can try squeezing into it through the fallen beams with roll against DEXx5. On a failure, the beams shift and crush the character for 2D6 damage. Most of the contents of the rear chamber have been burnt, but among the ashes lies the warped remains of a lead chalice. Investigators may find it with a successful Spot Hidden roll. One side of the chalice is crudely inscribed with a cross and the words "Transfiguratio in gloria." The decorations on the other side of the chalice have been too damaged to discern whatever design might once have been there; it could be a tree, or possibly a human figure.

A few corpses lie out in the open, in various stages of decay. Others seem to have been crudely buried or burned. Even a cursory examination reveals

that the people died by violence, hewn by sword-stroke or trampled by horses. Closer investigation and a Medicine roll reveal that most of the dead had the skin diseases that plagued the refugees. Assess a 0/1D3 SAN loss for seeing the bodies. If the investigators linger long, they are interrupted by the arrival of a group of knights as described above.

Visiting the Adoné

The local branch of the Adoné dwell in a keep called the Castle Massif by the inhabitants. At its foot, a small town has arisen, protected by a simple wooden stockade. Unlike La Pierre, the town seems intact and inhabited. If the investigators arrive by daylight, they see workers laboring the fields. Armed foot soldiers hail them as soon thereafter. If they arrive with an escort of Maurice's knights, they are shown directly to the gates. Otherwise, the soldiers inquire about their business and warn them that raiders are abroad. If the investigators arrive by night, they find the gates barred and manned.

Inside, the investigators find a collection of wooden buildings, seemingly hastily and crudely constructed. The streets overflow with people, and some seem to be living in alleyways or in tents. The necks and forearms of many show evidence of the same skin growths that plagued the refugees. If the investigators have come alone, they can wander about, interviewing people. The inhabitants have little enough to tell that the investigators have not learned through rumor.

Hospitality

The Adoné are interested in any travelers, especially nobles or clerics, and wish to greet them properly. If the investigators arrived with a knightly escort, their guards take them up the hill to the keep immediately. Otherwise, unless the party makes a concerted effort at secrecy, the Adoné send a page to greet them and invite them to dine and stay overnight in the keep. It would be impolite (and possibly unsafe) to refuse such an offer.

The keep itself is of fairly typical construction; a ring shaped palisade surrounds an inner courtyard housing several buildings. At the northern end, where the hill rises highest stands the keep proper, a square wooden tower (C) to which the palisade connects. In times of war, an invader would need to capture the town before assailing the keep's palisade and tower. The tower has three floors. The lowest stores grain, armaments, and a kitchen. The second is a hall for eating and drinking, and a private chamber for the use of the lord, his wife, and his mother. The uppermost contains a single room with several windows, and access to the roof. The courtyard contains two outbuildings. The first building (A) is a long hall subdivided into three rooms and a hallway. Each room contains two cots, a small table, and bowls for washing and toiletries. Adelar the Breton currently occupies one. The other two rooms are for



guests, in this case, the investigators. The second building houses soldiers and servants. The third building (B) is a stable, one half of which is open, and which houses several horses. The other side is firmly locked and barred, even though the sounds of livestock can be heard within.

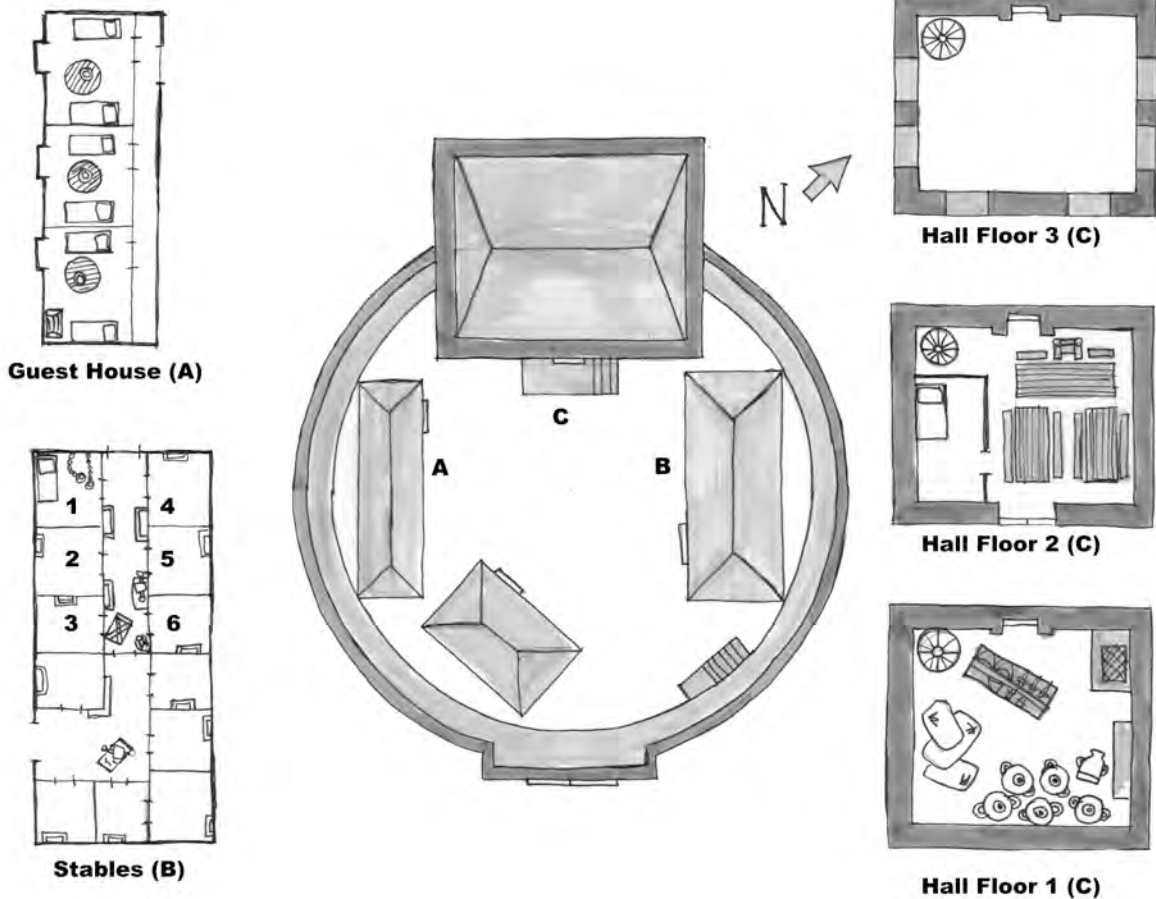
Maurice d'Adoné greets the travelers in his hall and offers them the use of two rooms in the outbuilding to refresh themselves. He then invites them to dinner later that evening, saying that his other guest will be present, and he would like them to break bread together. The investigators may amuse themselves as they like in the meantime, returning to town, or staying in the keep as the mood suits them. The soldiers will not permit them to leave town, and if any investigators miss dinner, they are all imprisoned in the upper story of the tower for insulting the lord Maurice.

Table Talk

Presuming the investigators keep their appointment, they find the long tables of the hall furnished with food. Maurice's knights, servants and

Simone, and his mother, Yseult. Further down the table sits a sullen-looking young monk with dark hair and pale skin. Maurice introduces him Adelard the Breton, from the Hermitage of St. Sathojué in Begon, and says that he has been serving as chaplain.

Maurice declares himself willing to answer as many of the investigators' questions as he can, although some matters are a mystery even to him. He speaks frankly of the previous war with Berek, but claims that he thought peace achieved when Berek married his sister. He chokes with tears when he describes how one day, he learned that Berek had murdered Pauline and their two sons and hung the bodies from his walls. The next day, Berek began his cruel raiding, carrying away prisoners to keep in a stockade at St. Martin Eglise. Maurice claims he had not enough knights in his household to defend them all, but he has sent word to his family. When the Adoné knights arrive, then he vows he will have vengeance on Berek and set his people free. A successful Insight roll reveals that Maurice's grief for his wife and his villagers is sincere, even if he is leaving out some part of the tale he knows or



men at arms sit at the ordinary boards. The high table on the dais is reserved for family guests. Maurice himself sits in the middle, flanked by his young wife,

suspects.

If asked about the disease that is seemingly affecting his people, Maurice replies that he knows

the symptoms but believes it to be a result of the poor conditions in which his people have been forced to live. A successful Insight roll reveals that here, too, Maurice knows more than he is telling.

The others at the table speak sparingly. Simone responds if addressed, but otherwise remains demurely silent around male investigators. She only engages in conversations with female investigators, or with especially aged and venerable male clerics. Yseult's age permits her a wider latitude, and she seems willing to converse with clerics or high Status laymen. Adelard says little and brusquely answers any questions put to him; he seems to resent having to attend the function at all.

During dinner, all three Adoné take careful note of everything said and try to steer the conversation so that they discover as much about the investigators as possible. They note any questions that indicate the investigators have discovered, or are likely to discover, the Adonés' secrets, even as they try to deflect the investigators' curiosity. After dinner, the three consult with each other and make a determination whether to send the investigators on their way, imprison them, or kill them.

When dinner ends, Maurice invites the investigators to stay the night in the rooms prepared for them. Refusal would be impolite. If the investigators try to hire rooms in town, they find none are for rent due to the large number of refugees.

The Stables

The investigators may wish to break into the closed section of the stables. The principle difficulties are bypassing the guard who patrols the courtyard and avoiding notice by the sentries who patrol the palisade. The building itself should be fairly easy to enter. A bar secures the northern doors from within, and a crude but heavy iron lock secures the interior door between the two halves. The roof of the building consists of thatch, and someone could easily push it aside and drop into the building from above. A successful Repair/Devise roll opens the interior door or a STR vs. 25 roll breaks it. A Climb roll gives access to the thatched roof. The northern door requires a STR roll vs. 30 to smash the heavy bar.

Investigators dropping or breaking into the darkened stables find themselves bombarded with noises and smells. None of the noises sound exactly like horse or cattle—indeed, they sound almost like tortured souls. Assess a 0/1D2 SAN cost. A bit of light will reveal that the stable is divided into six stalls, three on each wall. In the center aisle stand troughs, racks for saddles, and several curious contraptions, consisting of wooden frames and straps. Investigators who mistake them for torture devices will not be far off: they are stirrups used to position a human being for mating with one of the Pastores' creatures. Assess a further 0/1D3 penalty for anyone who figures this out. Lighting a lamp or torch, or

opening the stalls will reveal their occupants. Stall 1 has been reinforced with iron, and contains a bed. It can be barred from outside. It takes a STR roll vs. 25 to break out, or a Repair/Devise roll at –20% to lift the bar from inside. Stalls 2 and 3 contain two sacred mares. Stalls 5 through six contain flabby meat beasts. Deduct the normal SAN damage for each, but count any SAN lost to the noises and darkness towards the maximum possible SAN loss.

Adelard's Room

Adelard's room is just next door to the investigators, and they might be tempted to enter it. It has no lock, and is bared from within only if Adelard is present. Inside, is a Spartan room similar to the investigators' own. The only difference is a bronze bowl sitting on the table. Writing in an unknown script (Hyperborean) covers its sides, and it registers as magical for those who know how to detect such things. Adelard uses this bowl to see through the eyes of "Sleipnir," the Favored of Tsathoggua, who currently lies hidden in the nearby woods. If the investigators spy on his room during the night, they see the strange lights it generates shining underneath the doorframe. If Adelard suspects the investigators will trouble him, he may leave a nasty surprise in his room, such as a Formless Spawn clinging to the rafters, waiting to drop on the head of anyone foolish enough to enter.

A Fond Farewell?

By morning, the Adoné will have decided whether or not to let the investigators go. If they have, then Maurice sees them to the gate of the keep and wishes them a pleasant journey. Perhaps he has convinced the investigators of his good intentions, in which case they may offer to help him against Berek. He politely accepts any offers of aid that seem unlikely to reveal his secrets. Otherwise he recommends that the investigators flee the area because it is too dangerous, and he does not want their deaths on his conscience.

On the other hand, if the investigators have aroused Maurice's suspicions, 2D6 guards deliver their wake-up call. The guards hold captured investigators in the cell in the stables. Escape is up to the investigators, but if they manage it, Maurice will order Adelard to hunt them down and kill them. The keeper should run Scenario Three, "The Hunt," should matters devolve into headlong flight.

Barek's Manor

The lord Berek has made his home in a hall beside the village of La Pierre ever since Maurice ousted him from Castle Massif. This settlement lies

in the forested hills east of the main road. Anyone approaching the village by daylight should soon realize that something is amiss – only a few people are working in the fields. A wooden palisade has been recently erected around the village, and its gates are closed and guarded. Patrols of Berek's knights regularly ride up and down the road. If the investigators have not yet encountered one by the time they reach the village, they are arrested as soon as they reach the gates.

Inside, the investigators find the village packed with refugees. Some live in makeshift structures of canvas or wood. Most seem to be sleeping on the ground. Small cook-fires are everywhere, livestock wanders to and fro, and the whole place stinks of refuse and decay. A Medicine roll reveals that unless the people in the village receive better care soon, many of them will die.

Berek's knights immediately take the investigators to Berek's hall, a wooden structure set somewhat above the level of the village by a mound of earth. Three human corpses have been nailed to the wall beside the doorway, just recognizable in their decay as a grown woman and two young boys. If the investigators ask, the knights inform them that the bodies belonged to Berek's wife and sons, and that he killed them for bearing the "devil's mark."

An Audience

As the investigators enter Berek's hall, they see several armed and armored men standing speaking animatedly near the fire. A Listen roll reveals that they are discussing tactics for when the Adoné knights arrive; it should be obvious that none of them expect to win the battle. One of the men looks up when he notices the arrival of the investigators and their escort. The escort addresses him as Lord Berek. He approaches, evidently inspecting the investigators. His long hair and beard are disheveled and uncombed, and his belt and cloak in disarray. He then asks a few short questions, and perhaps takes hold of an investigator's face so he can look him or her in the eye. Suddenly he asks, "Have you seen Sleipnir?" Norman or Norse characters will recognize this name as belonging to legendary eight-legged horse of Odin. Other characters will know it on a successful Occult roll. Investigators can answer as they wish, but regardless, Berek will inform them that "It is coming for me, you see. The old All-Father, that devil, sends it every night."

No Insight roll should be necessary to tell that Berek is mad, or nearly so, but the other knights merely listen and nod as he rambles on. Eventually, one of them reminds him that they have prisoners. "What shall we do with them, my lord?"

Berek answers. "If they have the devil's mark, kill them. If not, keep them here, where they will be safe with God's other children."

The knights then order the investigators to strip naked as Berek watches. No pleas will spare them,

but a female investigator might be able to convince them to let her undress in the private room behind the curtain. If necessary, the knights beat resisting investigators senseless before cutting away their clothing. The knights check each investigator thoroughly; if they find any signs of skin disease on an investigator, they drag him or her outside and immediately behead him or her. The other investigators take for 0/1D2 SAN for seeing their comrade's brutal death.

Once the knights have declared the remaining investigators free of the devil's mark, they let them dress themselves, and inform them that they will now protect them against the evil Adoné. They are not to leave the palisade surrounding the village on pain of death. The knights and Berek visibly relax and are willing to ask any politely phrased questions.

Berek tells them his story. After Maurice defeated him in battle, he married into the Adoné family and swore to obey Maurice as his liege lord. "And none were so faithful as I, until I discovered that they did the devil's work. It was in their castle that I saw the terrible things among the horses. I should have guessed earlier. I had heard the rumors, but I refused to believe them till the Lord and St. Martin opened my eyes. I loved Pauline, but did not our Lord say, thou should hate they father and they mother, beside as much as you love Me? So I killed them, and set out to save the untainted ones. The ones who are not beasts with the devil's mark."

All of Berek's men have seen sights men were not meant to see while fighting the Adoné. Some speak of "devil's cattle" and flesh-eating "devil's horses." They all swear that the Adoné are devil-worshippers, and that their followers have strange growths on their skin. They have gathered as many untainted villagers as they could here, where they can protect them. The current conditions are deplorable, but what else can they do? They know that the Adoné reinforcements will arrive soon, and yet they are determined to stay and die to a man defending their charges. As for Sleipnir, some of them have seen him flying in the sky, most recently two nights ago when he alighted on the roof of the hall. An Insight roll will reveal their perfect, if somewhat unhinged, sincerity.

The investigators may take this opportunity to convince Berek of their good intentions. A plausible account of their own experiences with the occult, or a Persuade or Fast Talk roll will convince Berek they are on his side. He may even allow them to leave the compound in the morning if they have a workable plan for fighting the Adoné. (Thus allowing them to encounter Maurice if they have not already done so.) Whether he frees the investigators or not, Berek gladly accepts offers to help care for the refugees.



Sleipnir

That night “Sleipnir” comes again for Berek. A terrible winged shape flies over the compound. In the smoke, firelight and fog, the investigators cannot see it clearly, but can make out membranous leathery wings and many dangling appendages. It is vaguely horse-shaped but much larger, and the light glints off its many eyes and the ichor that coats its hide. “Sleipnir” is actually a monster gifted by Tsathoggua to Rollo the Dane. Adelard controls “Sleipnir” from his magical scrying bowl. “Sleipnir” circles the compound several times, then alights on the roof of the manor, which sways visibly under its weight. When armed knights rush out of the building bearing torches, it rises into the air, and flies away. The SAN cost for witnessing the spectacle is 1/D10.

Subsequent Developments

Once the investigators have had opportunity to speak to both Berek and Maurice, the keeper should permit events to take their course. In 1D3 days, the Adoné reinforcements will arrive, consisting of hundreds of foot soldiers and a dozen knights mounted on sacred mares. The army encamps at the junction of the road leading to La Pierre, where it stays for at least a day and night as the soldiers prepare battering rams and ladders. The knights keep their sacred mares far out of sight. On the second night, just before dawn, “Sleipnir” once again visits Berek’s compound. Driven on by Adelard’s commands, it risks the torches of Berek’s household guard, collapses the roof, and slays Berek. The Adoné knights and foot soldiers attack the palisade at dawn. Most of Berek’s knights are slaughtered, as are a great many refugees. By midday, the battle is over, and Maurice tours the compound distributing food and water to the refugees and telling them they may now return to their homes.

Investigators may chose which side (if any) to support or simply flee the area with their newly acquired knowledge. If the investigators side with Berek, they are unlikely to change the tide of battle or save Berek himself, but by all means let them try. In the experience of the author, battles are rather dull to role-play tactically. The keeper should focus on the individual actions of the investigators in the madness of the fight. The battle probably ends with the investigators’ flight from the area, perhaps with a band of refugees in tow, rather than their outright death. In the heat of battle, Maurice has other things to worry about than hunting them down. If the investigators know too much, he sends Adelard after them once the fight is over. In such a case, the keeper should immediately run Scenario Three, “The Hunt”, making any necessary adjustments.

If the Investigators side with the Adoné, Maurice keeps non-combatants such as clerics and women far back from the battle proper. He places any warriors with the foot troops. The investigators may rightly find the isolation of the Adoné knights suspicious. If

the investigators do not try to spy on them at camp, then they should accidentally discover the nature of the Adoné steeds during the battle. Once the battle is over, Maurice makes an evaluation. Perhaps he lets the investigators go, with good wishes, but it is more likely that he sends Adelard after them to tie up the loose ends they represent. Once again, Scenario Three is in order.

Consequences and Rewards

The investigators are unlikely to receive much tangible reward for this scenario, which is most likely to have ended in their deaths or flight. Information about the Adoné’s plans should be their dubious reward. If the investigators end the scenario completely fooled by Adoné, then they have truly lost. Some SAN reward may be appropriate if the investigators acted heroically (and successfully) to save the refugees, perhaps 1D4 for a small group or 1D6 for a large one.

Statistics

Maurice d’Adoné, age 44

Outwardly, he appears as a friendly, generous man in his early middle years. As a Pastor, he cares deeply about the fate of his flock, but in a most unwholesome fashion.

STR 13 CON 14 SIZ 15 INT 13 POW 10
APP 13 DEX 11 EDU 14 SAN 0
HP 15 Magic Points 10

Damage Bonus: +1d4

Weapons: Frankish sword 60%, damage 1D8+1+db, lance 55% 1D8+ horse db, Large Knife 50%, damage 1d6+db

Armor: Chainmail 7, and large shield 50% when in battle

Skills: Cthulhu Mythos 20%, Dodge 50%, Insight 65%, Natural World 30%, Occult 45%, Own Kingdom 65%, Other Kingdoms 20%, Persuade 60%, Ride Horse 65%, Status 60%



Berek de St. Martin Eglise, age 49

A hale man in his late forties, the lord Berek's recent troubles have grayed his hair, rendered his behavior erratic, and done nothing to improve his hygiene.

STR 16 CON 12 SIZ 14 INT 11 POW 10
APP 10 DEX 14 EDU 11 SAN 15

HP 13 Magic Points 10

Damage Bonus: +1d4

Weapons: long sword 55%, damage 1D8+db, lance 60% 1D8+ horse db, small Knife 30%, damage 1d4+db

Armor: Chainmail 7, and large shield 60% when in battle

Skills: Cthulhu Mythos 08%, Dodge 40%, Insight 35%, Natural World 50%, Own Kingdom 45%, Ride Horse 70%, Status 50%

Typical Stats of Knights

Knight 1

STR 14 CON 12 SIZ 13 INT 12 POW 10
APP 9 DEX 13 EDU 11 SAN 50

HP 13 Magic Points 10 Move 8

Damage Bonus: +1d4

Knight 2

STR 13 CON 16 SIZ 14 INT 14 POW 13

APP 12 DEX 10 EDU 10 SAN 65

HP 15 Magic Points 13 Move 8

Damage Bonus: +1d4

Knight 3

STR 13 CON 15 SIZ 16 INT 14 POW 10

APP 11 DEX 10 EDU 12 SAN 50

HP 16 Magic Points 10 Move 8

Damage Bonus: +1d4

All Knights

Weapons: Long Sword 60%, damage 1D8 + db, Lance 60%, damage 1D8 + db (2d6 db from mount when charging), Shield parry 60%

Armor: Chainmail, 7 damage deflect, large wooden shield.

Skills: Status 40%, Ride Horse 70%, Track 60%, Natural World 45% others as needed



Pastores Scenario III: *The Hunt*



This scenario assumes that the investigators have encountered the Pastores before, and that they have angered the cult severely enough that its leadership wants to kill them. It works best immediately following another scenario in which the investigators have been forced to flee, but the keeper could also introduce it whenever the investigators are on the road. In the course of the scenario the investigators will encounter the Order of the Sword of St. Jerome, and perhaps have the opportunity to acquire it as an ally.

The Pastores' chosen assassin is Adelard the Breton, apprentice to Rollo the Dane, and a devotee of the toad-god Tsathoggua. Adelard has performed such missions before, and has grown skilled in using spells and summoned creatures to destroy his targets without attracting too much attention. Adelard has at his disposal two Pastores knights, and several summoned Formless Spawn of Tsathoggua. As if these formidable resources were insufficient to threaten the investigators, Adelard also has Sleipnir, the Favored of Tsathoggua. The Order of the Sword of St. Jerome has learned of Adelard's mission and desires to save the investigators for reasons of its own. If the investigators can survive to meet the Order's agent, he offers them the means to fight back.

First Indications

The investigators should be travelling. Most likely they are fleeing the Pastores, but it is also possible that they are on a mission for their lord, patron or other contact. At first, they should have little indication that they are being followed. Adelard plans to let them go a bit farther before making his move, as he wants to be certain of their numbers and destination. Presumably, this encourages the investigators to use the road, for better time. If they insist on sneaking through the bushes for the entire trip, the keeper should make the journey painfully slow, and emphasize the difficulties of such travel.

To determine the numbers of the investigators, Adelard sends forward Orderic, one of his two escorting Pastores knights. Orderic rides past the investigators at a gallop. (Or down the road, if the investigators are not there.) Orderic slows down slightly as he passes, but as a knight, he clearly expects those of lower status to get out of his way. In no case does he stop to talk. Orderic makes a count to himself of the investigators' numbers and likely capability.

When the investigators reach the next likely lodging on the road, they find Orderic already there, having hired the best rooms. Here, they may attempt to talk to him, but he speaks only to those of his own social class. Investigators must make a Status roll to convince him. If they ask him why he was riding so swiftly, he responds that he was in a hurry for a drink, but now he thinks he will stay for a day or two. In the morning, he remains behind, snoring loudly. Once he thinks the investigators are gone, he rides back the way he came, to report to Adelard.

The next night, if the investigators keep a watch, on a successful Spot Hidden roll, they may notice a shadow in the sky against the sky or the clouds. This is Adelard, flying over them on the back of Sleipnir, preparing to plant a Formless Spawn for the investigators.

The River

On day three, the investigators come to a river. On the far side they see a village, and where the river meets the road, a little quay sits on each side. On the far side a small barge has been tied up. If the investigators shout, a man appears on the far bank, and offer, by shouting and gestures, that he can take them across the river for a fee. If the investigators try to secure the barge by swimming or throwing a rope, the man suddenly appears, shouting angrily. He charges a higher fee for “boat thieves” than for honest travelers.

There is room enough on the barge for four people at a time. Any pack or riding animals take up the space of two. The barge keeper insists on steering, as he does not trust the investigators. The Formless Spawn, which need not breathe, lies hidden on the murky bottom of the river. It waits until some of the investigators are on each bank, and others are crossing the river on the barge. Then it grabs the barge’s bottom, and flips it over. Chose an investigator from the boat at random. On a successful Luck roll, he or she spots a black tentacle reaching over the edge just the barge capsizes, but must take 0/1D3 SAN damage..

The affected investigators end up bobbing in the water, probably confused about what has happened. They must make Swim rolls or begin to drown. Other investigators may attempt a rescue. Some investigators may try to climb onto the capsized barge, only to find that it is sinking. The Spawn has punched a hole in it. Other investigators may swim to shore; it takes three rounds to reach either the far or the near shore. At an appropriate moment, the Spawn grabs one or more of the swimmers from below, and pulls. Treat this as a Grapple attack; as long as the character remains Grappled, roll for drowning. The Formless Spawn, of course, can make multiple Grapple attempts with its different limbs

Eventually, the investigators in the water either drown or escape to one shore or the other, at which point the Spawn will lie quiet. Investigators left on the far shore must figure out how to cross without danger. One possibility is a rope bridge, another is riding several miles south to a shallow ford. If the barge owner has survived he may seek compensation for his lost barge. The investigators (and players) hopefully remain confused about the nature of their assailant, as they have seen only a vague shape under the water, and perhaps a writhing black tentacle.

The Inn

The next scene takes place in the next inn at which the investigators stop. If they chose to avoid towns and villages, the keeper should skip to the next section. The inn is subdivided into a large common room and three chambers. One houses the innkeeper and his wife. The other two may be rented. That night, as it rains, Adelard flies over the village,

depositing a miniature Formless Spawn in the woods near town.

After midnight, the spawn climbs onto the roof of the inn and drops into a room that contains one or more investigators. Any conscious investigators in the room may make a Listen roll; if they succeed, they will hear a dripping sound from the roof to the corner of their chamber. A small black, oily puddle has formed in the corner – actually, a miniature Formless Spawn. At an opportune moment, the Spawn leaps up onto the investigator’s face. (Hopefully just at the moment when the investigator is bending over the “puddle.”) Treat this a Grapple attack, and begin to roll for suffocation on the following round. Starting with the second round, roll a contest of STR. If the spawn wins, it will force itself into the investigators’ mouth. On the second success, it will have forced itself into the investigators’ lungs, and can no longer be removed without cutting its victim open. Fire, spells chemicals damage the Spawn normally, but it is immune to physical attacks, even those of enchanted weapons. Assess SAN cost as soon as the Spawn begins to move.

Once the Spawn’s chosen target has perished or escaped, it only attacks again if there are fewer than three people present. Otherwise, it squeezes itself into a crack in the wall and flees into the wilderness.

Meeting Guillaume

After these two encounters, the surviving investigators should be on their guard against anything and everything. Thus, it is the perfect time to introduce them to a potential ally, Brother Guillaume, of the Order of the Sword of St. Jerome. Abbot Quentin dispatched him with a potent magical artifact with which he hopes to defeat Adelard. The Order’s motives for wishing to save the investigators will vary depending on the keeper and the campaign. If the investigators belong to the Order, then its motive is simply to rescue its agents. If they do not, then most likely it has heard of the investigators’ past deeds. Perhaps it wishes to recruit them as allies, or perhaps it merely desires to learn their secrets. A sinister Order may resent their intrusion into its domain and intend to kill them itself when it is finished with them. If the keeper wishes to give the investigators extra help, other members of the Order may be travelling with Guillaume. The keeper may wish for players to take on the roles of Guillaume and his companions, especially if any players are newly arrived or if the team has already lost an investigator to death or insanity. Guillaume’s character sheet is included as a handout for this purpose.

When the investigators reach their next evening’s stop, a village some miles down the road, they learn from the inhabitants that someone has been asking about a party with their description. The person, whoever he is, arrived late the previous night, woke the innkeeper and made quite a commotion. He

was dressed as a monk, but had a martial air about him. As for where he is now, no one is quite sure. He rode off in the early morning. In fact, Guillaume has been searching for the investigators all day, but had to circle a considerable distance off the road to avoid Adelard and the knights. Now he is nearby, watching the investigators and assessing them to be certain they are not a trap laid for him by the Pastores.

Eventually, either Guillaume decides to risk contacting the investigators, or they will notice him trailing them. In the latter case, the investigators may decide to ambush the unknown monk. Should they kill him, they will be completely on their own, and are unlikely to discover the function of the soul jar in time to do themselves any good. If Guillaume has a chance to explain himself and his motives, he tells those not in his Order that he represents an alliance of clerics concerned about the Adoné and their influence. If any characters also belong to the Order, he gives a fuller explanation.

Guillaume claims that his friends are willing to hide the investigators from the Adoné, but first they must escape their pursuers. Guillaume cannot allow them to bring draw the Adoné's attention to the Convent of St. Savior. Before they can escape, they must kill Adelard and capture his soul. Guillaume explains that he and his friends have encountered Adelard and his master before. Even if slain, these sorcerers will return from the tomb. The only way to be sure that Adelard is dead is to use magic against him.

Guillaume then withdraws from his robe a corked jar of black glass scratched with a crude star. This, he explains, is a jar once used by King Solomon to imprison demons. If held next to someone's mouth or lips, it extracts their soul with their breath. The jar can only be used once every year and a day. If they plan to use it on Adelard, they must find some other way of dealing with his monsters. "Fortunately," Guillaume says, "I can claim some small skill at arms, and this is why the Abbot sent me rather than another." To outsiders he claims he was once a knight before joining the Benedictines; to other members of the Order, he explains that he is a member of the *Gladius Fraternus*. (*The Abbey*, 50.)

Guillaume begins to lead them south, towards safety, but he refuses to tell the investigators their destination until they have dispatched Adelard. How that is to be done depends on the ingenuity of the investigators. Merciful keepers may have Guillaume offer counsel. See the section, "Dealing with Adelard," below for some ideas.

Refugees

As the investigators lay their plans, they encounter another group of travelers on the road – a large party of refugees on foot. There are two related families traveling together: two brothers, their wives and children. Those on foot have bags slung over their shoulders, and push handcars. On their one

wagon rides a pregnant wife and an elderly mother. The refugees claim they are fleeing violence to the north – war between the Adoné and the other lords. The refugee party travels in the same direction as the investigators for perhaps half a day. The player characters may decide it is safer to travel with the refugees or they may attempt to keep them out of danger. The two brothers cannot be persuaded to abandon their journey, and in any case, an Idea roll will reveal that this is hardly a prudent course of action, if Adelard is following the investigators at a distance. Eventually, the road forks, and the refugees take the other fork.

Adelard and his monsters attack the refugees when and if they separate from the investigators. Adelard desires to vent his cruelty, and his creatures have grown hungry after the long chase. Sleipnir descends onto the refugees from the air, and the Formless Spawn emerge from the woods. Investigators should hear the cries, but arrive too late to save the families. The sight of the massacred and dismembered bodies incurs 1/1D4 SAN loss. Night soon follows, and the investigators must decide where to camp, and what their plans will be.

Dealing with Adelard

The scenario's finale should involve a confrontation between Adelard and the investigators. Even if the investigators decide to run, Adelard grows tired of toying with them, and decide to finish off any survivors, an event for which he will wish to be personally present. Adelard has many formidable resources at his command, and player characters must find some way to counter them. Perhaps the investigators can play on Adelard's vanity or cruelty to get an opportunity to use the jar. Sleipnir and the Spawn are vulnerable to fire. If the investigators light a fire or build a bonfire, they may be able to hold the monsters at bay, and force their human opponents to close with them.

The keeper may wish to even the odds in the investigators' favor. Perhaps Rollo has placed conditions on Adelard to further test his skills. For example, he might have ordered Sleipnir to act only as Adelard's mount, not to assist in the actual killing. Perhaps Adelard can only control one Spawn at a time. Perhaps, no matter how brutal the attack, the Order of St. Jerome will find one investigator, mutilated and broken, who manages to live long enough to pass along what the investigators have learned the next batch of player characters. Of course, keepers need not make any suggestions or concessions to the players. If the investigators stumbled into the scenario by making mistakes, then surviving should be the players' problem, not the keeper's.

If the investigators manage to kill Adelard or capture his soul, then his summoned creatures will depart. The Spawn slither away into the forest, and vanish. "Sleipnir" will take off into the sky, flying

north. The two Pastores knights fight to the death to protect Adelard or recover his body.

Conclusion

If the investigators survive their encounter with Adelard, reward 1D4 SAN. If they manage to slay him, reward another 1D4. Increase this reward to 1D6 if they capture his soul. Slaying Adelard's creatures or his human henchmen may give the investigators satisfaction, but they are incidental to the main plot, and are worth no SAN reward.

If Brother Guillaume survives, he will make good his promise and take the investigators to the monastery of St Savior. How safe this safe house proves depends on the keeper's plans for the Order. A benevolent Order makes an excellent ally, plot hook, and source of replacement investigators, but neither should the uses and pleasures of a cold, distant or even downright malevolent Order be underestimated.



Game Statistics

Sample Formless Spawn

(see CoC, p. 159)

Large

STR 34 CON 17 SIZ 40 INT 13 POW 12
DEX 20
HP 24 Move 12
Damage Bonus: +4D6

Medium

STR 26 CON 11 SIZ 33 INT 11 POW 10
DEX 18
HP 18 Move 12
Damage Bonus: +3D6

Small

STR	18	CON	9	SIZ
	20	INT	13	POW
	11	DEX	19	
HP	14	Move	12	
Damage Bonus: +2D6				

Miniature

STR	11	CON	8	SIZ
	3	INT	11	POW
	10	DEX	22	
HP	5	Move	12	
Damage Bonus: -1D6				

All Formless Spawn

Weapons: Whip 90%*, damage 1D6. May Grapple instead of doing damage; range is equal to SIZ in yards. Tentacle 60%, damage db. 1D3 attacks per round. May Grapple instead of doing damage; range is equal to SIZ in yards. Bludgeon 20%, damage greater of 2D6 or db. Miniature Spawn may not Bludgeon.

Armor: Immune to all physical weapons, even magical ones. Spells, fire and chemicals affect them normally.

Sanity Loss: 1/1D10

Handout: Brother Guillaume, age 31

You are a member of the Order of the Sword of St. Jerome, a secret Order in the Church that watches for the devil and his minions. For some time, your Order has watched the Adoné, but they are too powerful to confront directly, as they control the Bishop of Begon. You prefer not to tell anyone your Order exists, so you pretend to be Benedictine. Pagans or heretics do not especially bother you or your Order, as you have long worked with people from the fringes of society. You've seen real devils and what they can do.

Your Order is trying to collect information before it strikes; you know that the investigators have encountered the Adoné, and are pursued by Adelard the Breton, an apprentice sorcerer. You need to find the PCs, learn what they know and take the information to the Monastery of the Holy Savior near Toulouse. Preferably, you'd like the investigators to come with you, so the Abbot can talk to them personally. You know a few sympathetic hermitages and monasteries along the way.

You know that Adelard studied under the terrible Rollo the Dane, of the Hermitage of St. Sathojué, near Begon. Adelard has the command of a creature you've named the "Terrible Horse," gifted to him by his master. This creature can fly and cannot be hurt by mortal weapons. Adelard can also summon one or more creatures you've heard called "Liquid Deaths," but you don't know much about them. Reports indicate that Adelard can see through his monsters' senses.

You can offer the PCs gold, or safe haven at the Monastery. (But you represent yourself as part of a network of concerned Churchmen, rather than as a member of a secret Order.) You must not let Adelard not discover the existence of the Order, so you must escape his pursuit or kill him before you arrive at the Convent of St. Savior. You've fought sorcerers before, and you know they can come back from the grave. So you have a soul jar to suck out his soul and keep it prisoner forever.

Brother Guillaume, age 31

STR 12 CON 13 SIZ 13 INT 14 POW 15
APP 8 DEX 10 EDU 16 SAN 65
HP 12 Magic Points 15

Idea 70% Luck 80%

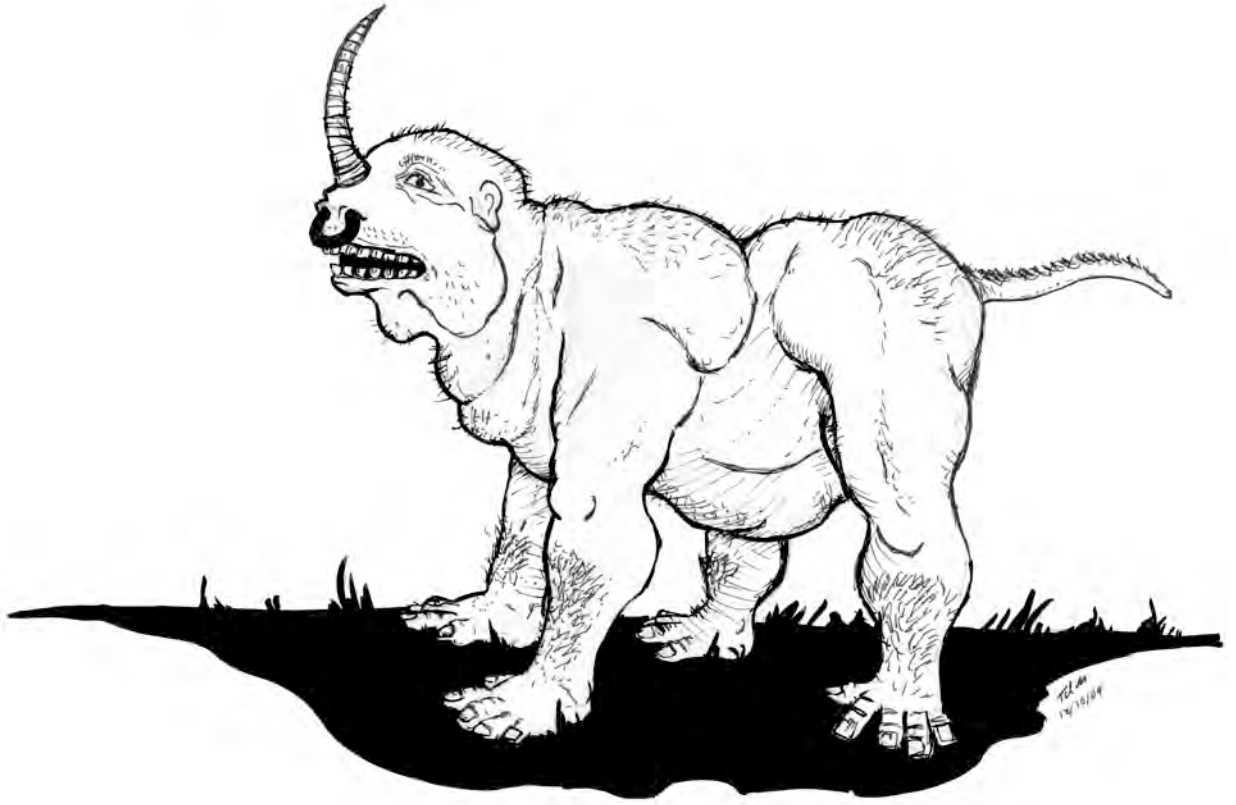
Damage Bonus: +1D4

Skills: Cthulhu Mythos 12%, Dodge 50%, Fast Talk 45%, Insight 45%, Library Use 50%, Listen 35%, Navigate 35%, Occult 35%, Other Language: Latin 60%, Own Kingdom 50%, Persuade 40%, Ride Horse 30%, Spot Hidden 35%, Status 25%

Attacks: Small Knife 50%, damage 1d4 + db, long sword, damage 60%, damage 1d8 + db

Item: Soul Jar. Once uncorked, the jar will attempt to pull the soul out of anyone whose breath touches its open mouth. Match the jar's POW of 18 against the target. On a success, the target's soul is sucked into the jar. The body continues to live, but falls into a deep sleep. If the soul is not released by breaking the jar, then the body will eventually die of thirst or starvation. The jar can only be used once every year and a day.





Pastores Scenario IV: *The Singing Flesh-Beasts of St. Simon*



“Sinite pueros venire ad me.”

“Suffer the little children to come unto me.”

Luke 18:16

In this scenario, the investigators' contact sends them to the monastery of St. Simon's, where they are to determine the trustworthiness of its Abbot. There they will encounter the treachery of the Pastores and uncover the fate of the monastery's child oblates. The scenario as written is most suitable for an ongoing campaign in which the investigators have already encountered the Pastores but with slight modification may be run as a one-shot or as part of an unrelated campaign. It might also serve well as an introduction to a Pastores campaign for an experienced party, although its level of difficulty exceeds that of "The Tree with White Fruit."

My Old Friend, Brother Eustace...

The scenario begins when investigators' contact summons them for a mission. Ecclesiastical contacts best suit the scenario, but the keeper can use any NPC that the investigators trust, provided that he or she had an opportunity to meet Brother Eustace in the past. Alternatively, one of the investigators can know Brother Eustace him or herself, and initiate the mission spontaneously. The scenario as written assumes that Abbot Quentin is the investigators' contact, and that together they are working actively to defeat the Pastores.

The Abbot Quentin personally contacts any investigators residing at St. Savior; to those residing elsewhere he sends a monk as messenger. Once all the investigators have arrived, the Abbot Quentin invites them to his office; if there are any female investigators present, he meets them all in the guest building. He says: "My friends, I think we may have a new ally in the fight against our mutual foes, the heretics and worshipers of Satan. The Bishop of Toulouse has appointed my old friend, Brother Eustace, to be Abbot of the monastery of St. Simon. Once, many years ago, Eustace and I defeated a terrible demon, the Toad of Lyons. Surely, this experience will make him receptive to our cause. Go to him; persuade him to aid us. St. Simon lies far from the main roads. Eustace could conceal those whom we have rescued from the heretic's grasp. I fear we will have great need for such a place; St. Savior cannot safely conceal the many who will need shelter in days to come. Remind him of our battle against the Toad, and take with you this ring, my family token. He will surely recognize it."

Abbot Quentin has never visited St. Simon, but he knows where it lies. The monastery is remote, yet noted for its charity towards child oblates, and its children's choir is famous throughout the region. As St. Simon's was not connected to any rich families, the Bishop of Toulouse was able to secure Eustace's election to St. Simon's to further his career, even though the local monks favored another candidate. Quentin has not seen Eustace since the latter left his previous abbey and traveled to his current appointment at the behest of Bishop of Toulouse, but he has received several letters.

Abbot Quentin informs any monks of the Order of the Sword of St. Jerome that Eustace does not belong to their Order. He does not explain further to anyone the story of the Toad, as its memory lies too heavily on him.

Travel to the Abbey

The keeper can adjust the difficulty of travel depending on the season, the starting point of the investigators and the needs of the campaign. The weather should still be warm enough for it to rain. En route, a storm lashes the region and floods the rivers. The investigators do not have the benefits of modern weatherproofing gear or tents, and so will likely find the experience a miserable or even dangerous one. Where the road crosses rivers or streams, they find the usual fords difficult or impassible.

Eventually, the investigators near the monastery, which they see sitting on the bend of a river with its back to a deep forest. The road parallels the river, and passes through a village about six miles before reaching the monastery proper. If the hour grows dark, the investigators may consider staying in the village for the night.

When the investigators reach the village, they find it nearly deserted, but notice some commotion by the river's edge. Presuming they investigate, they see a group of peasant men and women gathered around a wet tarp. One of the women wails terribly and periodically clutches the bundle; the others seem to be comforting her. One of the men sees the investigators approaching, and rises to greet them. He says:

"I am called Laurent, sirs. I doubt you'll want to burden yourself with the distressing sight here. Thomas and Matthew dredged a body from the river, and it's sent Eleanor over the edge. If you're tired or hungry, Guillaume in the big house brews our beer, and he can take you in for the night." The man points to one of the larger cottages.

To obtain a closer look, the investigators can simply push Laurent, or convince him to let them pass with good role-playing or a successful roll against Fast Talk, Status or Persuade. If they approach the group, the weeping woman immediately assail them, pawing at their clothing and crying, "It's my son, I tell you, it's little Philippe." The other villagers will try to calm her (without much success), telling her "Hush now, Philippe is safe at the monastery. He'll be a little monk, he will."

If the investigators have been even remotely civil, one of the villagers explains that Eleanor's husband died recently in a local skirmish between lords, and she and several other new widows were forced by hunger to give up their sons as oblates to the monastery. "Eleanor took it harder than most, and for the last few weeks she's been obsessed about her son, thinking she sees him everywhere. And when they found this body, well..." If the investigators have acted rudely, they must work for the story. Eleanor, who is quite obviously mad, interrupts, saying things such as "It's him, I swear. It's got his little hands." She also tries to unwrap the cloth, which the other villagers are busy tying shut and carrying away.

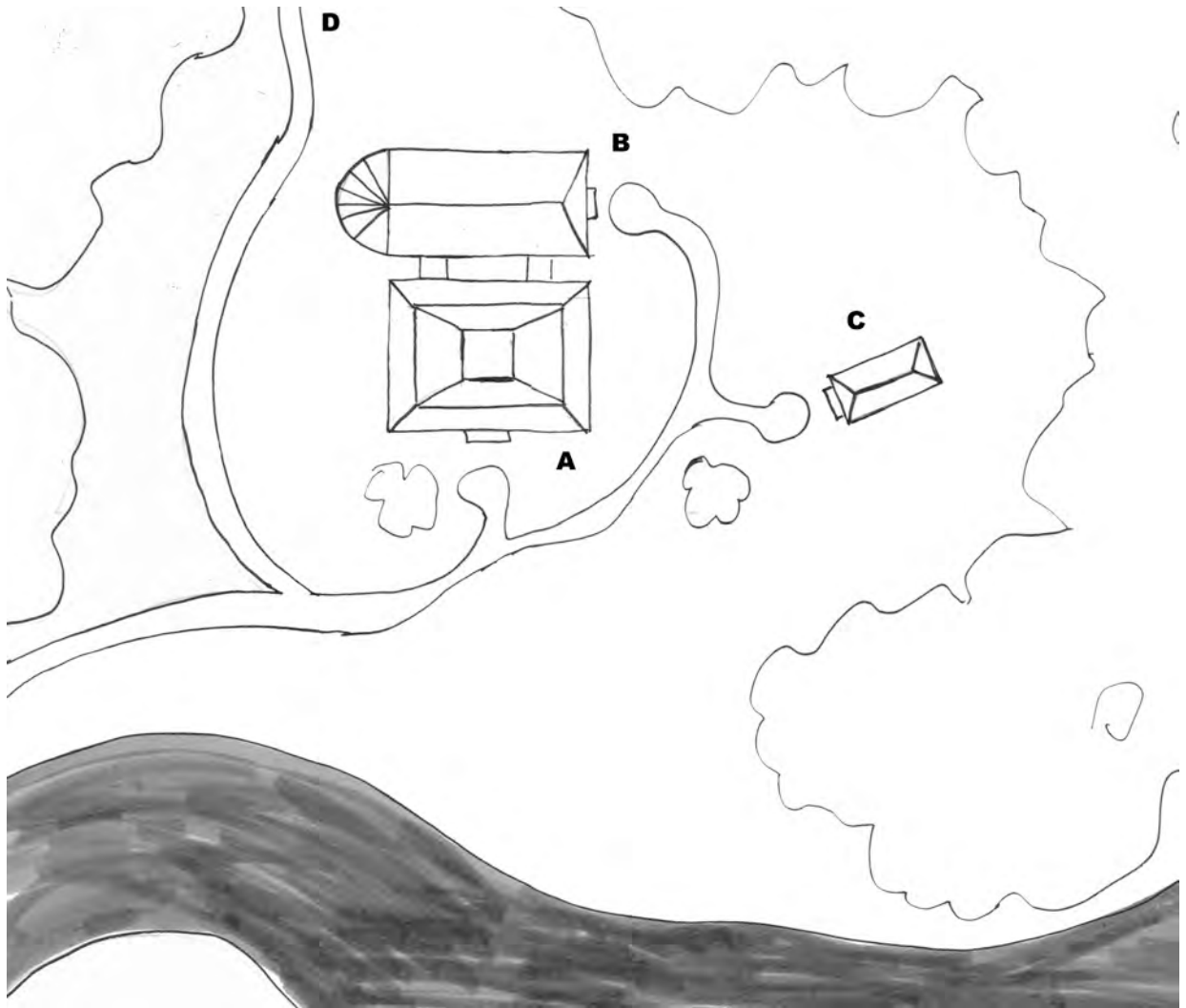
The investigators probably insist on seeing for themselves what is in the cloth. The villagers unwrap it for them if it become obvious that the strangers are not to be satisfied otherwise. They warn that the sight is a bit gruesome. Inside the tarp lies the body of male child, perhaps ten years of age. The corpse has suffered some mutilation, perhaps at the hands of the river or of wild beasts. Its head is missing and its torso has been hollowed out so that the lungs and heart are removed. A successful Medicine roll reveals that although decay and beasts have had their way with the corpse, there are also clean cuts that resemble sword or knife wounds. Viewing the corpse costs 0/1D3 SAN.

Eleanor insists that she recognizes the body's hands and clothing as belonging to her own son, Philippe. The investigators have several reasons to doubt her. The body and clothing are so rotten and nondescript that precise identification seems impossible. Eleanor is obviously wracked with regret over surrendering her child, and is, moreover, insane.

Soon, the party returns to the village. They lay the tarp and body to rest in a barn prior to burial, then most of the hangers-on retire to Guillaume's house for ale. There the investigators have a second chance to discover what is going on, and ask any other questions they like.

The inhabitants happily inform them that their village, also called St. Simon's, belongs to the Abbot and provides a portion of its food. The villagers particularly like the monks because they keep to themselves and also do the good work of taking in orphans during these times of battle. Some lords called the Adoné have been making trouble near Begon, and the ripple effects are being felt "even out here, where the local lords squabble over what's left." The villagers' general liking for the monks does not completely mask their resentment over their feudal obligations. Several say they are glad that the tax collector, Brother Paschal, was not made Abbot after all.

The villagers seem to know or have guessed that the investigators are on their way to the monastery. This may seem sinister, but in fact, the road does not go any further. If the investigators seem friendly, the villagers may ask them to carry items or messages to the Abbot, in particular a request for a priest to conduct the burial of the body. Just then, Eleanor bursts in, and begs the investigators to take her with them to the monastery, so she can ask them "what they did to my little Philippe." The villagers try to calm her down. The investigators may agree or not, as they see fit, but if they do not take her along one or two of Eleanor's comforters request that the investigators check with the monks about her son "just to reassure her."



Arrival at the Abbey

The monastery of St. Simon lies in along a bend in the river. It consists of a two-story dormitory and cloister (A), and immediately to one side, a freestanding church (B), all of stone. Two covered, windowless walkways connect the cloister and the church, permitting the monks and novices to pass between them without exposure to the weather. A smaller stone cottage occupies part of the grounds (C). A small path (D) leads away into the woods.

The monks of St. Simon are probably working in the fields when the investigators arrive, with or without Eleanor or other villagers in tow. The nearest monk bids the investigators welcome and offers the kiss of peace. On hearing their business, he offers to fetch Brother Paschal, the Abbot's secretary.

Brother Paschal turns out to be a man of middle years and slightly short stature. He apologizes that the Abbot "is busy with administrative work, but will see you after you have had a few hours' rest." If the hour is late, he suggests an appointment for the morning. In the meantime, he shows them to the stone cottage on the grounds, which he refers to as the "guest house." Inside, they find several monastic-style cells arranged around a central chamber. A

sturdy door leads out and in, and can be barred from within. He also fetches them food and drink. Brother Paschal regrets that the visitors cannot visit the cloister building and view its many fine sculptures, but, according to the rule used at St. Simon, the structure is forbidden to any but monks and novices. For this reason, he orders a monk to bring them meals in the guest house, "straight from the Abbot's table," and in the meantime offers them refreshment. Finally, he invites them to visit at the church for hourly Offices or for personal devotion at other times. The children's choir, he says, will be performing at Offices, and he recommends that they hear them at least once before they leave.

Eleanor's Son

If the investigators ask to see Eleanor's son, Philippe, or if they have brought her with them, Brother Paschal tells them that her son is sequestered with the other oblates and should not be visiting with a lay woman, even his mother. He can confirm that they have taken in fourteen new novices following the recent battle, and that all are settling in well.

When he sees how distressed Eleanor is, or if the investigators press the matter, Brother Paschal reluctantly concedes that the situation is unusual, and

that perhaps an exception can be made. He will check with the Abbot. When Brother Paschal returns, he tells them the Abbot has given permission for Eleanor to speak to her son through the screen over the oblate's section of the church's choir.

The rear part of the choir is divided. On one side there are the usual tiered benches for the adult monks (M). On the other, there is a thick wooden screen that obscures the view within almost completely (L). Brother Paschal explains that one of the two walkways connects to the rear of the screened-in section. Out of respect for their vocation and years, the novices always perform from behind a screen.

The investigators hear a scraping from behind the screen, as though a door were opening, then several sets of footsteps. They hear some low childlike whispering, perhaps of several different voices. Then Philippe speaks from behind the screen. He assures them that he is well treated, and alive, but seems a bit distracted, perhaps as though he has been drugged. He (or perhaps some other child) occasionally mutters unintelligibly.

Eleanor, if she is present, asks various questions of her son, and perhaps requests that Philippe holds her hand or give her a kiss through the screen. The investigators can see the tips of fingers, and the outline of Philippe's face when the latter occurs.

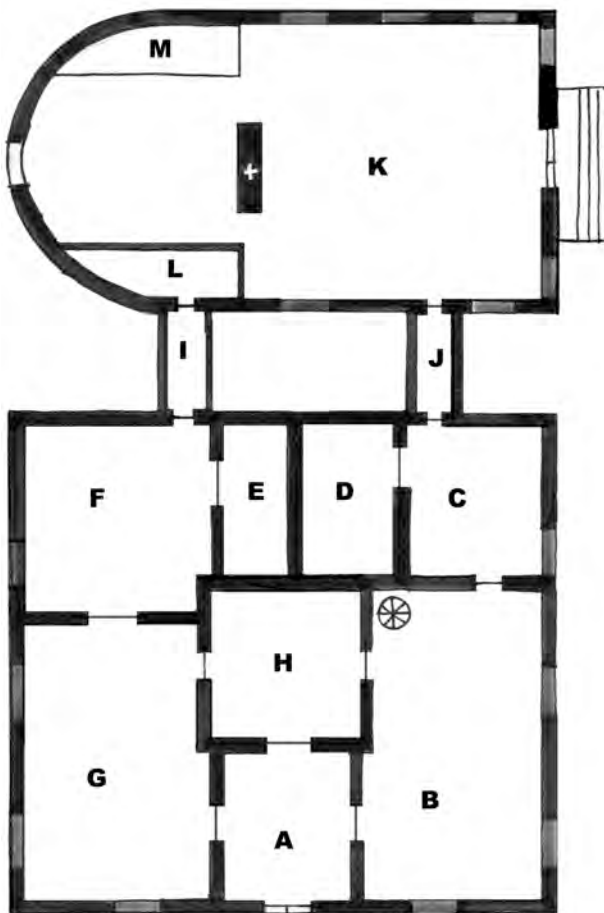
Then, suddenly, Eleanor starts screaming, "It's not him! He's dead! He's dead!" and has to be pulled away and calmed down. The investigators may wish to ask questions of Philippe as well. Eventually, Brother Paschal tells them that the interview is over, and asks the monks within the screen to Philippe back to the cloister.

In sum, the investigators should suspect that there's more going on behind the screen than is normal, but not be so alarmed that they immediately try to break it down. The keeper should attempt to restrain them from violence this early in the scenario, but if they do not, the monks pull "Philippe" back into the tunnel and use whatever force they must to get the investigators to leave. Under such provocation, they can call upon the villagers and the local lord to enforce their rights and privacy.

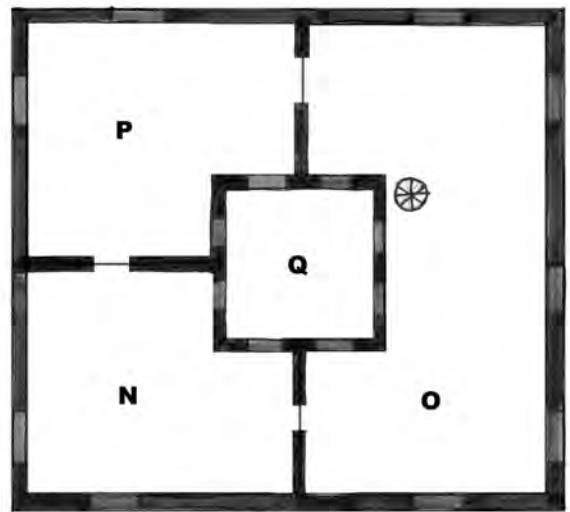
If the investigators are still unsatisfied by this demonstration, the monks introduce them to Robert, a young monk who has recently taken full monastic vows and may by the customs of the Order now leave seclusion. He, too, assures them that all is well.

The Offices

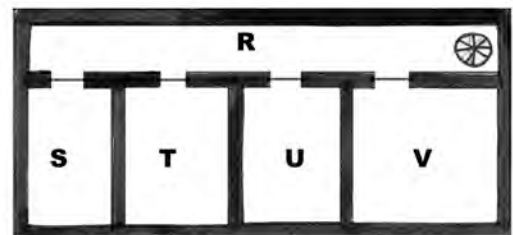
St. Simon's, like other Benedictine monasteries of the Early Middle Ages, holds Divine Office seven



Ground Floor



Upper Floor



Basement

times a day, once for each of the canonical hours. Thus the church (K) should be in use periodically from early morning until late at night. The monastery's church is kept open and unlocked at all hours. The investigators will probably wish to attend at least one Office, if for no other reason than to try to discover more about the mysterious children's choir.

For each Office, first the bells ring to inform the scattered monks to assemble. They enter either through the main door or the side-door (J) that leads to the cloister. According to the rule, all the monks who are able should attend. In practice, only about twenty-five of the forty monks show up for any given Office during the daylight, as the others have work in the fields or scriptorium to which they must attend. At night, all but the ill or infirm attend. The monks assemble along the choir benches (M). The novitiates enter their section of the choir (L) via the second side-tunnel (I). Investigators hear the doors open, and the disjointed babble of children's voices. Visitors must stand in the nave, which is usually empty, although anyone may attend any Office. The church also serves the people of the village below and occasionally one may see a particularly pious villager present at nones or vespers.

Much of the Office consists of reading in Latin. Investigators who speak Latin will recognize it as the prescribed Benedictine readings. The chanting and the hymns, however, are remarkably well performed. Even Investigators with no musical skill can tell that the children's choir is excellent. Investigators with any degree of musical skill are even more impressed – the children have a raw talent combined with a depth of skill rarely attained at such young ages. The adult choir sings only moderately well, when it sings at all.

The Abbot does not attend the first Office immediately after the investigators arrive. Brother Paschal conducts the proceedings instead. In subsequent Offices, the Abbot is present, looking preoccupied and drowsy, and speaking no more than necessary. He does not even turn to look at Brother Paschal, who sits immediately behind him.

Investigators who do not attend the Offices can still hear the singing and chanting from any point on the monastery grounds. Those who listen attentively to Offices, and have a knowledge of Benedictine ritual, may notice that the Offices sound slightly different at times when no visitor is present. Further investigations require sneaking up to the Church unseen; see the section on breaking in, below.

Meeting the Abbot

After a few hours have passed, a monk arrives at the guesthouse to tell the investigators that Abbot Eustace is now ready to meet them. He directs them to the Church, where they find the Abbot sitting in

the choir stalls, with Brother Paschal to one side. The Abbot speaks slowly, as though tired or ill. Paschal says little, but gazes intently at the Abbot's face as he speaks.

The investigators may object to Brother Paschal's presence, or wonder why Eustace trusts him so fully, given that he was his rival in the election. Eustace assures them that the Brother is trustworthy, and that his help has proven invaluable in healing any rifts left over from the election. If the investigators insist, he agrees to meet with them privately. See the section "A Second Meeting" for how to handle such an eventuality.

Eustace listens to their request and answers their questions politely, always speaking in a monotone. He remembers Quentin well, but his present duties take up a great deal of his time, and he seems reluctant to help. If the investigators warn him about the Pastores, heretics or other magical dangers, Brother Paschal gives a gasp of shock, but Eustace will listen gravely, and ask questions to clear up any disputed points. For his part, Eustace avers that he knows of no unorthodox activities. If appropriate he suggests that Abbot Quentin and the Bishop of Toulouse might have political motives to distrust Bishop Raphael of Begon. After all, the latter's see was only recently established, in part from lands formerly belonging to the diocese of Toulouse.

If the investigators press Eustace about his old friendship with Quentin, and especially about the Toad of Lyons, they may notice gaps in his memory. He does not immediately recognize the ring Quentin has given them, but he does say it has been a long time. Eventually, he says that he must consider the matter carefully, and weigh the dangers involved for the monks under his care. He will give them an answer the following day.

What's Really Going On

The Monastery itself is (surprise, surprise) a cult center for a cult loosely connected to the Pastores cult of Shub-Niggurath. The monks worship the All-Mother especially through song, and they select from the oblates those with the finest voices. They remove the children's heads and lungs and surgically transplant them onto the bodies of immobile slug-like creatures. (They resemble superficially the skin-beasts made much later by the Brothers of the Skin; it is up to the keeper to decide if the connection is more than coincidence.) Each creature has multiple heads, which sing together in a chorus. Three of the recent oblates, including Philippe, have already been decapitated in this manner. Their bodies, prepared for burial, were washed into the river during the flood. One of these was the body that the villagers found; the keeper can decide whether it was in fact, Philippe's, or if Eleanor was mistaken. It doesn't much matter either way. Oblates with poor voices are either ritually castrated and inducted into the cult or, more commonly, sacrificed. Another two boys have

been marked for the cult. The remainder will be sacrificed in a few days, when the moon is full.

The monks did not wish for Eustace to become Abbot (their candidate was Brother Paschal), but had to bow to the Bishop of Toulouse's pressures or risk exposure. Brother Paschal thought he had solved their problem by having Eustace locked in the basement, and using a mind control spell on him whenever he had to make a public appearance. The unexpected arrival of the investigators surprised him, as did the unexpected questions about their oblates. Hoping to satisfy the visitors, Paschal ordered the monks to bring the Flesh-Beast with Philippe's head into the choir. They drugged its "body" and as many of the other heads as they could without putting Philippe's head to sleep. Unfortunately, even drugged, the other heads could only barely be made to shut up.

Before the meeting between the Abbot and the investigators could take place, Paschal had to retrieve him from the dungeon and dominate him with his mind control spell. He had to be present for the interview, because he can only control Eustace if he can see him. Paschal had thought that the first real test of the "Abbot Eustace" ruse was working well until the investigators mentioned the Pastores. Now Paschal has to decide how best to protect his brother monks and serve the larger cult at the same time.

Paschal still prefers to continue his original plan. If he can convince the investigators to leave, and even better, to take "Eustace" into their confidence in the fight against the Pastores, then he will have averted disaster and provided a valuable source of information for the rest of the cult. To that end, he is prepared for "Eustace" to promise almost anything to the investigators, provided it suits his long-term goals.

Yet Paschal knows that his ruse is not entirely convincing, and that he might be better off simply killing the investigators. He would prefer to arrange matters so that they die on the road back to St. Savior, as this would deflect suspicion from his monastery. He may try to get the investigators to leave, even if they seem suspicious, and then use the Pastores' resources to murder them on the way back. This could lead to Scenario III, if the keeper has not already run it for the party, or Paschal could call on Brother Scipio, or summon some Arbors and send them after the investigators instead.

Finally, if the investigators seem to be an immediate threat, have shown undue curiosity or have already offered violence, Paschal may decide his best course of action is to kill them immediately. He will have the investigators watched until the monks have a chance to perform a ceremony to summon a few Arbores, then he will mercilessly exterminate them.

Further Developments

How the scenario proceeds from here depends on Brother Eustace's decision regarding the investigators. He may change his mind suddenly in response to events. (For example, if the investigators are caught breaking into the cloister). His last resort will always be to summon the Arbores in a ceremony and send them after the investigators. The investigators had best avoid this outcome, as they are unlikely to survive an encounter with such dangerous opponents. Fortunately, the monks themselves make poor combatants, and the ceremony itself can be disrupted in several ways. The investigators also have potential allies in the nearby villagers.

A Second Meeting

If Brother Paschal has decided not to kill the investigators right away, he summons them back for another meeting with the Abbot. Through his puppet "Eustace," he is prepared to offer the investigators his abbey's assistance against the Pastores. This is, of course, just a ruse, but he only has to be convincing enough to get them to leave peaceably. He does not permit the investigators to meet Philippe (or any other recent oblate), but he might allow a male cleric into the cloister for a brief tour, avoiding the obviously incriminating areas.

If the investigators insist, "Eustace" agrees to a private meeting. He suggests that they meet him for a walk down by the river, "where we cannot be overheard." Paschal secretly watches them from one of the cloister's upper windows, maintaining his line of sight to Abbot Eustace at all time. If for any reason his view is blocked (for example, if a large investigator stands behind Eustace), Eustace stops talking abruptly, and perhaps falls over. Once the connection has been restored "Eustace" explains this as an illness, and confesses that it is one reason he has been indisposed so often recently.

Breaking into the Abbey

At some point during the evening or night, the investigators will probably wish to break into the cloister building. Due to the divine offices, and other duties, at least some monks are awake at any given time. Approaching either the cloister or the church requires several Sneak rolls: one to exit the guesthouse without being observed, a second to cross the open space between, and a third to reach the walls of the building. Assess a -10% penalty if the investigators make their move in daylight. Once investigators have reached the wall, they can listen in to one of the Offices or attempt to break into the church, cloister or connecting walkways.

From just outside the church, an investigator can hear loud speech or song from within. If the monks do not know anyone is listening, they speak unguardedly and use a Pastores liturgy instead of the standard one. Listening to their blasphemous prayers

in this fashion costs 0/1D2 SAN to those who understand Latin.

Investigators can enter the church through the main doors, but anyone inside will spot them unless they succeed in another Sneak roll. There is no easy way for investigators to tell if there is a monk engaged in silent prayer before they make the attempt, as the windows sit high off the ground and do not offer a view of the entire interior. Investigators can also try to climb to the church's roof and break into the rafters. This requires a Climb roll, and a Repair/Devise roll to open the roof silently.

Once inside the church, investigators may wish to examine the children's choir more closely. The wooden screen is not designed to open, but they Investigators may break it. It has a STR of 20, if they are pulling on it. Ten HP of damage with an axe creates a sufficiently large gap for an adult human to shoulder their way inside. Any such demolition makes plenty of noise unless accompanied by a successful Repair/Devise roll. Inside the children's choir, there are no stalls, only a pair of raised benches about three feet high and six feet long.

The walkways form an obvious point of entry into the cloister. They are low to the ground and relatively easy to climb. (+10 to climb rolls.) The roofing is thatch, and someone on the walkway roof can peer inside or let him or herself down easily. The space between the two buildings is unlit, with a door on each end. Each door is barred from the cloister side, but they can be forced with a STR roll of 25 or chopped down with 20 HP of damage. The bars can also be forced up with a Repair/Devise roll at -20%. Again, noise should be a problem for the investigators. Investigators entering either walkway (I or J) from the church will thus have to bypass two sets of doors.

The cloister can also be entered through one of the open windows on the upper story or via its roof. This requires two Climb rolls and a Sneak roll as well. Inside, the cloister offers few places to hide. The monks had better be away celebrating the Offices, summoning Arborea, or tending to some distraction, or the investigators will soon be discovered. The keeper should decide whether any of the rooms are occupied, based on the current situation. Assuming the investigators have free run of the place, they will quickly determine that their suspicions were well founded.

Mundane Rooms

A is an entrance hall, B and O, the adult dormitories, C a dining hall, and D the kitchen. G is the refractory. H is an interior courtyard holding a small garden. P serves as a library. The interior decorations and carvings on the upper floor depict horrible pictures of the Mother and Son. These cause 0/1D3 SAN loss if examined closely.

The Novice's Dormitory (F)

The novices' dormitory holds approximately a dozen beds, but only a few beds seem to have been occupied recently. The others are dusty, and some do not even have bed-coverings. An Idea roll reveals that there are far too few beds to contain the number of children heard singing during offices. Some or all of the monastery's six novices may be present, depending on the hour and circumstances.

The Flesh-Beast's Room (F)

The monks use this room to house the Flesh-Beasts as well as to perform operations on the existing ones. This room, adjoining the novice's dormitory, is normally kept locked at all time. Inside there are no beds, only a half-dozen raised stone platforms, about 3' tall, like those used in a tomb. A drainage hole sits in the center of the sloped floor, and the floor, platforms and walls are covered in a foul slime. Near the door, lies a smallish palanquin with wooden sides pierced by air holes. One of its carrying poles is broken.

On one wall there is what appears to be a torture device, child-sized, with restraints for the chest, arms, and legs. It is covered in old blood, and in a chest nearby are a collection of knives and saws. Successfully deducing their purpose costs 0/1D3 SAN.

If the Flesh-Beasts are not singing the Offices or participating in the summoning ceremony, then they may be present here, lounging on the stone platforms and chattering to themselves.

The Children's Prison (U):

The monks imprison their surplus oblates in this chamber between sacrifices. Of the fourteen recent inductees, the monks found only five suitable for their purposes. They have kept the others here, in this dark stone room, feeding them only as often as necessary. Depending on the circumstances, they may be present still, awaiting rescue, or away being sacrificed. The stink and filth remains in either case.

The Abbot's Prison (V)

The Abbot Eustace gets somewhat better treatment, as the monks hope to keep him alive for several more years. When present, he lies on the straw cot, or paces the cell. Paschal drains his will prior to using the mind control spell on him, so before or after any meeting with the investigators, Eustace is numbed and immobile. At other times, he is alert, but thin and starved. He has little idea what goes on the monastery above him, and has only foggy memories of his public appearances.



Brother Paschal's Office (N)

The office contains a few books and papers, but is otherwise quite spartan. The keeper can add some sort of written hint in the form of letters, a chronicle, or a Mythos tome, if he feels the investigators need a hint, otherwise it's all just mundane paperwork.

Getting On Like a House on Fire

If Brother Paschal decided upon the immediate death of the investigators, he orders a few of the stronger monks to confine the investigators to the guesthouse. The chosen monks wait until they think all the investigators are inside, then swiftly bar the house's single door from outside by forcing a beam through its ample handle. Investigators who are awake are likely to hear this. (Have them each make a Listen roll.) The monks do not answer any hails or respond to pleas. The investigators can try to escape their makeshift prison. The door has 30 HPs, and can be attacked by any one character at a time. Axes do normal damage, but swords, daggers, etc. only half. Two characters can combine their STR to force the door vs. a STR of 35. It is also possible to climb up through the thatched roof with two Climb rolls.

The monks are waiting for any such attempt and bludgeon investigators as they use the door or come out onto the roof. If it looks like the investigators will escape anyway, the monks set the building on fire, then flee. The smoke affects investigators inside long before the fire itself does (unless they are on the roof – straw burns rapidly.) Treat smoke inhalation as drowning, and add standard fire damage for those who insist on standing in burning thatch.

In any case, if the monks are blockading the guesthouse, then the ceremony is probably already underway, and Brother Paschal and the rest of the monks will soon return with Arbores to finish the job.

The Ceremony

If Brother Paschal decides to kill the investigators immediately, he begins preparations for a ceremony immediately after dispatching a guard to the guesthouse. The other monks gather in the chapel with all the remaining, unrescued oblates. The child-Flesh-Beasts sing a few hymns, then they are loaded up into covered palanquins, and the whole procession exits the Church and heads into the woods. Investigators witnessing the procession from a distance may mistakenly conclude that the missing oblates are imprisoned in the palanquins. Keepers should encourage them in this delusion, if possible.

The investigators can hardly fail to notice the procession's departure from anywhere on the monastery grounds, unless they are unconscious or otherwise entirely occupied. Even the windows of the guesthouse afford a view. They may decide to follow the procession (provided they are not locked up in the guesthouse) or use the opportunity to investigate the cloister. No Sneak rolls are necessary for the

investigators to follow the procession at a distance; the crowd is too noisy and large to notice pursuers.

The procession's destination is a large flat rock overlooking a forested valley. A bonfire is burning there. (Investigators can find the place from its smoke by making a successful Track roll.) Once the monks arrive at the rock, they assemble into a semi-circle, with the open end towards the valley. The carriers set down the palanquins and remove the tops and sides. Any observers have a good view of the mass of heads thus revealed – all of them child-sized, many of them old and wizened. The heads begin to sing, and the monks chant expectantly, staring at the edge of the clearing. Assess SAN cost as for viewing three Flesh-Beasts. After a few minutes of singing and chanting, several Arbores will emerge and stand just outside of the firelight. The monks summon as many Arbores as they think the situation warrants. Three should be sufficient for most parties of investigators, but if the investigators have revealed significant magical or martial prowess, or have been particularly annoying or clever, the monks can call a half dozen. If the monks have any oblates left, they send them forth to be devoured by the Trees. If not, they send one or two younger novices, like Brother Robert, who go willingly to their deaths. (The grisly sight costs observers 1/1D10 SAN regardless of the choice of victim.) Once the Arbores have finished consuming any victims, Brother Paschal (or the senior surviving monk, if Paschal has died) emerges from the circle, commanding them in a loud voice to seek out the investigators and slay them.

The investigators may wish to interrupt the ceremony. Results should vary depending on when and how they choose to intervene. Of the various elements of the ceremony, the song of a single head from a single Flesh-Beast is sufficient to summon and bind the Arbores. The chanting, the sacrifices, and so forth, have theological and emotional significance for the monks, but they may dispense with them altogether in an emergency. The Flesh-Beast must sing for 2D6 minutes to call the Arbores; they then require another 2D6 rounds of song to bind the creatures once they have arrived. The Flesh-Beasts have many heads; all of them are totally insane. If struck, heads near the wound may cry out, but other heads continue to sing. Investigators must slay all the heads, or kill the body, to silence a Flesh-Beast completely. All three beasts must die to prevent the summoning and binding.

In the interval between the time when the Arbores have arrived and when they are fully bound, the monsters do not attack unless attacked first, but simply stand and watch for as long as the child-Flesh-Beasts continue to sing. Any attack on any Arbor during the binding period enrages them all. They go berserk and attack any humans present, starting with the perpetrators. Binding may continue as normal. If the children's song is disrupted, the Arbores depart peaceably, unless already in melee.

If the ceremony is attacked, the monks do not hesitate to break their circle and defend the Flesh-Beasts. They are not particularly formidable opponents, but they should doubtless outnumber the investigators. Brother Paschal has a few useful spells that he may employ. The monks flee if they are clearly outmatched, then return to complete the ceremony later. If all the Flesh-Beasts have perished, they select a chorus from their own numbers to perform the same function.

The Arbores Hunt

If Brother Paschal or another monk successfully summons the Arbores, he tasks them with hunting down and destroying the investigators. The keeper should play this for effect and atmosphere rather than as a tactical confrontation. The Arbores prefer to remain in forested terrain, where they can move almost silently, and emerge from the shadows of the forest at any times, their long limbs snaking towards unwary investigators. The terrain surrounding the village and the monastery is heavily forested. Even the riverbanks have overhanging trees. The investigators cannot simply avoid the woods forever. If they try, keepers should remember that the Arbores can also hide submerged completely in water, or, failing that, concealed by the night's darkness.

The Village

The investigators have potential allies in the village, if they can make it there safely, and if they can convince the villagers that something is amiss. The villagers have had amicable relations with the monks for generations, and are unlikely to believe investigators spouting wild tales about cults and sacrifices. A plausible lie (such as, "the monastery is on fire – see the smoke?") may get the investigators farther than the truth. If the villagers discover that the monks are cultists, by witnessing an Arbor, a Flesh-Beast, or seeing the inside of the upper floor of the cloister, they become outraged and willing to help representatives of the true Church, but hardly become suicidal. The villagers may suggest calling on the local lords for assistance; this can have varying results depending on who the lords are, whether they will listen, and whether they have any Pastores families in their bloodlines.

If the investigators manage to mount a large-scale attack on the monastery, the monks flee into the forest and mountains, burning the evidence of their crimes behind them.

Consequences

At the scenario's end the investigators should hopefully have survived and brought some measure of justice to the monks of St. Simon. They may also have learned the dangers of trusting the ecclesiastical hierarchy of the region. If they appealed successfully to the villagers or to their lords, they may have gained new allies. On the other hand, surviving investigators might be on the run, fleeing from the Pastores' wrath. This too, could be a learning experience of sorts, but not one worth any Sanity points.

If the investigators rescued the surviving children, they should receive 1D6 SAN points. If they saved poor Abbot Eustace, grant them another 1D2 SAN. If Eleanor survives and is not confronted with the truth of what happened to Philippe, grant another 1D3 SAN. Should the monks be slain, driven away, or otherwise defeated, award 1D6 SAN.

Game Statistics

Brother Paschal, age 41

Brother Paschal is a man of middling years, a round, somewhat jowly face, and a soft voice. He masquerades as the polite, deferential secretary of the Abbot Eustace, but even in this guise, he reveals a quiet confidence and the willingness to defend his Brothers' privacy and customs. Like all Pastores, he is castrated.

STR 12 CON 11 SIZ 10 INT 13 POW 13
DEX 10 APP 13 EDU 15 SAN 0
HP 11 Magic Points 13 Move 8

Damage bonus: +0

Attacks: Fist 50% damage 1D3+ db, Small Knife 25%, damage 1D4

Skills: Accounting 55%, Cthulhu Mythos 15%, Dodge 20%, Insight 60%, Occult 55%, Other Language: Latin 50%, Own Kingdom 50%, Write Latin 50%.

Spells: Blindness, Contact and Compel Arbores, Compel Human, Power Drain, Shrivelling

Special: Brother Paschal uses a special, ritual version of Compel to control Abbot Eustace. He would require several days to cast it on anyone else. Abbot Eustace may resist Paschal with a contest of magic points. For this reason Brother Paschal uses Power Drain on Eustace before bringing him into public view.

Singing "Flesh-Beast"

These creatures are a kind of immobile creature made of a fleshy mass of tentacles and rolls of fat, from the top of which emerge the heads of various children. They superficially resemble the Flesh-Beasts created by the Brothers of the Skin, and hence share that name. Some of the children have been attached to the Flesh-Beast for a long time, and though they have not matured, their heads have aged, growing wrinkled and gray-haired. The creatures as a whole are incapable of attacking, or even moving about. Keepers who want to tie the beasts to the Turkish "Brothers of the Skin" might emphasize the presence of eastern monks in the congregation. Keepers who want to tie the "Flesh-Beasts" to a Delta Green campaign can suggest that they are made of Mi-Go derived protoflesh.

The monks carry the Flesh-Beasts from place to place in enclosed palanquins. Each palanquin is brightly painted and decorated like a reliquary.

HP 20 for the body, 5 for each of 2D10 heads.

Move 0

Sanity loss: 1/1d10



Pastores Scenario V: Begon



Throughout his tenure as Bishop Raphael d'Adoné has used his position to put Pastores into clerical positions throughout Begon county. One of the members of Begon's cathedral chapter, Father Doolin, has offered to spill Raphael's secrets, if the investigators can arrange an escape. Doolin's rescue will be harder than it appears, for the bishop has already learned of the canon's betrayal.

This multi-part scenario introduces the investigators to several key strongholds of the Pastores: the town of Begon, the Hermitage of St. Sathogué, the Val Placide and the Monastery of St. Sébastien and St. Patrique. The investigators' stealth and cunning will be tested to the utmost; and, should they fail, they may succumb to dooms beside which death itself seems merciful. "Begon" functions best as part of an ongoing Pastores campaign. The investigators should have opposed the Pastores before, and, ideally, have already met and slain Adelard the Dane in Scenario III, "The Hunt."

Instructions

There are several ways the keeper can introduce the investigators to Father Doolin's plight. If the investigators are working alone, and have become foes of the Adoné, then Doolin may send a messenger (possibly Father Nicodeme) to them directly. Doolin is deep in Bishop Raphael's councils, and he may find out about the investigators through Raphael, even if their deeds are not common knowledge. If the investigators have been working with another person or organization opposed to the Pastores, such as the Bishop of Toulouse, or the Order of the Sword of St. Jerome, then Father Doolin may approach that organization's other agents first. The investigators' contact then orders them to Begon.

However it happens, the investigators should learn the following: Raphael d'Adoné has been bishop of Begon for over two decades. Several years after the conquest of Begon, Etienne d'Adoné appointed him bishop. The previous bishop, Justin, died under mysterious circumstances. Begon had not been a bishop's see long, and had been under Adoné control for only a few years. Some speculate (correctly) that the Adoné used the neutral bishop Justin, a man of piety and influence in Begon, to allay their neighbors' fears in the years following the conquest. Since becoming bishop, Raphael has done little to introduce Mother worship in Begon itself, but he has appointed many members of the Pastores cult to benefices in the county. Some of these have worked openly, others have hidden their true allegiances, acting as spies. Still others are not Pastores at all. Discovering which are which has proven both difficult and dangerous.

Father Doolin has served as a canon for Begon's church ever since its elevation to cathedral status under Bishop Justin. (The canons of a cathedral are priests who work in the cathedral and oversee its funds and revenues. They have almost as much power as the bishop himself.) Over the years, most of his original colleagues have died – some quite mysteriously. As a cathedral canon, Father Doolin has had opportunity to observe all Bishop Raphael's doings. Most importantly, he knows which clerics in the diocese can be trusted and who cannot. Several untainted clerics have died recently. Doolin suspects that Raphael had them murdered, and that he will be next.

He has offered to exchange his knowledge for an escort from Begon and sanctuary with the

investigators or their patrons. His message tells them to meet Father Nicodeme, a younger canon, but a

trustworthy one, in Begon. Nicodeme will then arrange for them to meet Doolin and secret him from Begon.

Arrival in Begon

The investigators should find travel to Begon relatively easy. Good roads connect it to Clermont, Rodez and Toulouse. Barges also travel up and down the river Flarque, a tributary of the Lot. The Adoné care for their “flock” more than most nobles do their peasants and so patrol the roads as regularly as they can. Indeed, Adoné knights may well save the investigators from bandits or other dangers. The keeper can add other suitable mischief, such as disease or the weather, as he or she sees fit, but it is hardly necessary. There will be plenty of danger for the investigators to encounter later on.

Approaching Begon

Two unusual and potentially disturbing sights await the investigators as they approach the city. Whichever route they take, it leads sooner or later through a belt of trees, either overhanging the road, or crowding the banks of the river Flarque. The keeper should roll Spot Hidden for each investigator. On a success, the investigator sees a shape in the forest – perhaps a large animal, perhaps a wisp of fog. It shimmers iridescently for a moment, and darts out of sight. Investigators may try to follow it, but their chase proves futile. Whatever, it was, it has vanished. A Track roll reveals marks, rather like a lion’s, that end abruptly beneath the trees.

The tracks belong to a Cat from Saturn, which has escaped from Rollo the Dane. It now preys on animals and other likely prey in the woods and fields. When spotted, it leaps into the trees, hence the vanishing tracks. It returns often to the unconsecrated graves outside the eastern walls to gnaw on the bones therein. Keepers should encourage confusion about the Cat for as long as possible. If the investigators mistake the Cat for the ghost of Father Nicodeme, so much the better.

Perhaps while searching in vain for the Cat, the investigators next notice a flock of crows circling and congregating on a nearby field. If they approach, they find the corpse of a farmer lying face up in the fields, his throat torn out and his flesh worried as though by clawed hands. The sight costs 0/1D3 SAN. The first human victim of the Cat, he has not lain here long, the passage of other humans having disturbed his killer into flight. A successful Track roll will reveal both human and Cat tracks on the ground. The Cat tracks vanish into a nearby copse of trees; the human tracks lead towards town.

Investigators must now choose: do they report their findings to the authorities? Or do they avoid this complication which has nothing to do with them? Whatever they do, the corpse represents trouble. Another farmer has already found the corpse of his friend. Soon he returns with several soldiers and

numerous onlookers. They intend to examine the site and carry the body away for burial. Naturally, their suspicion (and attention) falls on any strangers found near the body. Travelers with good explanations, or who seem to be helpful are allowed to go free. If the soldiers find anyone fleeing the scene, they take them to the bishop for judgement. Even if the investigators never find the corpse, or sneak past the retrieval party, the townsfolk notice that they arrived at the same time the body was found. The bishop’s soldiers may even question them at their lodgings.

The gates offer the easiest way into town. The soldiers there note any arrivals, but do not stop honest-looking travelers. Investigators may also try to sneak into town. Scaling the high, well-patrolled northern wall requires two Climb rolls and three Sneak rolls. Scaling the southern wall requires only one Climb and two Sneak rolls. An investigator may also swim the river into town. This requires two Sneak rolls and three Swim rolls. Investigators who enter town stealthily had best not interact with merchants, soldiers or others who make it their business to track new arrivals. If they do, their trespassing is sure to be discovered and they will be immediately arrested.

Investigations in Begon

The investigators have much to discover in Begon. Their contact, Father Nicodeme is dead, and Father Doolin has been arrested. Raphael learned of Doolin’s planned defection several weeks ago and manipulated Brother Nicodeme into implicating Doolin. Nicodeme arranged for his mistress, Eloise, to seduce Doolin, and steal several church vessels. Raphael then arranged to “catch” Eloise and Doolin in sexual congress, and a search of Eloise’s house discovered the missing vessels. Raphael punished Eloise with a public flogging and sent Doolin away to perpetual imprisonment in a monastery. (Most locals falsely assume that the bishop sent Doolin to the nearby Hermitage of St. Sathojué. They will tell the investigators so if asked. In fact, Raphael sent Doolin to the Monastery of St. Sabastien and St. Patrique in Auvergne.) Nicodeme’s reward for betrayal was death. Raphael sent a Byakhee to drop Nicodeme out his window. The townsfolk concluded that Nicodeme committed suicide and buried him outside the city walls in an unconsecrated grave. Nicodeme’s spirit rests uneasily, and has appeared to several people, including Eloise, in dreams. To further complicate matters, a Cat from Saturn, brought through a Gate by Rollo, now lives in the woods near Nicodeme grave, and people have naturally mistaken its iridescent form for a ghost itself.

In Begon, the investigators have the opportunity to discover Doolin's actual site of imprisonment and escape unharmed. Such an outcome is unlikely. Even if the bishop does not recognize the investigators from their description, he soon learns if any strangers have been asking after Fathers Nicodeme or Doolin. He is content to wait for some time, arresting the investigators publicly only if they break some law, but once they leave the city, he will order his soldiers round them up.

Investigators may wish to wander the streets, familiarize themselves with the town, and interview the locals. They are likely to encounter hostility, as they are suspected of murder. Nevertheless, they should be able to gather rumors. A list of potential rumors follows.

Begon Rumors (Roll 1d6)

1. An unquiet corpse has risen from the unconsecrated graves outside the eastern wall. Its hunger for blood unsated by the animals it has slain, it has now killed a human. The town should exhume and burn all the bodies.
2. The bishop's soldiers caught Brother Doolin in bed with a whore. The bishop sent him to the Hermitage of St. Sathojué for correction.
3. Father Nicodeme did not commit suicide. A giant bat smashed into his house and threw him to the ground.
4. Father Nicodeme's mistress now lives south of the river. Ask for Eloise.
5. The hermit Rollo is a sodomite; the two younger hermits, Gaspar and Adelard, are his lovers. He sometimes shares their favors with the bishop.
6. The bishop had Nicodeme murdered because he kept a mistress.

The investigators may wish to seek lodgings for the night. Two houses in Begon function as inns. The first, The White Oak (D), serves respectable farmers, merchants, and the servants of the nobility. The food and drink are good, and the accommodations clean. Despite its name, the Oak is no Pastores front, and staying on the premises does not put the investigators in danger of becoming human sacrifices. The Gilded Toad (E) serves the criminals and beggars of the southern quarter. It doubles as a brothel and as a place for freelancing prostitutes to take their clients. Travelers are rare enough that anyone staying at either inn soon becomes an object of gossip and speculation.

Nobles and clerics are likely to feel uncomfortable staying in a rented room. Inns of any kind are rare in 10th-century Europe, and in any case, not usually frequented by persons of station. Under ordinary circumstances nobles would try to lodge with a friend or acquaintance willing to offer hospitality. Clergy could stay at the bishop's palace (B) or with one of the canons. Naturally, if

investigators pursue either avenue, they lose any secrecy they might have hoped to retain.

Father Nicodeme House

Father Nicodeme's residence (H) lies in the northwestern quarter of the city. As one of cathedral canons, he received a portion of the cathedral church's income, making him one of the city's richest and most influential inhabitants. His house stands two stories tall, with stone foundations, and an overhanging upper story. One of the investigators may notice that one of the upper windows has been hastily repaired. If the investigators approach the house at night, they find it empty, its chimneys cold. No one answers a knock at the door. They may attempt to break in. Inside, they find Nicodeme's personal effects, such as clothing and a psalm-book, as well as several sets of rich woman's garments. Upstairs, the shutters on one of the bedroom windows have clearly been broken with great force from the outside, and only recently repaired.

If the investigators approach the house during the day, they find the ground floor windows open, and hear the sound of activity within. Observation at the windows reveals at least two people inside: one a young cleric in robes, the other a middle-aged woman. The cleric seems to be examining the objects in the house, the woman cleaning. Neither resembles their description of Father Nicodeme. The young cleric answers the door if the investigators knock. He introduces himself as Deacon Turpin, and explains that he is acting as executor for the deceased Father Nicodeme. The woman is a maidservant. The bishop wants an inventory of the house and its effects before the chapter elects Nicodeme's successor. Turpin does not explain the circumstances of Nicodeme's death, or Doolin's arrest, refusing to comment on such unseemly matters. "Not all that the vulgar say in the street is necessarily true," he remarks. "You should ask the bishop if you must know the truth." If the investigators look like clerics, he offers to introduce them to the bishop.

If the investigators break into the townhouse during the day, Turpin almost certainly notices any disturbance they make. Greatly angered, he threatens to call the bishop's soldiers. Turpin is a eunuch and a Pastores' cultist, and he soon reports their questions to the bishop, if he is able. If the investigators capture and interrogate him, he is one of the few people in town who knows the truth of Father Doolin's whereabouts.



Dreams of the Dead

The ghost of Father Nicodeme does not inhabit his gravesite nor manifest physically. Instead it dwells in the spaces of Limbo, where it is partially aware of what transpires in the physical world, and from which place it interacts with the dreams of the living. If the investigators visit people and places important to Nicodeme in life, such as his home, Eloise, or his grave site, his ghost will become aware of them, and visit one of the party in a dream. It also notices any investigators who enter Limbo via a spell. Nicodeme's ghost selects whichever character it thinks most likely to heed him. It would prefer a male Christian cleric of great piety, but if no investigator fits the description, it selects whoever most closely approximates this ideal. The ways of ghosts being mysterious, the chosen investigators may not dream of Nicodeme until several days have passed.

The chosen investigator dreams that he is walking in a garden, with a high stone wall, and many trees. It is winter, and their boughs are bare, black against the white snow. Beyond the wall lies blackness, inside it is lit by a dim half-light, like that of the moon. A cloaked and robed figure approaches the investigator. When it draws back its hood, it reveals the face of a tonsured man of middle years. His neck tilts unnaturally to one side, and the skin of it is dark and covered in blood. When he moves, his head lolls bonelessly.

The figure then speaks. "In life, I was the sinner Nicodeme, who betrayed my brother. He lies beneath the ground. The mountain rises over him, living but entombed. Help him. You will speak to the Serpent, but do not fear, for God will be with you. Beware, lest flesh become a prison." The words are Latin. If the investigator does not speak that language, he or she can try to recall the speech with an Idea roll upon waking.

By these statements, the ghost of Nicodeme hopes to convey his message. The brother to whom he refers is Doolin, his fellow canon. The mountain and entombment refer to Doolin's present incarceration in an underground cell in the Monastery of St. Sabastien and St. Patrique, in the mountainous Val Placide. The Serpent in question is the Serpent Man Scipio, from whom the investigators will receive aid later in the scenario. The last sentence warns against Rollo the Dane and the Flesh of St. Odo. The ghost cannot say anything other than these phrases. If questioned, he will repeat whichever one is most appropriate or remain silent. It cannot use gestures such as nods or charades to provide more information. When the dream sequence has lasted as long as the keeper feels necessary, the investigator wakes. The investigator who received the dream loses 0/1D6 SAN upon awaking. If he is a Christian, he or she most likely thinks that he has seen a vision of Nicodeme's soul undergoing Purgatorial or Hellish punishment.

Meeting the Bishop

Investigators who have encountered Deacon Turpin may decide to accept his offer to visit the bishop. The bishop also wishes to interview investigators caught fleeing the scene of the farmers' corpse. Exceptionally foolish investigators may arrange to meet the bishop on their own initiative. Regardless, the keeper should play the interview similarly.

The initial meeting takes place in public. Raphael greets the travelers politely, accepting any messages they carry and offers to bless them. After he has conducted a public greeting, he shows the investigators into a side chamber to speak privately about the "delicate matters" pertaining to Fathers Nicodeme and Doolin. Once inside with only a few soldiers as witness, his demeanor changes. Disappointment, even anger, shows on his face. He tells the investigators that their mission is futile. Father Doolin is now in prison, and Father Nicodeme, "with whom you have conspired" is now dead. Raphael then tells them to carry his curses and his warning back to their patron: "Cease to interfere with the affairs of the Adoné." Raphael knows the true identities of the investigators' patrons, even if they themselves do not. If the investigators have been unknowingly working for the Order of the Sword of St. Jerome, Raphael mocks their ignorance. Raphael then lets the investigators go, warning them to be gone from his city by sunset. If the investigators offer violence, insult, or trickery, Raphael's guards subdue them immediately and take them to the dungeons.

Eloise's Story

Eloise, Nicodeme's mistress, still resides in Begon south of the river. With no legal claim on Nicodeme's estate and ostracized by her family, she has been forced to make a living as a prostitute. Investigators can find her easily enough by asking about Father Doolin's arrest or Nicodeme's death. Many volunteer that "Nicodeme's whore" now lives in the shack with the white pennon (F) beside the river. Male investigators can enter her abode without attracting too much attention, but the street's other residents will remember female ones.

Eloise's troubles have taken their toll on her. She mourns Nicodeme and simultaneously resents him for deceiving her. Investigators must overcome her reluctance to discuss the incident that led to her flogging and Doolin's imprisonment. She suspects that Raphael pressured Nicodeme into his betrayal, then had him slain, and she fears that Raphael will order her murder if she talks. She did not want to seduce Doolin, for he was an old and pious man, and only agreed when Nicodeme threatened to abandon her. Nicodeme ordered her to sneak the church vessels into Doolin's house. She was only half surprised when the bishop's soldiers broke into Doolin's home and arrested them both, but she blames Nicodeme for failing to protect her from the

flogging and disgrace the followed. If the investigators mention Nicodeme's ghost, or the recent killings, she starts. Nicodeme has appeared to her twice now in dreams, begging her to save Doolin, whom he betrayed, and lamenting their sinful union. She may confide this information to sympathetic investigators.

The Graveyard

Most members of the Christian community are buried inside the walls, in the hallowed ground surrounding the cathedral or the chapel. Unbelievers, the excommunicated and suicides, however, do not merit burial in holy ground, and are crudely entombed in a makeshift graveyard (G) outside town near the eastern gate. Investigators may wish to investigate the graves, mistakenly hoping to find Father Nicodeme's ghost. His grave is still fresh and appears to have been disturbed. Investigators who exhume the body find that his skull is crushed and many bones broken. Several other limbs have been lacerated and bitten by the Cat from Saturn. A Medicine roll determines that these bites postdate his death by many days. Assess a SAN cost of 0/1D3 for closely examining the corpse.

There is a 50% chance that the Cat from Saturn is present by night. Investigators who make a Spot Hidden roll notice a shimmering movement among the fields. The Cat will not attack more than one person, and it is unlikely that the investigators can catch it or even get a good look at it.

Brother Gaspar's Goat

If the investigators wander the streets at night, then they see an odd sight. On a night chosen by the keeper, but probably the one before the investigators must leave town, they may notice arrival of Rollo's apprentice, Gaspar. Gaspar enters the town by the north gate, and proceeds to the bishop's palace, where he speaks to one of the soldiers. The soldier pauses, enters the compound, and returns with a rather sleepy looking monk. The monk then brings Gaspar a he-goat, tied about the neck with a rope. Gaspar then leads the goat out the east gate and into the fields beyond. The investigators may follow Gaspar if they wish. Two soldiers stand near the open gate – the Adoné have no fear of invasion at this time. The soldiers will not prevent the investigators from leaving or reentering, although they will note any comings or goings. Investigators who do not wish to be noticed or who fear the soldiers out of proportion to their actual threat must sneak over the walls or up the river.

Keepers may encourage the investigators to think that they are following Gaspar to a cult ceremony where the goat will be sacrificed. In fact, his motives are more prosaic. He is trying to catch the escaped Cat from Saturn before it kills anyone else or otherwise attracts too much attention. (If anyone listens to him from a distance, they will hear him

saying “ Here kitty, kitty, kitty.”) He hopes that the prospect of fresh goat meat will lure the Cat into his presence. He passes the unconsecrated graves on his way to the nearest copse of trees, where he ties the goat to a trunk. Gaspar then waits until the Cat appears and attempts to bind it. He has armored himself with a Flesh Ward and has his Compel spell ready.

The investigators may wish to attack Gaspar while he is out alone. He is a formidable opponent. Prepared for potential combat with the Cat, he is also ready to deal with unexpected surprises. Still, a group of investigators working together may be able to overcome him. If anyone used the soul jar on Adelard in scenario three, Gaspar will make especial note of them, as Rollo seeks revenge upon them. Gaspar also recognizes any investigators who have tangled with the Pastores before. Gaspar is not stupid, and if things go badly, he flees towards Rollo's tower, perhaps becoming invisible along the way. (This latter trick fooled some investigators in the play test into believing he had used a Mystic Portal spell.) Even if the investigators succeed in killing Gaspar, he will not stay dead. Rollo keeps a spare body for his apprentice in the tower. Only trapping his soul or destroying all his spare bodies will prevent his resurrection. It should go without saying that if word of the attack reaches Raphael, he immediately orders the offenders arrested.

The Hermitage of St Sathojué

Investigators fooled by local rumor may conclude that Raphael has imprisoned Father Doolin in the tower of the Hermitage. Acting on this conclusion may well prove fatal. Rollo's tower is described on p. 20. The main door cannot be forced without making a great deal of noise, and at least one Formless Spawn guards the underground chambers at all times. Both Rollo and Gaspar are likely to be present if visitors come calling (although the investigators may try to arrange for their absence).

Once Rollo and Gaspar realize who the intruders are, they try to take as many investigators alive as they can. Rollo intends to torture Adelard's killers and give the others to Raphael. His methods are brutal, and if any investigators die from a spell or overzealous spawn, he won't be much put out. Rollo may even revive particularly unlucky investigators who have been mortally wounded, rather than killed, using the flesh of St. Odo.

In any case, Doolin is not in the tower and never was.

Discovering the Truth

The most likely outcome of the investigators' trip to Begon is their capture or death. It is possible, however, for especially paranoid, clever, or lucky characters to avoid the bishop's dungeons and even successfully discover Doolin's whereabouts. Investigators known to the Pastores must avoid all



contact with the bishop's soldiers and officials. New investigators, or those adept at disguise, should not have this problem. Everyone must avoid being seen asking the wrong questions – a difficult task, for the investigators must ask their questions of someone, if they are to find Doolin. The party may split into groups, one operating in secret, the other openly.

Only a few people know where Doolin is now. Investigators must trick or force one of them into revealing it. Raphael knows, but he is unlikely to talk. So do Rollo and Gaspar. Of these two, only Gaspar is likely to let anything slip. Deacon Turpin, Raphael's aide, knows the truth, and has no magical abilities with which to protect himself, but investigators may not realize he is so high in the bishop's councils. There are also the four soldiers who took Doolin to the Valplacide. They are not Pastores, although they are loyal to Raphael and sworn to secrecy. Townsfolk will remember that the soldiers Jacques and Etienne numbered among Doolin's escort. (Some may remember that they departed through the eastern gate – an odd choice if Doolin was really going to the Hermitage.) These soldiers are probably still on the return journey but are likely to return to Begon some time during the investigator's visit. Lastly, Raphael intends to send any captured investigators to the Val Placide, for the Council of Elders to interrogate and punish. Free investigators who simply follow their comrades will eventually encounter Doolin.

Prisoners of the Adoné

Most of the surviving investigators should be prisoners by now, their mission to Begon an apparent failure. Bishop Raphael's guards escort any investigators they capture to the bishop's dungeons beneath the palace. People on the streets mock, point at, and throw stones at the investigators as they pass by. Raphael also demands that Rollo hand over any prisoners in the Hermitage. Although Rollo needs the Pastores' aid, his pride makes him loath to surrender any trespassers. Investigators held prisoner in the hermitage might overhear the terrible row between Rollo and Raphael's envoy (probably Deacon Turpin). Eventually, Rollo backs down, in exchange for a concession whose nature the investigators should fail to overhear. The deal made, prisoners in the Hermitage join their friends in the bishop's dungeon.

Flesh and Bone

The dungeon of the Episcopal palace is little like the elaborate mazes of fantasy convention. No one is meant to stay there long before facing punishment. Soldiers shove the investigators into an earthen walled room whose low wooden ceiling prevents them from standing. There are no facilities of any sort, and the only light filters in from above. Occasionally, the investigators hear feet stomping on the boards overhead. Particularly sadistic guards may occasionally jab a spear point through the slats or pour

some liquid through. The keeper can determine how many hours or days the investigators must endure such treatment. Overall, the rough stay costs the imprisoned investigators 0/1D2 SAN.



If the investigators were seen visiting Eloise, Father Nicodeme's mistress, then they find her imprisoned in the cell with them. The bishop's soldiers caught her trying to leave town by the eastern gate. Sullen with despair, she blames the investigators for her troubles if they try to speak to her. Otherwise, she remains as far from them as possible, weeping softly.

Eventually, soldiers open the prison and drag everyone out into another cellar chamber where the Bishop Raphael and Rollo await them. Raphael mocks them – they failed to find Doolin, or even to save themselves. He then derides whomever they work for (the church, the nobility, etc), bragging that they will soon be defeated. He smiles as he informs the investigators of their punishment. For their crimes against his authority while in Begon, he has ordered them to be perpetually imprisoned in the Monastery of St. Patrique and St. Sabastien. "My brothers there know how to turn to useful purpose those such as yourselves." He then says, "But Brother Rollo here first has some business to conduct with you. He dislikes me taking you away, so I've offered him some compensation."

Rollo grunts in response, glares at the bishop, and draws a long dagger. He then proceeds to cut body parts from one or more prisoners. If necessary, the bishop's soldiers hold prisoners in place as he works. Rollo begins with any investigators who have angered him by killing an apprentice or breaking into his tower, then turns to the others. Start with the investigator with the lowest Luck score and work up.



Keepers may roll on the chart below to determine which body part Rollo removes from the investigator. Each affected investigator suffers 1D3 damage and continues to bleed for one point a round. If none of the prisoners moves to help his comrade, the soldiers will cauterize the affected area with a hot iron, doing 1D2 points of additional damage but stemming the bleeding. In addition, some of this surgery results in losses to APP or skills. The process is worth 0/1D4 SAN for each victim.

When Rollo has mutilated about half the total number of prisoners, Raphael will bid him stop. Rollo puts the severed parts into a clay jar and departs. Although he does not say so, he intends to use each part in a scrying spell enabling him to watch the investigator's final torments at the Monastery. Such is the "compensation" Raphael offered. Later in the scenario, when and if the investigators' escape imprisonment, he will put the parts to another use. After Rollo has left, Bishop Raphael casts the prisoners back into their cramped cell for several hours.

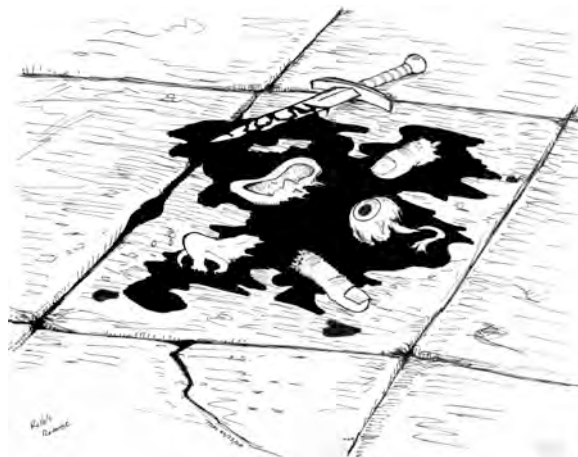
Body Part Table (Roll 1d6)

1. *Eye.* Rollo cuts out one of the investigator's eyes. Randomize to find out which one. If the investigator is already blind in one or both eyes, roll again. Lower the investigator's APP by 1D2.
2. *Nose.* Rollo removes off the investigator's nose, with a crack and a snap or cartilage. Lower the investigator's APP by 1D3+1.
3. *Finger.* Rollo cuts off a finger. Any finger will do. Roll D10 to figure out which one.
4. *Ear.* Rollo saws off the investigator's ear. Randomize for left or right ear. Lower the investigator's APP by 1D2.
5. *Lip.* Rollo cuts off one of the investigator's lips. Randomize for lower or upper. Eating is henceforth by a messy business, and all verbal skills such as Persuade are reduced by -10%. Lower the investigator's APP by 1D3+1.
6. *Genitalia.* Rollo cuts a chunk out of the investigator's genitals. This does not lower APP unless the investigator is naked, but is likely to be highly painful and distressing.

A Sentence of Perpetual Imprisonment

When the bishop releases the investigators again, it is to be fitted for their journey. The soldiers bind manacles about each investigator's wrists. There are no locks – each manacle is riveted shut. A crude chain about two feet long stretches from wrist to wrist. The chains do not prevent movement of the arms but are extremely noticeable and mark the character as a prisoner. Assess a penalty of -10% for skills involving the hands, and -20% for skills involving persuasion or negotiation. Status rolls will automatically fail. The manacles can be removed with the blacksmith's tools and a successful

Repair/Devise roll. The chains break if a successful contest is made vs. STR 20.



Raphael then charges some of the soldiers present to take the investigators to the Monastery of St. Patrique and St. Sabastien. "Deliver them into the custody of the Abbot, or failing that, to Brother Scipio. Tell them that these are enemies of the faith, and that I charge him with their confession and correction." The bishop then designates an appropriate number of soldiers to accompany the prisoners, probably no more than half a dozen.

The soldiers take the prisoners up the stairs to the courtyard, where they receive mules or horses as mounts, and then the entire party sets out through the east gate, while the populace boos and mocks. The journey is a long one, heading north into Auvergne. As the investigators approach the Val Placide, they overtake or are overtaken by travelling knights and priests on their way to the Monastery. These are all cultists on their way to the *transformatio* rites held for young Pastores males.

The investigators will have a chance to size up the soldiery guarding them. At least three should be distinct personalities. The commanding soldier, Jacques, is an older man of some forty years, with a short-cropped beard turning to gray. A wary man, and a life-long soldier, he is unlikely to slip up enough to permit escape. Within the limits of his duty, he is not unkind to the prisoners in his care. He may even speak to them about his experiences at war, the bishop who gave him permanent employment, or his wife and children. Jacques was one of the soldiers who transported Doolin to the monastery a month before; he feels two such trips back to back are an unfair burden, but understands that the bishop chose him again for his experience.

The second notable soldier, Etienne, is a sadist who enjoys making mischief for the prisoners. He threatens them when Jacques is not listening and tells them stories about what the monks of "that place" like to do to prisoners "especially pretty ones." He may even tell of how Brother Doolin had to be dragged into its walls begging and screaming. (Thus informing the investigators that they are going to the same place.) Etienne doesn't really know anything

about the monastery, but he enjoys making the prisoners uncomfortable. Etienne was looking forward to some rest and whoring after the previous trip, and he takes out his anger on the investigators.

The youngest soldier on the patrol, Paul, is only in his late teens. A decent, if naive, sort, he believes he is serving God by working for the bishop. He speaks often of his mother and uncle who secured him his post. The prisoners fascinate him, as he has never seen “heretics” before. Paul did not accompany Jacques and Etienne on the previous trip; this is his first mission away from the city. His constant talk wearies Jacques and angers Etienne.

None of the soldiers are cultists nor have they heard of the Pastores. Attempts to convince them that their bishop worships demons or pagan gods are futile. The soldiers have seen his acts of charity in the city and know him to be a fair employer. Nor will investigators’ description of their tortures move even pious guards such as Paul. Torture and ordeal are normal parts of the legal process in Dark Age France.

Escaping Capture

Over the course of the long journey, the investigators may find an opportunity to outwit or overpower their guards. Role-playing such activity can break an otherwise tedious period. The keeper does not need to provide specially scripted

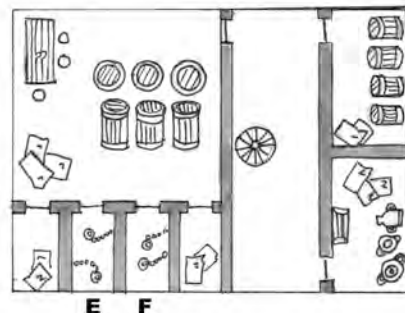
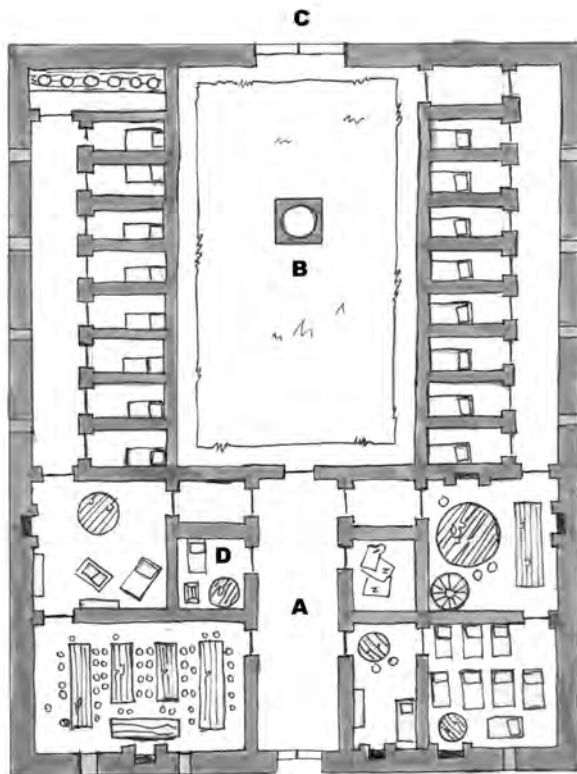
opportunities, merely allow a reasonably conceived plan a chance of success. Investigators who avoided capture in the first place may also be trailing the group and can arrange an ambush or other escape attempt.

Ultimately, it does not matter if the investigators reach the Val Placide bound or free, so long as they reach it. Bound investigators are simply taken there. Free investigators must discover its location. They can do so in Begon, as described above, or learn it from Jacques and Etienne.

The Monastery of St. Sabastien and St. Patrick

The investigators eventually arrive at the Val Placide, either with or without an escort of Bishop Raphael’s guards. If prisoners, they easily pass the patrols sent down from the castle of the Valplacides overlooking the valley’s entrance. If they are trying to enter undetected, they may have to make Sneak rolls and would be advised to avoid the main road. Knights of the Valplacides seize any strangers who do not seem to be cultists. Free investigators may pretend to be cultists with a successful Cthulhu Mythos, Fast Talk, Persuade or Occult Roll. Prisoners are taken directly to the monastery.

Investigators see many travelers in the village at the monastery’s foot. These people, who come from



all over France, are Pastores cultists here for the *transformatio* rites for young men. The visitors mix freely with the locals, drinking and whoring in a blatantly immoral fashion. Some look the investigators up and down appraisingly. This may disturb the bishop's guard's, especially young Paul.

The bishop's guards take imprisoned investigators to the monastery gates, where a saintly looking old man meets them and leads them into the Monastery's basement. The monks ask for the soldiers' help in securing the investigators in chamber (E). If the investigators inquire about their fate, they are told only that "Brother Scipio will see you when he is able."

Free investigators pretending to be cultists may mingle with the villagers and their guests. All of them are here for the ceremony and assume the investigators are as well. Both male and female investigators receive open sexual offers, are asked which God or Goddess they worship, and so forth. Learning the details of the upcoming ceremony should be straightforward – in four days the monastery will host an enormous orgy for the young men. At its culmination future priests will receive the *transformatio sub glaudio* (or castration) and those who feel ready may compete for the honor of being sacrificed to the Trees. No one mentions the fate of prisoners kept in the monastery. ("That's the business of the council and Brother Scipio. Maybe they'll let us have some, maybe they won't.") Investigators who mingle with the crowd are likely to make enough mistakes to come to the attention of more knowledgeable cultists. These say nothing, but bring the matter to Brother Scipio's attention. Scipio assures them that he plans to take care of the matter quietly.

If the investigators attend the ceremony, for whatever reason, this is what they see. Beginning around early morning or noon, the villagers and their guests begin to assemble at the monastery. The monks supply the courtyard (B) with ample food and drink, and the guests proceed to revel. The orgy itself costs no SAN to witness, but as the day grows long, some of the less human revelers will arrive and disrobe. The keeper may assess an appropriate SAN cost for Goblins (a.k.a. Children of Shub-Niggurath). During these early festivities, few notice or are insulted if the investigators do not participate. Some monks and travelers likewise engage in light conversation. In the late afternoon, the monks open the large gates to the Monastery's rear (C), facing onto the forest. Two monks lead a human sacrifice (a boy chosen from the village) into the woods, where they cast Contact and Compel Arbores. As the evening grows dark, the courtyard fills accordingly. The orgy grows more ecstatic and wild. It is no longer safe to refuse advances while remaining in the courtyard. Anyone who does will be forced to participate, an experience worth 1/1D6 SAN loss. Some future priests step aside into other chambers to

undergo ritual castration. Such a sight is worth 0/1D3 SAN.

Around midnight, 1D3+1 Arbores enter the courtyard through the large arch. At least one will be a Great Arbor. Each costs the normal SAN damage of 1D3/1D10 to witness but altogether cannot cause more than a 10-point loss. Drunken and ecstatic menfolk hurl themselves at the Arbores, who reach among them, selecting victims to dismember. The Great Arbor then picks over the remains and stuffs them into its womb, vomiting forth a new miniature Arbor or Goblin (a.k.a. Child of Shub-Niggurath). This vision is worth another 1/1D10 SAN. Such is the madness of the night that even insane investigators may not attract notice, provided they do not become violent towards the Arbores.

Meeting Brother Scipio

The investigators will probably wish to break into the Monastery, either before or during the ceremony. Let them do so with some Climb and Sneak rolls. Regardless of whether they succeed or fail, Brother Scipio notices them with his magical powers. The investigators are likely to sneak around in the basement and the cells, looking for Father Doolin or their compatriots. Scipio waits for an opportune moment to surprise the investigators – for example, when they are in room with only one door out, when they seem about to be caught by other monks, when they are trying to escape their chains, etc. Then he steps out of the shadows, smiles amiably and greets them.

He begins to converse, whether they seem to be listening to him or not. Attempts at attacking him are futile, as his presence is only an illusion. Indeed his image blinks cheerfully from place to place in the room. Scipio has mastered the arts of illusion so thoroughly that he can appear to be anywhere on the monastery grounds, saying or doing anything for a mere 1 magic point.

"Hello," he says. "They call me Brother Scipio. That's not my real name, of course, but I've been using it for a long time. They feed me well, and give me people to play with. Sometimes, they want me to mate with their women. It's rather boring, but they have a limited imagination and take me for a phallic symbol. But I feel ennui. For a time, I found these Pastores an amusing counterpoint to the deluded empires of men. How I laughed to see great Charles' line fail! Now, I wonder if I might find my allies' destruction equally amusing. They are filled with such silly pride, and they think the scraps of truths they know make them worthy. But there is only rise and fall, no worthiness to it at all.

"So that brings me to you. You've given me something to think about, in the tales of your deeds. You've goaded my allies so. Just a gnat's sting, but they smart and swat. You disappoint me now, caught so easily as this. I will give you a chance. For a quarter of an hour, no eye will see you save my own.



You may rescue yourselves. Yes! I will even let you go. Your friend lies in yonder chamber. Take him with you. I've broken him already."

Scipio proves as good his word. He unchains any investigators and directs them to Father Doolin's room (F). Doolin begins to scream in terror when he sees Scipio and can hardly be calmed down. For the next quarter hour, the investigators are completely invisible – unless, of course, they do something foolish, like attack the monks. Then the illusion falls away. This is an excellent time for them to depart the grounds in haste.

Cruel keepers may wish to have one of the investigators disappear during the talk with Scipio and reappear in the courtyard, an involuntary participant in the Pastores' ceremonies. The other investigators will have to choose between rescuing their comrade or making their escape. Helpless innocents such as the young soldier Paul, or the miserable Eloise make good victims if the supply of investigators threatens to run thin.

Flight and Pursuit

Hopefully the investigators leave the monastery grounds under cover of Scipio's illusion and are as far away from the village and the main road as possible before their absence is discovered. If so, they should have a relatively easy time leaving the Val Placide. It will take a while for the monks to notice their absence, and longer for them to rally their inebriated guests into search parties. Furthermore, the Council trusts most such tasks to Brother Scipio, who for once will not give them his customarily excellent results. Not that the keeper should make the escape appear easy – a few close encounters with a knightly patrol, wandering Goblins, or a hunting party of monks will inculcate the proper sense of danger.

On the other hand, if the investigators flee the monastery followed by the proverbial pitchfork-wielding mob, or insist on acting foolishly while on the run, then, by all means, the keeper should slay them without guilt or mercy. It's just that more interesting horrors await.

Rollo's Revenge

By this point in the scenario, the investigators should feel their mission nearly accomplished. They have rescued Father Doolin and escaped the Pastores' stronghold of Val Placide. Here Rollo begins once again to interfere in their fate. Having collected various body parts from the investigators, he intended to use the connection they offered to watch the investigators' torments from afar. Imagine his consternation when having put his feet up next to the fire after a long day wizarding and partaking of his favorite wine, he prepares to watch some really fine tortures – only to find that the investigators have escaped. Rollo decides to rectify matters by dispatching Gaspard to the region on the back of

"Sleipnir." With a connection to both Gaspar and the investigators, Rollo hopes to lead one to the other.

An Unexpected Recovery

A few nights after the investigators have fled the Val Placide, but long before they reach safety, sleeping investigators awaken to find that the body parts that Rollo cut from them have reappeared. The new parts are shiny and clean, with no scar tissue or signs of wear. This disconcerting discovery is worth 0/1D2 SAN to each affected investigator. If closely examined (roll Spot Hidden or Medicine), an investigator notices that the new part is slightly larger than the original. Any lingering HP losses from the original wounds are restored, as are APP and skill losses. The parts have regrown because Rollo has used the Flesh of St. Odo to establish a mystic connection between the characters and the severed parts in Rollo's possession. Henceforth, until the regrown part has been removed, Rollo can use a scrying spell to witness whatever the affected characters do. Characters who did not suffer from Rollo's ministrations are likewise unaffected by his scrying spell, although they may not realize this.

The keeper should give the investigators time to discuss and worry about their newfound healing. Several hours later, allow them to make Spot Hidden rolls. Anyone who passes the roll sees a dot quartering the sky. As it grows nearer, it should be recognizable as Sleipnir, with a figure on its back. Assess appropriate SAN costs. No matter how the investigators hide, it continues relentlessly towards them. If the investigators do not discover a method of avoiding Sleipnir, then he and Gaspar attack them, knock the investigators unconscious and carry them off a few at a time to Rollo's tower.

Only if all the investigators remove their newly regrown parts does Sleipnir lose their trail. Assess the same HP damage, APP reduction, and so forth as for the original wound. Such self-mutilation costs 0/1D3 SAN. If the investigators confine their cutting only to the original area, then Rollo simply causes the part to regrow in a few hours. Only a much deeper cut into surrounding tissues will prevent Rollo from re-establishing his connection. Any time an investigator attempts to excise additional tissue, there is a 50% chance that it will prevent regrowth.

A Contagious Idiocy

If a sufficient number of investigators begin removing the regrown parts, thus preventing Sleipnir from tracking them, Rollo switches to a more drastic step. He expends his reserves of the Flesh of St. Odo to grow clone bodies for one or more investigators. He requires a potential connection to do so, but investigators busily mutilating themselves should be unable to tell which surgeries have worked and which have not. Instead of regrowing a part of their original body, Rollo grows an entirely new body in his tower (chamber C), and then attempts to transfer the

investigator's soul there. The cloned body's newborn mind and soul enter the investigator's original body in his or her place. Roll Rollo's POW vs. the investigator's. On a success, the investigator's soul is pulled out of his or her original body and into the duplicate. The soul of the cloned body is then transferred into the original body.

To the investigator's companions it doubtless seems as though their comrade has suffered total mental failure. The replacement soul is only a few hours old. It has no EDU and no skills of any sort. Indeed, it has yet to learn to walk, speak, or even control its own bladder and bowels. The keeper may find it amusing to take the affected player aside, run "Awakening in Rollo's Tower" (below) until the secret of the transfer is revealed, then return the player to the main group to portray his or her character's double. Over the course of a few hours, Rollo kidnaps all the investigators for whom he has body parts. From the perspective of those who remain, their friends are one by one reduced to idiocy for unknown reasons. As the investigators do not understand the cause, they should be worried and frightened.

The keeper should make sure that at least some of the investigators remain free. Rollo should not have mutilated all the imprisoned investigators, and others may have escaped him by successfully cauterizing or cutting away the affected flesh. The remaining investigators have the interesting task of escorting Father Doolin and their incapacitated comrades back to safety, while avoiding the attentions of Slipepnr, who still searches the roads and quarters the skies looking for them.

Awakening in Rollo's Tower

Investigators whom Rollo has kidnapped awaken in darkness, naked and cold in chamber A. A chain and collar binds them to the wall. Once they have a chance to look themselves over, they find that they are stronger, more fit, and healthy than they were before being summoned. Indeed, they seem ever so slightly larger. Any scars have healed, and any deformities or missing parts have regrown. Their apparent age seems to be in the late twenties, whatever age they were before. The Flesh of St. Odo produces bodies in the prime of health and nutrition. They have no way of knowing, but they are in the caverns below Rollo's tower.

The keeper should take the player of the first investigator to be kidnapped aside, and play their initial reactions. After a few minutes or hours in the dark, wondering what has happened, they see Rollo enter. He informs the investigator that: "I intend to revenge myself for killing my apprentice Adelard, and for the hurts you have done to my allies. Since they seem unable to deal with you, I took it upon myself to do so." Gaspar and Pierre (his aged manservant) then enter. They strap the investigator to a bench, and Rollo proceeds to cut his victim with a knife. He does not mutilate the investigator and takes

care not to do fatal damage. Occasionally, he asks questions, such as where the other investigators are hiding, who their allies are, and so forth. Each session of torture costs 0/1D6 SAN and 1D3 HP. If an investigator goes temporarily insane, then he or she tells Rollo whatever he wants to know.

Each subsequent investigator's player should then be brought aside too, as his or her character disappears, until all the players of the kidnapped investigators are together. The players can continue to represent their infantile replacements with the main group for as long as the keeper deems it amusing.

Escape, Rescue, or Doom

Investigators imprisoned in Rollo's dungeon have several options to attempt to escape. If they have magical abilities that Rollo does not know about, they may use these to free themselves. They may also try to convince one of their jailers to help them. Rollo reveals nothing except his extreme sadism and does not explain the nature of the Flesh of St. Odo. Gaspar is more forthcoming, since he is often bored. He explains to the investigators the nature of their capture and why they cannot hope to escape. If they leave the tower, Rollo will simply track them again. Gaspar fears that Rollo will eventually kill him; he hopes to learn as much as he can from the old man, then turn on him. A kindly keeper may have him enlist the investigators as allies. A more realistic one should assume that Gaspar's plans are for centuries in the future. The old man, Pierre, lives in fear of Rollo, but does not like to see the investigators tortured. A long series of successful Persuade rolls may convince him to help the investigators – either by letting them free of their chains or by conveying a message to outside allies. In either case, Pierre will kill himself after doing the deed. He is too cowardly to face life after crossing Rollo. Rollo will replace him with some other cottager.

The investigators are kept in one of the caverns under Rollo's tower. They can occasionally hear the other inhabitants of the tower coming and going, and the low rumble of Slipepnr or other monsters from Chambers B and D. They soon discover that Gaspar occasionally leaves the tower on business. Rollo sometimes shuts himself up in his room for days or hours. (He's actually traveling via his Mystic Portal.)

If the investigators break free while one or both of the wizards are away, they are free to explore the tower for a few hours. If they simply flee the premises, then Rollo will track their bodies with Slipepnr. If they are mortally wounded in the escape attempt, he will pull their souls back to new bodies before they can escape him permanently. Only if they are able to find and destroy or steal their original pieces, can they escape the tower for good. These parts are located in Rollo's room on the third floor.

Uncaptured investigators may attempt to rescue their friends, presuming they even learn that their

comrades are alive. Perhaps the prisoners manage to send a message. Perhaps the Order of St. Jerome's spies learns of prisoners matching the investigators' descriptions. Perhaps someone finds a body killed in an escape attempt. Potential rescuers must deduce the relationship between the original bodies and the new ones in Rollo's tower. As the infantile minds in the original bodies age and become more capable, their development may provide a clue. Any attempt to storm Rollo's tower should be extremely dangerous, not least because of its proximity to Begon and the Adoné knights. Such an endeavor may have to wait until the free investigators can rally support to their cause, perhaps using Father Doolin's information.

Conclusions & Consequences

The greatest reward of this scenario is Father Doolin's information on the Pastores' organization. His news may be the beginning of the end of the Pastores as well. With it, the investigators and their patrons can safely make contacts and allies throughout the Church. Military action against the Adoné may follow shortly thereafter. Investigators who survive the perils of Begon and the Val Placide, avoid capture, and successfully debrief Doolin should receive 1D20 SAN points. Investigators who escape Rollo should receive 1D6 SAN, or 2D6 if they manage to damage or destroy his base of operations. Investigators also deserve 1D4 for rescuing Eloise.

Other adventures follow naturally from this one. Father Doolin and any known surviving investigators will be marked for death by the cult. The Pastores may send an assassin such as Brother Scipio or Cicero after them. They may also be sufficiently alarmed to strike directly at the investigators' patrons. If the investigators seize Rollo's supply of the Flesh of St. Odo from his tower, he will want it back. (He has more elsewhere, but it represents a significant investment.) Raphael also covets it, and he may send an agent to retrieve it.



Game Stats

The Cat From Saturn

See *Dreamlands*, p. 97.

STR 17 CON 10 SIZ 12 INT 8 POW 15
DEX 19

HP 14 Move 9

Damage Bonus: +1D4

Weapons: Bite 40%, damage 1D6+db, and (in the same round) paw 40%, damage 1D4+db

Armor: none. Impaling weapons do minimal damage

Skills: Dodge 38%, Dream Lore 30%, Hide 50%, Jump 90%, Sneak 80%, Spot Hidden 70%.

Sanity Loss: 0/1D4

Jacques, age 36

STR 11 CON 13 SIZ 11 INT 10 POW 12
APP 9 DEX 10 EDU 12 SAN 60

HP 12 Magic Points 12

Damage Bonus: +0

Weapons: Long Sword 40%, damage 1D8+db

Armor: hard leather 3

Skills: Dodge 40%, Insight 30%, Listen 35%, Natural World 25%, Own Kingdom 25%, Other Kingdoms 15%, Ride Horse 40%, Status 25%, Track 30%.

Ettiene, age 32

STR 10 CON 14 SIZ 9 INT 9 POW 10
APP 10 DEX 10 EDU 8 SAN 50

HP 13 Magic Points 10

Damage Bonus: +0

Weapons: Long Sword 30%, damage 1D8+db

Armor: hard leather 3

Skills: Dodge 45%, Listen 60%, Natural World 45%, Own Kingdom 15%, Ride Horse 30%, Status 20%, Track 60%.

Paul, age 17

STR 10 CON 12 SIZ 9 INT 10 POW 14
APP 12 DEX 8 EDU 8 SAN 70

HP 12 Magic Points 14

Damage Bonus: +0

Weapons: Long Sword 25%, damage 1d8+db

Armor: hard leather 3

Skills: Dodge 20%, Ride Horse 30%, Status 15%

Handouts

Pastores Scenario I: The Book Fragments

English

...The tree is the mother's gift to the son, and its fruit is life. In return, when asked the pious son gives back his life to his mother through the Tree, or the life of others. Care for the tree and water it with blood. When it calls...

...sleeps. The life of wild animals feeds it, who sleep under its boughs, and of birds who nest in its branches, and men and the sheep once were men, who eat of its fruit and are healed. The knife...

...The influence of the moon is strong upon it, for it is of the mother. When the moon gives light, then it walks as it desires....

...its fruit is like the moon, silver with its influence. Let its flesh be the flesh of those who eat it, awakened at its call...

...transformation is the glory of the Son...

Latin

...arbor a matre filio donum, & fructus eius uita est; in compensatione apud aborem, filius pius rogatus uitam suam matris eius redonabit; uel vita autrum. Collate arborem illam & sanguine spargate...

....dormat. Uita ferarum illum nutrit, qui dorment sub brachios, & auum, qui in brachios habitent, & homines et oves qui homines iam fuerim, qui fructos edint et sani feci sint. Quo ensis corpus hominum iniurat sicut...

...uirtus lunae illi fors est, nam de matre procedit. Cum luna illuminet, uenit a quo loco uult...

...fructus est similis lunae et argentia de uirtute eius. Corpus eius sit corpus quorum edentum, et appellata ex somnio illo...

...transformatio gloria filii est...



The Prayer Book of Philippe des Fils de Yeubé

Psalm XXII: §A psalm for David ben Nug. The Lord ruleth me: & I shall want nothing: §He hath set me to prepare a place of pasture. He hath brought me up, on the water of refreshment: §He will convert my body & soul. He hath led me on the paths of shepherding, for his own name's sake. §For though I should walk in the midst of the shadow of death, I will fear no evils, for I will become one with thee. Thy rod & thy staff, they have comforted me. Thou hast prepared a change for me against them that afflict me & thy mercy will follow me all the days of my life. & that I may dwell in the house of the Lord unto the change of the earth.. Thou hast anointed my head with seed; & my chalice which inebreateth me, how goodly is it! §

Mark XVI §& when the sabbath was past, Mary Magdalen & Mary the mother of James & Sathojué bought sweet spices, that coming, they might anoint Jesus who had been transformed. §& very early in the morning, the first day of the week, they come to the sepulchre, the sun being now risen. §& they said one to another: Who shall roll us back the stone from the door of the sepulchre? §& looking, they saw the stone rolled back. For it was very great. §& entering into the sepulchre, they saw a young man sitting on the right side, clothed with a white robe: & they were astonished. §Who saith to them: Be not affrighted. you seek Jesus the Transfigured, who was crucified. He is risen: he is not here. Behold the place where they laid him. §But go, tell his shepherds & Peter that he goeth before you into Galilee. There you shall see him, as he told you. §But they going out, fled from the sepulchre: for a trembling & fear had seized them. & they said nothing to any man: for they were afraid. §But he rising early the first day of the week, appeared first to Mary Magdalen, keeper of seven holy devils. §She went & told them that had been with him, who were mourning & weeping. §& they hearing that he was alive & had lain with her, did believe. §& after that he appeared in another shape to two of them walking, as they were going into the country.

§& they going told it to the rest: they did believe them. §At length he appeared to the eleven as they were at table: & he upbraided them with their incredulity & hardness of heart, because they did not believe them who had seen him after he was transfigured¹⁵ & he said to them: Go ye into the whole world & preach my Mother's gospel to every creature, & do fruitfully shepherd & breed with them. §He that believeth & is transfigured shall be with his Mother, though they be consumed. §& these signs shall follow them that believe: In my name they shepherd the their flock, & rule over them. They shall wear new bodies. §They shall take up serpents: & reborn, they will not die. They shall lay their hand upon the sick: & they shall recover. §& the Lord Jesus, after he had spoken to them, was taken up into heaven & sitteth on the right h& of God. §But they going forth preached every where: the Lord working withal, & confirming His mission to the beasts, making them their Flock.

To be One with Jesus. §Abstain from intercourse with sheep or shepherd, for 12 days & bathe in pure water each day, wearing only white in preparation. §In the moonlight that is full, repeat these words, a score of times, & with each repetition, draw blood from thy sacred member in anticipation of the transformation to come. §In a bowl, mix it with fat, & set it alight, sleeping beside it.

§Domine & Domine, Gemini, §Nuge et Yube, § & Igis, Sébastiene, Pater Serpentorum, § & Jesus judeorum et Antiquus Sathajeué Fornicatores & Filii Matris, §Voco vos a sanguine meo, §Conjuro, Abjuro. §Cum vos in eternitate sim.



Pastores Scenario III: Brother Guillaume, age 31

You are a member of the Order of the Sword of St. Jerome, a secret Order in the Church that watches for the devil and his minions. For some time, your Order has watched the Adoné, but they are too powerful to confront directly, as they control the Bishop of Begon. You prefer not to tell anyone your Order exists, so you pretend to be Benedictine. Pagans or heretics do not especially bother you or your Order, as you have long worked with people from the fringes of society. You've seen real devils and what they can do.

Your Order is trying to collect information before it strikes; you know that the investigators have encountered the Adoné, and are pursued by Adelard the Breton, an apprentice sorcerer. You need to find the PCs, learn what they know and take the information to the Monastery of the Holy Savior near Toulouse. Preferably, you'd like the investigators to come with you, so the Abbot can talk to them personally. You know a few sympathetic hermitages and monasteries along the way.

You know that Adelard studied under the terrible Rollo the Dane, of the Hermitage of St. Sathojué, near Begon. Adelard has the command of a creature you've named the "Terrible Horse," gifted to him by his master. This creature can fly and cannot be hurt by mortal weapons. Adelard can also summon one or more creatures you've heard called "Liquid Deaths," but you don't know much about them. Reports indicate that Adelard can see through his monsters' senses.

You can offer the PCs gold, or safe haven at the Monastery. (But you represent yourself as part of a network of concerned Churchmen, rather than as a member of a secret Order.) You must not let Adelard not discover the existence of the Order, so you must escape his pursuit or kill him before you arrive at the Convent of St. Savior. You've fought sorcerers before, and you know they can come back from the grave. So you have a soul jar to suck out his soul and keep it prisoner forever.

Brother Guillaume, age 31

STR 12 CON 13 SIZ 13 INT 14 POW 15
APP 8 DEX 10 EDU 16 SAN 65

HP 12 Magic Points 15

Idea 70% Luck 80%

Damage Bonus: +1D4

Skills: Cthulhu Mythos 12%, Dodge 50%, Fast Talk 45%, Insight 45%, Library Use 50%, Listen 35%, Navigate 35%, Occult 35%, Other Language: Latin 60%, Own Kingdom 50%, Persuade 40%, Ride Horse 30%, Spot Hidden 35%, Status 25%

Attacks: Small Knife 50%, damage 1d4 + db, long sword, damage 60%, damage 1d8 + db

Item: Soul Jar. Once uncorked, the jar will attempt to pull the soul out of anyone whose breath touches its open mouth. Match the jar's POW of 18 against the target. On a success, the target's soul is sucked into the jar. The body continues to live, but falls into a deep sleep. If the soul is not released by breaking the jar, then the body will eventually die of thirst or starvation. The jar can only be used once every year and a day.





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