

THE TOAD WORKING v1D

A Dungeon Starter by Mark Tygart
For Sage LaTorra and Adam Koebel's

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AGENDA

- Make the world fantastic
- Fill the characters' lives with adventure
- Play to find out what happens

QUESTIONS

- Who has sent you to investigate Alchemology?
- How did you learn of its secret temple?
- What reason do you have to hate Hubbard? Parsons?
- What experience do you have combating demon cults?
- Have you heard about the mysterious "Toad Working"?

IMPRESSIONS

- The marble spires of the Temple
- The spray of the fountains
- The croaking of evening prayers
- Hungry grins of the goblins
- A huge Idol of a Toad
- The sound of chanting
- Exotic Incense
- Green drapes everywhere

Alchemology is a set of ideas and practices regarding the metaphysical relationship between the mind and soul created by rogue alchemist L. Hubbard; it is practiced by followers of his Alchemology Cult and a few separate independent Alchemology groups.

Alchemology has achieved no acceptance as a mainstream magical practice and is a widely accepted example of a pseudo-alchemical theory.

When Hubbard formulated Alchemology, he described it as "a mix of Western alchemy and Ancient 'Old One' philosophy". Hubbard also variously defined Alchemology as "a spiritual healing technology" and "an organized alchemy of thought."

—Hassan the Scholar

GOALS

- Establish details, describe
- Use what they give you
- Ask questions
- Leave blanks
- Look for interesting facts
- Help the players understand the moves
- Give each character a chance to shine
- Introduce NPC's
- Fill out your worksheet

DUNGEON MOVES

- Change the environment
- Point to a looming threat
- Introduce a new faction or type of creature
- Use a threat from an existing faction or type of creature
- Make them backtrack
- Present riches at a price
- Present a challenge to one of the characters

You don't get rich writing science fiction. If you want to get rich, you start a religion.

— L. Hubbard

ACTUAL HISTORY

The **Babalon Working** was a series magical and sexual rituals performed from January to March, 1946 by author, pioneer rocket-fuel scientist, and occultist Jack Parsons and Scientology founder L. Ron Hubbard. These "rituals" were essentially designed to manifest an individual incarnation of the archetypal divine feminine called Babalon. The project was based on the ideas of Aleister Crowley, and his description of a similar project in his 1917 novel *Moonchild*.

This "elemental" arrived a few days later in the form of Marjorie Cameron, who agreed to participate in Parson's sex rites. Soon afterwards, Parsons and Hubbard agreed to set up a business partnership, "Allied Enterprises", in which they invested nearly their entire savings—the vast majority contributed by Parsons. Occultist Aleister Crowley strongly criticized his student's Parsons's actions, writing: "Suspect Ron playing confidence trick—Jack Parsons weak fool—obvious victim prowling swindlers." Parsons attempted to recover his money by obtaining an injunction to prevent Hubbard from leaving the country or disposing of the remnants of his assets.

Parsons was killed in a chemical explosion in 1952. Some have suggested that Parsons' death had been suicide, stating that he had suffered from depression for some time. Others theorized that the explosion was an assassination planned by Howard Hughes in response to Parsons' suspected theft of Hughes Aircraft Company documents. Cameron became convinced that Parsons had been murdered — either by police officers seeking vengeance for his role in the conviction of LAPD Captain Earl Kynette of conspiracy to commit murder or by anti-Zionists opposed to his work for Israel. One of Cameron's friends, the artist Renate Druks, later stated her belief that Parsons had died in a rite designed to create a homunculus. His death has never been definitively explained.

(Sources include:Wikipedia, *Strange Angel* by George Pendle and *Sex and Rockets* by John Carter and Robert Anton Wilson.)

Services

Consult local Scholar: 100 Coins

The scholar will brief the party on Alchemy. She believes the cult is a front for worship of a Toad Demon.

Monsters

Alchemy Female Cultist *Group, Organized*

Punch (d4 damage)

Close HP: 2

Fearful and desperate, they'll brutally attack anything or anyone that questions their bizarre cult.

Instinct: Obey the Cult

Goblin Guard *Group, Small, Intelligent, Hoarder*

Dagger (d4+2 damage)

Close HP: 3

A trusted goblin minion of the temple from a tribe that has an eerie resemblance to Tom Cruise.

Instinct: Obey the Masters

Hubbard, Evil Illusionist *Magical, Intelligent, Hoarder*

Nightmare Bolt (d10 damage) HP: 8

Far, Ignores Armor

Illusionists are often dismissed as creating no real magic, just phantasms of smoke and echo. The evil illusionists know better. They say all is a lie, told by the universe, so hoodwinking fools to their death is to follow the gods' example.

Instinct: To trick the masses

- Cast Illusions that make party members seem like monsters
- Hide something using magic
- Become Invisible and escape

He rides astride the Toad; in his left hand he holds the reins, representing the passion which unites them. In his right she holds aloft the cup, the Unholy Chalice aflame with yummy insects and swamp water...

—Rites of the Toad

Parsons, Alchemist *Magical, Devious, Intelligent, Hoarder*
Flasks of alchemist's fire (d6 damage) HP: 8, 1 Armor
Far, Ignores Armor

This Cult of Alchemy is ever mentioned only in hushed tones, and many are fearful of its hidden influence. Its members are said to have unlocked the knowledge of the forbidden "*Rites of the Toad*" and apply these secrets to mold horrors and monstrosities.

Instinct: To perform forbidden rites

- Summon the Toad Demon
- Discover occult secrets
- Conduct twisted experiments

Toad Demon *Solitary, Huge, Planar, Terrifying*

Acid Tongue (d8+3 damage) HP: 18

Near, Far, Ignores Armor

Special Qualities: Can engulf with tongue

This demon has a giant toad like appearance with webbed hands, bright eyes, a wide mouth and an ensnaring tongue.

Instinct: Rampage

When you engulfed by the toad demon, roll+DEX. On a 10+, you avoid the demon's jaws. **On a 7-9,** you evade getting eaten and simply take damage. On a miss, you take no damage but the toad demon swallows you whole. When you're inside take -1 forward from the demon's digestive juices and don't get too comfortable. The Toad Demon will digest anything but stone and metal.

When you try to escape the demon, roll+CON. On a miss, the demon deals damage to you and some of your non-stone and non-metal stuff gets ruined.

On a 10+, pick two. **On a 7-9,** pick one:

- *You get out
- *Deal your damage to the mimic
- *None of your stuff is ruined. **On a miss,** the demon deals damage to you.

The most wasted of all days is one without laughter.

—e. e. cummings



Fun Historical Fact

LAPD Captain Earl Kynette was freed from prison just days before Parson's death. His conviction was for conspiracy to commit murder by bombing. It had been proved by Parsons in court that Kynette had personally bought the pipe for the homemade bomb in an attempt to kill a private investigator looking into LAPD corruption. In 1963, Kynette was stabbed during a drunken fight in a skid row hotel in Oakland and died. —Los Angeles Times



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