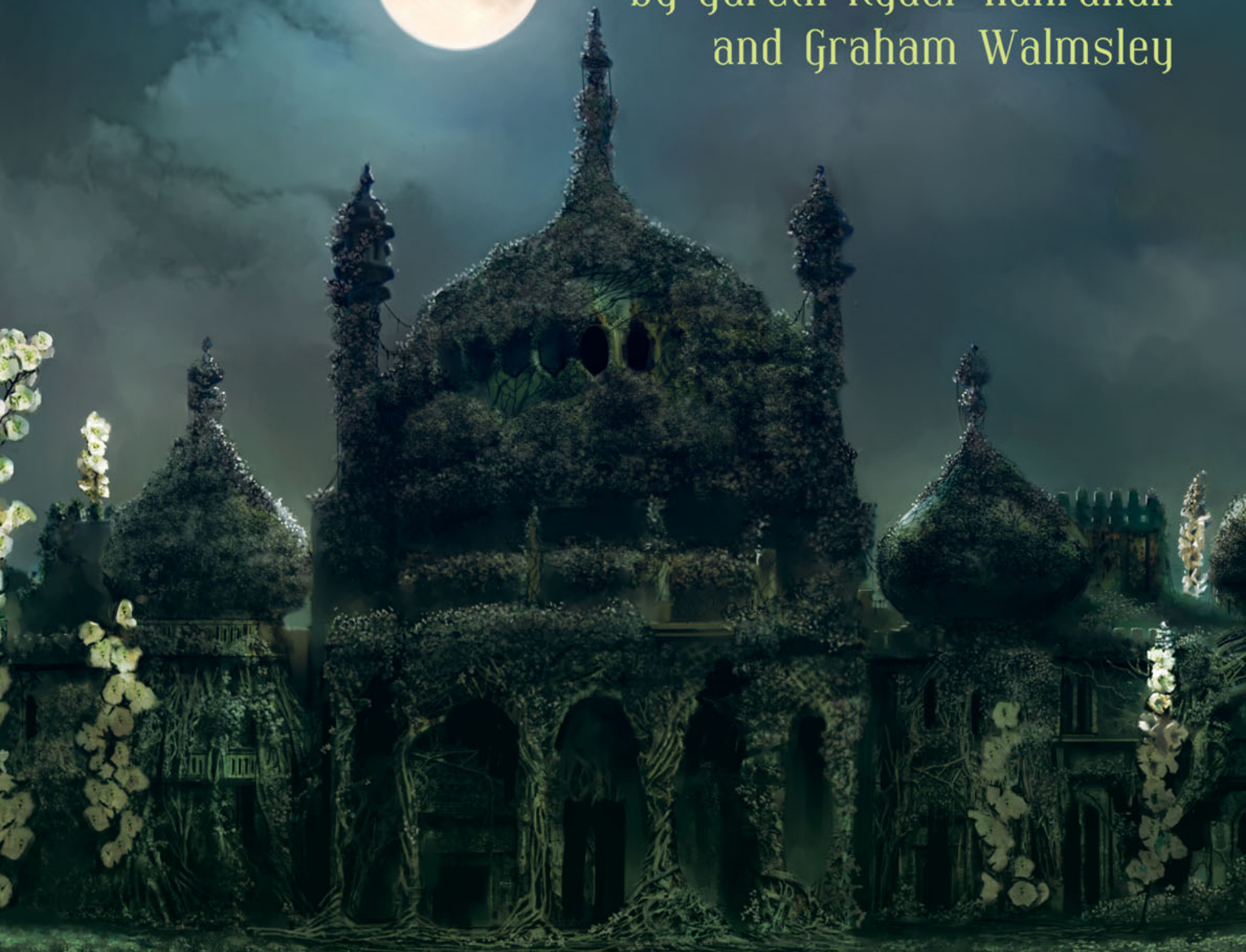


TRAIL OF CTHULHU

Slaves of the Mother

by Gareth Ryder-Hanrahan
and Graham Walmsley




Pelgrane Press

CTHULHU APOCALYPSE



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CTHULHU APOCALYPSE



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Introduction

These three scenarios complete the destruction of England in the *Cthulhu Apocalypse* campaign. The adventures pick up three years after the final part of *The DeadWhiteWorld*.

It is now the summer of 1939. The decision that the characters made in the alien city of Shk'hrnwr continues to haunt England (see **The Creatures**, page 7). Horrors now stalk the empty and overgrown streets of the civilisation that once existed here. The passage of three long, strange years has transformed the world into an unrecognisable landscape of horrors. There are a few survivors, living in the ruins of the past, but under the unfathomable pressure of the Mythos, their humanity is slipping away, cracking and moulting in the process of becoming something new.

Three Years Gone...

What has happened to the player characters in the last three years? Presumably, they are all still alive (though if any of the players wish to retire their previous characters and create replacements, let them) and have found some place of refuge. This refuge must have

- A source of fresh water, untainted by the Flowers
- Easy access to scavenged canned food (or some other food source)
- A place to hide from the Creatures.

Optionally,

- Several other people beyond the player characters live there
- The existence of the refuge is a mystery – there is no clear reason why the Creatures rarely come here

- The refuge is a well-known landmark, perhaps a former police station, country house or hotel
- Even if other people live at the refuge, the player characters are the leaders and defenders of the settlement.

The refuge should not be

- Mobile
- Underground
- Impregnable

or

- Pleasant

Do not spend too much time detailing the refuge. It won't last long (and let the players know that).

Alternatively, it is possible that there is no refuge. The characters might survive for years as scavengers and nomads, criss-crossing the wreck of England as they strive to avoid the ever-present Creatures.

It is worth reviewing *The Decaying Earth* section of *The Apocalypse Machine* for ideas on presenting the crumbling remains of human civilisation.

Downtime

Ask the players what transpired in the last three years. Did they run from the rise of the Deep Ones at Blackpool and flee to higher ground in the Yorkshire Dales? Perhaps they wandered in terror until they found a miraculous place of safety, or were scattered and travelled separately until they met up again recently.

Optionally, allow the players to each spend up to three points from Investigative Abilities of their choice, representing their characters' activities and efforts during these three years. Benefits for spending these points are noted below. If a skill is not listed, then we couldn't think of a suitable benefit – maybe you or your players can, though!

Skills marked with a * give one Affliction point if a character invests time in them, if you are using the Affliction rules from *The Apocalypse Machine*.

Anthropology: You've studied how human society has changed under the pressure of the Mythos, and heard rumours about other settlements and sanctuaries across England. A 1-point spend lets the character find out about the 'safe zone' in Brighton; a 2-point spend picks up rumours about a secret military project preparing to fight back against the Creatures. A 3-point spend gets the characters a rumour about another settlement of your choice.

Agriculture: You were able to grow food even under these harsh conditions. For each point spent, one character may permanently increase his Health by 1.

Archaeology: You put your expertise in excavating ancient civilisations to work in recovering the remains of your own. For each point spent, the character gains a temporary 2-point pool of Scavenging.

Architecture: You have learned to find hiding places and safe areas in the ruins where the Creatures rarely go. For each point spent, you may nominate a safe place in an urban area where you can rest and recuperate.



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Art: You've channelled your horrific experiences into your art. You may increase your maximum Sanity by 1 for each point of Art spent. However, anyone who looks at your art must make a Sanity test at a Difficulty of 2+the number of points of Art spent.

Assess Honesty: If you were part of a refuge, you were responsible for vetting newcomers. For each point spent, you may describe a suitably reliable and stalwart member of your refuge.

Astronomy*: You've watched the stars twist and change as the years passed by. For each point spent, the character gains a temporary 1-point pool of Cthulhu Mythos.

Bargain: You traded with other survivors and amassed a stockpile of useful items. For every point of Bargain invested, the character gains a temporary 2-point pool of Preparedness.

Biology*: You've studied the Creatures, and know more than most about how they kill – and how to kill them! For each point spent, you gain a +2 bonus to one General Ability roll to avoid danger or inflict damage. For example, you could invoke your Biology studies when making a Sense Trouble roll that involves the Flowers, or say that you know where to shoot a Deep One with Shooting. This bonus applies only once, but if you've got multiple bonuses, you can stack them or split them between rolls.

Botany: You've made a study of the Flowers. This works just like Biology, above, but only applies to the Flowers. The bonus per point spent is increased to +3.

Bureaucracy: You've collated records and made notes about places where you are likely to find supplies, such as old military bases, canning factories, warehouses and the like. For each point spent, the character gains a temporary 2-point pool of Scavenging.

Craft: You spent your time fortifying your Refuge. For each point invested, you may describe an improvement to the Refuge's defences or amenities.

Cryptography*: You managed to salvage a working radio, and spent many sleepless nights listening to the strange squeal of radio messages passing through the ether. With a 1-point spend, the character hears horrible messages of the destruction of Copenhagen from a babbling madman in Vanløse; huge tentacles rose out of the ocean and pulled much of the city into the water. A 2-point spend lets the character detect and decode the ramblings of the keeper of in a lighthouse off the coast of Wales, whose fevered transmissions speak of mysterious black ships, possibly some sort of refugee transport, travelling west. A 3-point spend means the character catches the tail end of a transmission from *HMS Hood*, a British warship that was in Portsmouth when the apocalypse struck. Apparently, the ship survived and is communication with someone called Cavendish. The radio transmission confirms that some cargo from the ship was successfully delivered to this Cavendish.

Forensics*: You spent several years studying the victims of the Creatures, and now know a great deal about the curious natures of their deaths. For each point spent, the character gains a 3-point pool in First Aid that can be applied only to injuries caused by the Creatures.

Geology: You surveyed the land around your Refuge, and identified useful geographical features. A 1-point spend allows the character to describe a cave nearby to hide in; a 2-point spend discovers an underground spring uninfected by the Flowers; a 3-point spend lets the character find signs of a vast sigil drawn across the whole country in the folds of hills and valleys. This troubling revelation is worth a 3-point Sanity test.

History: You have invested time and energy in preserving the culture and learning of a rapidly vanishing age. For each point invested, you may gain 1 point of Sanity. You also gain the Pillar of Sanity "Preservation of Learning".

Leadership: You became the leader of your little band of survivors. For each point of Leadership invested, you allow another character to invest an extra point in downtime activities.

Medicine: You have observed the changes in humanity. A 1-point spend means the investigator noticed a sharp rise in human and animal fertility. A 2-point spend means the investigator has studied the Flowers, and can treat those infected by their seeds. A 3-point spend gives a temporary 2-point pool of First Aid.

Navigation: You mapped the region around your Refuge. For each point invested, you gain a temporary pool of 2 points in Stealth when moving around the immediate area.

Oral History: You've picked up various useful rumours. A 1-point spend lets the character find out about the 'safe zone' in Brighton; a 2-point spend picks up rumours about a secret military project preparing to fight back against the Creatures. A 3-point spend gets the characters a rumour about another settlement of your choice.

Outdoorsman*: You've learned how to survive in this strange new world. For each point invested, you may increase your Stealth, Preparedness or Fleeing rating by 1.

Pharmacy: You've stockpiled medical supplies and other useful drugs by ransacking pharmacies. For each point invested, you gain a 2-point pool that can be applied to Preparedness, First Aid or Scavenging rolls related to drugs.



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Unnatural Fecundity

Slowly, over the three years, a strange phenomenon swept across the country – a rise in fertility across all species. The Creatures, of course, derived the greatest benefit from this, but it also affects plants, animals and humans. The investigators may or may not notice this rise, depending on how they invested their points during Downtime. Female investigators may, if they wish, have children during the intervening period – the rise in fertility ensures that conception and childbirth are both free of complications or problems.

It is as though the world responds to the millions of deaths during the Apocalypse by bringing forth a bounty of new life. In truth, this wave of unnatural fecundity is the first of the signs heralding the approach of the Mother.

Physics: You have studied how the fundamental laws of physics have changed since the Apocalypse. Gain 1 point of Cthulhu Mythos for every two points of Physics spent (rounding down).

Sources of Stability, Pillars of Sanity & Drives

Optionally, player characters who lost Sources of Stability in the Apocalypse may choose to switch to new, living Sources in the form of other survivors. Two sample Sources are described below. Any such non-player character Sources of Stability should not be on a par with investigators – they may be able to survive in this strange new world, but they cannot find clues or take an active part in these scenarios.

Similarly, player characters may choose to replace lost or meaningless Pillars of Sanity with new ones more suited to the post-Apocalyptic environment. For example, a character whose Pillar was “England Prevails” might change it to “England Can Be Reclaimed”; one who formerly valued God might lose her faith and become focussed on her own personal survival.

Finally, Drives that no longer fit a character can be exchanged for something else. See *The Apocalypse Machine* for post-Apocalyptic Drives.

The Creatures

Depending on what the players chose at the end of *Sandgrown*, England is overrun either with the strange white Flowers that blossomed across the country, or half-drowned by the Deep Ones. In either case, some outposts of the other horror remain. There are either a few patches of flowers still growing on high ground, or else the Deep Ones continue to lurk off the coast, coming ashore on high tide on certain moonless nights.

Throughout the rest of this book, the dominant entities are referred to as the Creatures. Their diminished rivals are termed the Others. In sections where the Flowers are the Creatures, you will see this symbol:



In sections where the Deep Ones are the Creatures, you will see this symbol:



The Flowers as the Creatures



The Flowers continue to spread, obscenely and blindly, obeying nothing but their own genetic commandments to be fruitful and multiply. The Flowers are thinnest on dry, stony soil and rocks, thicker along rivers and other waterways, and grow thickest of all in the ruins of cities, where they sprout from the charnel piles of the dead. Each morning, their petals unfurl and vast milky clouds of seeds belch skywards. The skies of England are a sinister pale pink-white now from dawn until mid-afternoon.

The seeds float on the breeze until they come to earth. They can germinate only in water or damp soil. Rains, therefore, result in frenzied new growth that stains the land white. Anyone who drinks water containing the seeds perishes. The vast seed-bursts can also be perilous – an unfortunate victim who is exposed to millions of hungry seeds may germinate flowers in his eyes or mucous membranes.

Animals are unaffected by the seed-tainted water, but cannot gain any nourishment from eating the strange plants. Therefore, most animals have starved to death as the seeds crowd out native flora.

The Flowers keep growing steadily, so the oldest Flowers are now gigantic in size. Eight-foot-tall Flowers are not uncommon, and some of those near Dover are said to be bigger than churches.

Terrain

Seen from the air – if there were any aircraft left to fly – England now looks like a milky-white carpet, except for a few regions of bare rock and the last dying forests. The flowers grow everywhere, like a shroud. It has become increasingly difficult to recognise landmarks and to tell one sort of terrain from another, when everything is shin-deep in delicate white flowers.



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Strange Sights

- Huge swaying growths looming over ruined buildings. These towering plants resemble white delphiniums, but are the size of oak trees. They are disconcertingly supple, and leave caustic pollen-stains on anything that touches them.
- One of the characters awakens to find a furze of bone-white moss has grown around them overnight. This moss coats every surface in the room other than the character's bed.
- The plants are attracted to complex machinery and to vibrations. Anything that creates repetitive sounds – a millwheel, for example, or an engine – is soon covered with a thick growth as seeds cluster there.
- The characters find a glasshouse, miraculously still intact. Inside, they see the shocking red of ripe tomatoes, the vibrant green of

natural plants. However, the instant they breach the sanctity of the glasshouse, the Flowers start sprouting inside, choking out the other plants.

- The characters pass a famous body of water (a river such as the Thames, or perhaps Lake Windermere, or the Bristol Channel) and see that it has turned milky-white. As they stare, a huge scaly creature heaves itself out of the waters and strides past and over them, scattering droplets of white all over them. The titanic creature ignores the characters entirely. It moves to another part of the waters, then sinks back down.
- Sometimes, the Flowers seem to almost besiege the survivors. If they cannot penetrate a shelter, then they gather there, sprouting in vast numbers on and around the offending structure until the sheer

weight of them crushes it. The characters find a former shelter – a farmhouse, a cave, a hospital, an army base – that is drowned by gigantic snowdrifts of Flowers. The plants have used their incalculable numbers to swamp any opposition.

- The Flowers evolve in a Lamarckian fashion, where changes to the parent entity are passed onto the offspring. That means the Flowers can change radically in a short time. Most of the Flowers encountered by the characters are identical to the snowdrop-like plant they encountered three years ago in Dover, but some have become truly bizarre aberrations.

Human Survivors

Water is the key to survival in the Dead White World. 99% of the water supply is tainted with the seeds, and drinking it is therefore invariably fatal. Survivors rely





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on boiling water (although even this is risky), bottled drinks (what few remain after three years of anarchy) or water supplies that remain unaffected (such as a few mountain streams, underground aquifers or emergency tanks).

Horrorific Fate Table

1. Smothered by a mass of Flowers. The victim clearly struggled, and does not appear to have any of the Flowers in her stomach. Instead, the Flowers choked off her mouth and nose, sprouting furiously quickly in any moist crevices until she suffocated.
2. Accidentally consumed a seed, and died when the Flower burst through his stomach. Nearby is a battered old saucepan lying near the embers of a fire. The water in the saucepan is nearly – but not quite – entirely clear. It is only when the light catches it just right that the characters can see tiny white specks floating in it.
3. Murdered. The victim was hung by the wrists from a makeshift gallows. There are two huge gashes, one at the top of each thigh, and the legs are covered in dried blood. A close examination shows that most of the victim's blood was deliberately drained out of his body and collected.
4. Suicide by Flower. The victim sits or lies in a comfortable position, with a single flower growing from the wreckage of his head. It is clear that the victim placed a seed on his tongue, like the Communion wafer in a Catholic mass, and waited for it to grow and kill him.
5. Unknown. The trail of footprints runs into a thick patch of Flowers, then stops abruptly as if the victim was carried off by a flying monster, or vanished on the spot. As the characters watch, new Flowers begin to grow from the compacted earth of the footprints; in a few minutes, the trail will be gone and nothing at all will remain.

6. Drowned. What appeared to be a patch of Flowers was actually a deep hole covered by a thin mesh of plants. The victim fell in and was smothered by the plants.



Three years ago, a strange yellowish scum floated to the surface of the ocean and began to wash onshore with the tides. This yellow scum proved lethal to the Flowers. Soon afterwards, stinging yellow-tinged acid rain fell across the south of England, wiping out most of the Flowers. Now, they can germinate and spread only in a few regions deep inland that escaped the Deep One's chemical purge.

Today, the Flowers are forgotten by most survivors, remembered only as part of the chaotic, horrific days that marked the end of the old world. There are still outbreaks and infections, but the survivors have learned that drinking a purgative potion of yellowish sea-water can stop the Flowers from growing and killing. The characters may glimpse the occasional fading Flower as they travel, a patch of tranquil white amid the thrashing horror of the drowned world, but the Flowers are not a major threat as the Others.

The Deep Ones as the Creatures



Humanity lived and died in the shadow of another civilisation infinitely greater and older than ours. For millions of years, the Deep Ones lurked in the cold and dark of the abyssal plain between the continental shelves, waiting for the time to rise. Now they are here, and they have inherited the Earth.

All of Europe is like Innsmouth now.

Terrain

The water level rose steadily for nearly a year after the Apocalypse. Strangely, this rise was not evenly distributed. In some places, the coastline is unchanged;

in others, waves roll many miles inland. The rising waters paid little heed to gradient or geography. One valley might be drowned, while the next valley left untouched, even though both are the same height above the old sea level. Streets and roads were especially flooded, as though the sea was an eager commuter rushing to some midlands town. The sea entwined England like the tentacles of a kraken.

Most of the country is now either flooded or marshy and waterlogged. Travel is virtually impossible, as all the easy routes run uncomfortably close to bodies of water. The water itself is dark and fouled with seaweed. Mysterious shapes move under the surface.

Strange Sights

- A bizarre procession of creatures moves along one of the half-flooded roads. In this hurly-burly mob the characters see some figures that are almost human save for their bulbous eyes and scaly skins, but the others are a fever-dream. Fish-like monsters that shamle and bellow, writhing blobs of protoplasm, stumbling insect-shapes dragging bloated egg-sacs behind them, yowling horrors with burning yellow eyes, twisted dragon-things and other indescribable creatures. This column of nightmares races along the road with great haste, as if chasing some prey. When the water grows deeper, they sink beneath the surface and vanish.
- A trio of Deep Ones, who hop and crawl over a boggy landscape like overgrown frogs. The three appear to be searching for something – they probe the mud with their spears and bellow instructions to each other. After some time, they show mounting frustration before finally giving up. If the characters search the area, they find what seems to be a token of some sort buried in the mud. It is made from



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greenish glass, and depicts a many-legged sea creature like an octopus. Keeping this token is worth one Affliction point, if you're using those rules.

- The characters come across a broken-down bus, standing in waist-deep water. The bus is crowded with human survivors – every seat is full, and dozens of people stand in the aisle. All these passengers wear clothing made from an unfamiliar rubber-like substance, and all have purplish bruises or scars on their limbs and necks. They have the hollow, despairing eyes of people who have lost all hope. The passengers refuse to leave the bus; they can be dragged off, but just lie where the characters leave them.
- A half-sunken town, where flood waters and marshland have swallowed the lower half of the buildings. It appears that the town sank in a matter of minutes, as the characters find the buried remains of swallowed victims in the mud-logged rooms. Huge white earthworms squirm through the soil, feeding on the buried victims.
- The characters come upon a black market in stolen Deep One relics, such as gold jewellery and strangely shaped pieces of coral. Some merchants trade in lumps of pale blue-green flesh that quiver

on silver plates – these are said to be pieces of Deep One flesh. Crazed survivors come here in the hopes of finding a way to become Deep Ones themselves, believing the only way to survive in the wreck of England is to join the Mythos.

Human Survivors

The Deep Ones are less inimical to human life than the Flowers. They mostly ignore the few survivors, although any gathering of more than a handful of survivors draws retribution. The creatures are bizarrely well informed about the movements of human survivors, and the characters may come to suspect that the Deep Ones can watch them through the eyes of the small silver fish that swim through the muddy pools. Rumours persist of coastal communities where chosen humans are inducted into the worship of Dagon and are allowed to survive in exchange for mating with the sea-creatures.

Horrific Fate Table

1. Torn apart by something with tremendous strength. The victim was ripped limb from limb, and most of the bones in her body shattered. Notably, the left femur appears to have been gnawed on by wickedly sharp teeth.
2. The victim drowned. His lungs are full of silty salt water, although the rest of the body is quite dry other

than some wet patches on his legs and chest. It is as though the water crawled up his body and nested in his lungs.

3. Suicide by shotgun. A close examination reveals that the victim had developed the Innsmouth look.
4. The victim's head is missing. Whatever removed it made an incredibly clean cut; the top of the neck is sliced neatly, and the exposed muscle glistens strangely. There is very little blood.
5. The victim died due to blood loss and infection from a botched surgical procedure with improvised tools. Those with **Medicine** recognise the signs of an attempted late-term abortion.
6. Little evidence remains of the cause of death, as the body was attacked after death by a swarm of silvery slugs who devoured every scrap of flesh. The bones are picked clean.



Driving the Deep Ones back into the ocean merely continues the status quo. The Deep Ones still have their cities off the coast, and may still menace coastal communities. Indeed, with the collapse of human civilisation, the Deep Ones grow bolder and more active. They even protect some isolated coastal settlements from the Flowers to maintain a breeding stock of humans.





Bright Futures

The seaside town of Brighton is an unlikely sanctuary for the ragged remnants of humanity. As the Creatures close in, they force the investigators to travel to Brighton and seek safety there. There, the investigators meet with the criminal gang who rule the town, and must find decide whether safety is worth submitting to tyranny.

The Hook

The Creatures surround Brighton, but they leave the town alone. It's the best place for the characters to take shelter.

The Question

Why is Brighton safe?

The Horrible Truth

The citizens of Brighton have entered into a horrible bargain with the Creatures. Taking advantage of the unnatural fecundity of all living things in this strange new world, they sacrifice the one asset they have - children.

The Spine

The adventure begins at the investigator's refuge. Soon after hearing rumours of how Brighton is safe, the investigators realise their own refuge is no longer secure. They travel across the ruins of England to Brighton. En route, they meet other refugees seeking safety, including a woman named Rose and her young son Toby.

Brighton has fallen under the control of a gang of criminals, but they permit the characters to enter - at a price.

After living in Brighton, for some weeks, Rose comes to the investigators for help - Toby has vanished. In fact, a neighbour kidnapped the child to offer him in lieu of his own son.

Bring The Horror Closer

The non-player characters Rose and Toby are just plot devices to hook the characters into the mystery of the vanishing children in Brighton. If any of the player characters have children, or if you have already established non-player characters who fit these roles, you should use them in place of Toby and Rose.

Investigations lead the characters to the Queen's Hotel. These investigations may be aided by Ida Arnold. After finding the missing child, the investigators go to the hospital and then the racetrack where the sacrifices take place.

At this point, the characters have a choice to condone or sabotage this policy of sacrifice.

Brighton

Brighton is a seaside town in the south of England, about an hour south of London. It came to prominence as a tourist destination in the 1780s under the patronage of the Prince Regent, who built a palace there called the Royal Pavilion. Throughout the 19th century, the town prospered as a resort for wealthy Londoners, and drew many fashionable visitors. The construction of a railway line brought the resort within reach of the lower classes. By the 1930s, Brighton was no longer the place to be seen, but was still a popular tourist destination. Any Investigators with a **Credit Rating** of 2 or more have probably visited Brighton at some point.

Notable locations in Brighton include:

- **The Piers:** These two piers were mainstays of the tourist district along the beach. The Palace Pier was filled with amusement arcades

and other tourist attractions, while the West Pier was better known for its concert hall.

- **The Royal Pavilion:** This curious building was built in the Indo-Saracenic style – an architectural style that combines Islamic and Indian elements with the Gothic and Neo-classical styles from Europe. Inside, the pavilion was richly decorated.
- **Queen's Hotel:** Queen's Hotel is located between the two piers. It is a large and well-appointed hotel, built in 1846.

Apocalyptic Brighton

The Apocalypse wiped out virtually the entire population in a matter of hours. The two main groups of survivors were the regulars in the Crown pub – it was Harry's birthday, they'd celebrated into the small hours, and no one was drinking water that night – and a gang of criminals. The leader of the gang, an intelligent and dangerous young man nicknamed Pinkie, spotted the early symptoms of the Flowers and intuited what was going on. Within two weeks, he and his gang were the de facto government in Brighton.

Brighton After The Flowers: The centre of Brighton is free of the Flowers. They don't grow in sand, so



Bright Futures



the beach and the well-maintained streets around the Queen's Hotel are safe. Rainwater buttes collect drinking water, and everyone is careful to check their water for traces of the seeds before taking a sip. There are even a few vegetable gardens, but most of the town's food comes from looted tins or from the sea – ever since the Deep Ones rose and retreated, the sea has been thronged with fish. Fishing vessels dock with the Palace Pier.

Brighton-on-Rlyeh: The rising waters have, strangely, left Brighton mostly intact. The outskirts of the town are flooded, and the nearby town of Hove to the west is a waterlogged memory, but as long as one avoids basement flats, Brighton itself is livable. The Deep Ones and their servants are never seen, although sometimes there are tracks in the wet sand left by no

earthly creature, and the tides wash up unidentifiable things encrusted with muck of the ocean floor.

Notable locations include:

- **Queen's Hotel:** Now it is commonly referred to as 'Pinkie's palace' (although not when any of Pinkie's gang could overhear.) The leader holds court in the grand ballroom of the hotel, and trusted gang members are permitted to live in the hotel suites. Pinkie himself lives in the penthouse, and he has a harem of girls on the floor below.
- **Ship Street:** A street lined with fine townhouses, now one of the areas controlled by Pinkie's gang. Most of the inhabitants of Brighton live here or in one of the adjoining streets or squares.

- **The Crown Pub:** The Crown is a pub close to Ship Street that is still in operation. Most residents of Brighton visit the Crown in the evenings. Sometimes, it's possible to close your eyes and just inhale the smell of spilled beer and human odour, to listen to the gossip and the singing, and to forget that the outside world is a hellish post-human abomination.
- **The Promenade:** The Brighton Promenade runs along the beachfront. It is still the main thoroughfare for most foot traffic.
- **The Walls:** The Walls refer to the barricades built by Pinkie's gang, blocking the approaches to the 'safe' region around the Queen's Hotel. All able-bodied men are expected to take their shift manning the



Bright Futures

Walls, to watch danger. As Pinkie's bargain keeps the creatures away, the main threat is intruders and scavengers from the north.

The Bargain

It began with a man named Andrew Hale. Pinkie had a grudge against him, and even as the world fell apart and the Flowers killed millions, the boy pursued Hale through the chaotic streets of Brighton. He murdered Hale by shoving his head into a barrel of Flower-tainted rainwater and holding him there until the alien plants took hold. In the moment of Hale's death, Pinkie noticed an eerie thrill run through him – and the Flowers around him. It was as though they accepted this sacrifice. He watched, and saw that no new Flowers grew in that grubby alleyway.

In the coldly furious machine of Pinkie's mind, he realized that this could be a sort of truce with the Creatures. He understood the language of violence and suffering – they would have their turf, and he his.

Children's deaths were better than grown-up deaths, and baby's deaths best of all. The calculus made sense to him; a child was less useful, less productive than a man, and a baby less useful still – and he was careful to baptize them all first, anyway. If there was a Christian God, then the souls of Pinkie's sacrifices would logically be almost perfectly innocent, with only original sin holding them back from Heaven.

Once he controlled Brighton, Pinkie established a fair system – fair by his lights, anyway – for procuring sacrifices. He and his gang have a harem of girls who are kept pregnant. As long as they continue to produce children, they are exempt from all other work. Most of the necessary sacrifices come from these women, who are kept on the upper floors of the Queen's Hotel and rarely leave. Only a few people in Brighton know about them.

If extra sacrifices are needed, then Pinkie selects a child at random from

the town. The child's family are told that they can either give up the child willingly, or the child will be taken from them by force and they will be thrown out of Brighton. They're not told what will happen to the child.

Not everyone in Brighton knows about the sacrifices, and most of those who do know wish they didn't, and are too ashamed to talk about it. It's a horrible thing to go to sleep knowing that your safety was bought by murdering children – but at least you're alive, and not out *there* with the Creatures.

Rumours of Safety

The characters may already know about Brighton from their downtime activities (see page 11). In fact, if they choose to travel to Brighton without being prompted by a danger to their refuge, run with that instead of deploying The Threat.

If they do not know about Brighton, then they are visited by **Bill Shakespeare**, the postman they previously encountered in the ruins of London (see *Letters from Ghosts* in *The DeadWhiteWorld*). In the last three years, Bill has continued to bring messages and supplies between different groups of survivors. His trusty van no longer works, so he now travels on a heavy black bicycle. Somehow, Bill has maintained his cheery outlook, even though his rounds of survivors grow every smaller as communities succumb to the Creatures or to despair.

Oral History gets the **Core Clue** – Bill tells the characters that lately, he's heard a lot about Brighton. The story goes that it's safe from the Creatures, and that they're welcoming survivors who join them. It's a dangerous trek down there, but Bill knows several other survivors who decided it was worth the risk. He hopes they made it.

Spending points of **Oral History** or **Streetwise** gets some more details out of Bill (one item per point spent):

- No-one knows why the Creatures leave Brighton alone.
- Some people believe that Brighton is under the control of the Royal Navy. The rumour claims that a British warship survived the initial chaos and is now docked at Brighton pier. A **Strategy** spend or knowledge of the military suggests this is a false rumour.
- Only survivors with useful skills are wanted in Brighton. Some stories claim that a few refugees were turned away from the town, but other stories contradict this, and say that anyone can find a home there.
- Bill himself is considering making the trip south. He has fond memories of courting his late wife, Dorothy, on the promenade one bright summer.

After spending the night in the safety of the Refuge, Bill departs. Describe the incongruous sight of a man in a faded post office uniform atop a black Roadster bicycle, tottering down the road surrounded by the eerie white Flowers (or stagnant green-scummed water), outlined against a sky that glows with unnamable colours.

The Threat

Some days after Bill's visit, the investigator's Refuge comes under threat. The nature of this threat obviously depends on what sort of Creature exists, as well as the Refuge itself. Whatever the threat is, it should not immediately destroy the Refuge (although since you will be blowing it up in a later adventure anyway, feel free to wreak premature havoc if you wish), but should instead make staying in the Refuge feel unsafe, and make a journey to Brighton more appealing.

The **Core Clue** in this scene is the necessity to leave.



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Strategy: This Refuge is no longer secure. It may hold out for a few months with a lot of luck, but the characters need to find a safer place to live. Brighton may be their only hope.


Intuition: You know that this place of safety cannot endure. You have to leave.


Leadership: The other people at the refuge look to you for guidance. You can't like to them any longer – it's time to go.


Oral History: Some of the other people living in the refuge come to you and ask you to escort them to Brighton. They no longer feel safe here.


Some possibilities:


 A forest of gargantuan Flowers grows up nearby. It starts to expand, and within a short few weeks will engulf the Refuge. These Flowers are the size of oak trees; they smash through rock and concrete with ease.

 Mobile Flowers besiege the Refuge. These plants stand roughly eight feet tall, and move by slow undulations of their roots. They attack by spraying bursts of seeds in the faces of any humans they encounter. These seeds germinate in the eyes or mouth of the victim.

 A strange white moss sprouts inside the Refuge. The characters can easily wipe this moss away, but it soon grows back thicker and stronger, forcing them to spend more and more time fighting the furze. Left unchecked, it would swiftly engulf the whole building.

 One of the titanic shambling things heaves itself out of the ocean, dripping with the primordial muck of a million years of sediment, and begins to stumble across the countryside. It moves slowly, no more than a mile every day, but it exudes a poisonous miasma that kills everything nearby – and it is on a path directly towards the Refuge.

 The characters hear tales of packs of Deep Ones ravaging across the countryside, hunting survivors. Strange things like headless skinned dogs guide them to their prey.

 The water level at the Refuge begins to rise. Chill black water wells up through the foundations. This rising water has no discernable source, nor can the characters channel it away. The Refuge starts sinking into the growing mire.

The Road

Depending on where the Refuge is, the investigators may face a long trek across the country. Three years after the Apocalypse, few roads are still passable – most have either been swallowed up by the Flowers, drowned by the rising seas, or just fallen into disrepair. Functional vehicles are also hard to find, so the characters will likely have to hike across the country.

Any character with Navigation can find the way to Brighton, even if they have to stay off the main roads. This is a Core Clue.

They do not encounter any immediate threats on their journey, as long as they stay away from known dangers (apart from some of the Strange Sights on page 8 or 9). Any character with **Outdoorsman** or **Cthulhu Mythos** (or who listens to their **Intuition**) knows to avoid that peculiar white-tinged forest, and can tell not to go too close to those mirror-black lakes that reflect no Earthly skies. The characters should see signs of the creatures – Deep One footprints, the acidic snail-slime of Shoggoths, the dawn seed-bursts from the Flowers – but do not see any of them directly. They only spy traces of the horror.

They also find a few traces of survivors. 99% of the population – in England, anyway – died within a few hours of the *Lysenko* incident – and the Flowers consumed those bodies years ago. They do see signs of more recent survivors, such as the ashes of

a campfire, graffiti on the side of a ruined house or a path hacked through the undergrowth. For the most part, though, they see nothing but the slow tide of nature reclaiming the land.

The Other Travellers

South of London, the investigators cross the trail of another party. They spot signs of at least two other people ahead of them.

- **Outdoorsman:** Judging by the footprints, there's one small adult and one child ahead. They're moving slowly and uncertainly.
- **Evidence Collection:** You find a discarded children's history book. The owner has 'updated' it in crayon, drawing white flowers over the faces of all the people and scribbling out the buildings.

The next day, the investigators spot Rose and her son Toby, resolutely marching across the white fields of Sussex.

- **Reassurance** assures the pair that the investigators are not dangerous.
- Rose explains that she was a waitress in London before the Creatures came. Toby's father was out working, and she never found out what happened to him.
- She lived with another small band of survivors until they were all killed - they uncovered something in the cellars of a house that gobbled them all up. She didn't see it.
- A one-point **Intuition** or **Assess Honesty** spend reveals that Rose is lying to herself. She did see whatever killed the others, but is desperately suppressing the memory.
- It's strange – she nearly moved to Brighton four years ago, before all this changed. Now she's fleeing there because it's the only safe place left in England.

Playing Rose:

- Hunch your shoulders nervously.



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- Agree to any suggestions put to you. Never lead.

Her son Toby was four when the Apocalypse began. He doesn't know anything except this strange new world.

- **Psychoanalysis:** Children can be surprisingly resilient. Toby seems better-adjusted than his mother.
- Toby has an active interest in the world before the Creatures. He'll happily babble to the investigators about how many people used to live in London, and how there were once these wonderful machines called trains that whisked people between London and Brighton. He saw a train once, but it wasn't moving and everyone in it was dead.

Playing Toby:

- Be absolutely matter-of-fact about the horrors around you. To you, checking water to avoid flower seeds or dodging Deep Ones is utterly mundane.
- Enthuse about the mythic, vanished past.
- Look up at the players. Make sure your eye level is well beneath theirs.

Both Rose and Toby are weaponless and undernourished. They gratefully accept any aid proffered by the player characters.

After another few days' travel, the characters see the outskirts of Brighton.

End of the Road

Entry to Brighton is controlled by Pinkie's gang. The characters' first introduction to Brighton is not a promising one - a big thug emerges from a dilapidated shop and stands in the middle of the road, blocking the characters' path. He carries a nasty blackthorn club in one meaty paw.

- **Strategy or Architecture:** There's a pair of men armed with rifles on

the rooftop overlooking the street. One wrong move, and someone's going to get shot.

- **Intimidation:** This thug is trying to intimidate the characters. He's clearly under orders to turn away anyone who threatens the powers that be in Brighton.

The thug's name is Cubitt; big, red-haired, a little slow, loyal to his friends but capable of shocking violence.

"More mouths to feed," he mutters, "like bloody stray dogs." To get into Brighton, the Investigators need to get past the thug. Cubitt demands to know what the characters can offer - any of them doctors, or mechanics, or fighting men, or anything useful like that? This reminds the investigators of their arrival in Blackpool (see *Sandgrown* in *The Dead White World*), although the Brighton survivors seem harsher and more competent than the previous group.

To win entry to Brighton, a character must have one of the following (**Core Clue**):

- Agriculture
- Medicine
- Intimidation
- Craft
- Outdoorsman
- Streetwise
- Electrical Repair 4+
- Firearms 4+
- Mechanical Repair 4+

Spending an extra point (2 points, for the General Abilities) from any of these 'useful' abilities lets one character 'cover' another by vouching for his usefulness.

Spending two points from any of these 'useful' skills means the character impresses Cubitt enough that he decides that the Boss should meet with this newcomer. He tells the character to

come to the Queen's Hotel after they are settled in Ship Street.

Alternatively, spending a point of Bargain for a bribe or Flattery or Seduction convinces Cubitt to let the characters in.

Living in Brighton

Most of the town is abandoned and falling into ruin, so at first glance it seems like there are plenty of houses to choose from. However, Pinkie's gang dictates that, "for safety", everyone must live within a short distance of the Queen's Hotel. The characters, as well as Rose and Toby, are shown to Number 6, a large townhouse on Ship Street. The survivors divided the house into six flats, of which three are occupied. Rose and Toby are given one flat; the characters may share one, or split themselves between two, or take those two flats and some rooms in an adjoining house once next door is cleaned out.

The rooms are furnished in a manner that might generously be described as

Sneaking in?

The characters can try sneaking around the checkpoint to get into Brighton without being seen, although Rose will refuse to go with them. Sneaking in requires a Difficulty 6 Stealth test. Failure means the character is spotted by one of the snipers - unless the character surrenders, he'll be shot at. Success means the characters get into Brighton unnoticed.

While skulking around Brighton, they run into Ida Arnold (page 23) who realises they got in without Pinkie's permission and offers them shelter. She then confides her worries about the missing children to them.



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‘eclectically’, or more accurately described as ‘looted from the rest of Brighton’. Everything smells of industrial cleaning chemicals (Pinkie is fastidious about infection from outside, so all items brought to his petty kingdom get bleached).

The other residents of Number 6 are:

- **Niclas Matikainen**, a rake-thin man from Helsinki. He speaks with a distinct accent and comes across as rather detached and eccentric. He came to Brighton several years ago to recuperate and recover from a mental breakdown. He was a portrait painter, but found himself compelled to paint scenes of alien landscapes and things rising from the depths of the ocean. He now suspects that this weird compulsion was a glimpse of the future, as many of the horrors he painted in the past have now come to pass, including the destruction of his beloved home city by the Flowers. He continues to work feverishly, painting by night, but refuses to show anyone his canvasses. He shares rooms on the top floor with...
- **Oliver Kermit White**, a former lecturer in history and politics. He peers owlishly out from behind thick glasses, and wears a stained bowtie even when laboring in the fields. He considers himself the ‘intellectual opposition’ to Pinkie, and even tried advising the gang leader on ‘proper government’; that won him a sound thrashing at Cubitt’s hands. White is ultimately ineffectual, but can put the player characters in touch with others who oppose Pinkie – including **Ida Arnold** (page 23).
- **Ronald Garvey**, his wife **Maureen**, and their children **Albert** (8) and **Nigel** (3). Ronald and Maureen were on a day trip to Brighton with young Albert when the Flowers came. They have settled into life here in Brighton, and do their best

to welcome newcomers to the town. Ronald is a plumber by trade, and his skills are in high demand. Maureen takes care of the square’s children while their parents or guardians are at work. She is convinced (correctly) that Brighton is the safest place left in England, and counts herself extremely lucky that she ended up here. She impresses this opinion onto everyone she meets – Brighton is a blessed sanctuary, so don’t rock the boat. Her sons are utterly unlike. Young Nigel is a quiet and well-behaved child, but Albert is a terror and a bully. They have a flat on the middle level.

- **Andrew Somerset** lives on the ground floor, sharing his rooms with a woman named **Georgie**, who is pregnant. No-one is quite sure what their relationship is, especially as Georgie is often visited by Dallow, another member of Pinkie’s mob. Somerset is a grey-faced man, aged beyond his years by what he has seen. He owns a rifle, and works for Pinkie in an obscure but clearly violent role. Most of the other tenants are glad to have some protection in the house, and so do not pry into the strange affairs of the bottom flat.

Everyday Life

It’s all doggedly, determinedly ordinary. Everyone tries their best to ignore the outside world. Life continues, even if the rest of the country is dead. Men get up and go to work - they never talk about what they do, but most people in Brighton labour in food production in the fields around the town (if the Deep Ones are the Creatures) or fishing at sea (if the Flowers control the countryside). Others go on scavenging expeditions to the ruins of nearby towns, although increasingly they return empty-handed. Still, there’s food on the table and necessities like soap and sugar in the shops. At night, everyone crowds into the Crown or the Queen’s Hotel for home-brewed

ale or wine stolen from the cellars of London.

- **Oral History:** No-one’s willing to talk about Pinkie’s gang at length. Those who tried to argue with the gang met with unfortunate fates, and most people value the security offered by Pinkie over any ideals about justice or the rule of law.
 - A 1-point **Oral History** spend convinces a drunken man to mention Ida, who he refers to as a ‘saucy girl, but she’s always complainin’ about Pinkie and castin’ aspersions about him”.
- **Streetwise:** You’re being watched. Oh, there are the obvious gang members standing on street corners, clearly monitoring the newcomers, but there are also hungry-eyed men and women in the pubs and fields. Back before the end, they’d have been police informants and fifth columnists; now they’re probably reporting back to Pinkie.
- **Medicine:** The unnatural fertility that you may have noted at the Refuge is even more pronounced here. Everywhere you look, there are rounded bellies and expectant mothers. Twins and multiple births are much more common than they were before the Apocalypse, and all the pregnancies seem to be proceeding unusually smoothly, with little in the way of complications or miscarriages.
 - With a 1-point **Intuition** spend, you realise that while a great many women here are pregnant, there aren’t quite as many young children as there should be. Perhaps this alien fecundity only extends to birth, and the newborns fail to thrive in these harsh conditions?
- **Anthropology** or **Oral History:** You try talking to the other residents, and they’re friendly enough, but



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sometimes they become suddenly guarded or change the topic. You can't quite work out what the trigger is. It's not just you, either – there are definitely cliques and groups among the survivors, and you keep seeing conversations suddenly stop when someone who isn't in the know walks by. Maybe you're just being paranoid.

- With a 1-point **Assess Honesty** spend, you can tell that these people – the ones who won't talk – are deeply scared and ashamed. Some sort of survivor's guilt, you guess, and there's plenty of that going around.

If any of the characters impressed Cubitt, then they can meet Pinkie - see *An Audience with Pinkie*, page 21. Other characters can demand a meeting with their new master by spending Intimidation or Bargain.

Characters who demonstrated knowledge of a useful skill get assigned to a suitable job. Those without useful skills get put on cleaning duty, clearing out new buildings adjoining the inhabited section of Brighton. Pinkie is apparently fastidious about cleanliness, and if there's a single speck of dirt where a Flower might sprout, he won't be happy, and an unhappy Pinkie makes other people very unhappy.

This scene lasts as long as the players are willing to indulge in domestic slice-of-life roleplaying (albeit life after the end of the world under a sinister regime). To hurry things along, then elide over the intervening time by saying “*after several uneventful weeks in Brighton...*” and then run *A Mother's Plea*. For a more leisurely approach, there are several subplots that can be explored and developed before jumping into the investigation proper. (It is even possible that the characters start investigating the reasons behind Brighton's strange protection from the Creatures, in which case you do not have to use Toby's disappearance to motivate

them – just skip straight to *Ida* or *The Horror in the Hotel*)

Working with the Gang: A character who was inducted into Pinkie's gang has his loyalty tested when he is ordered to something distasteful.

- Perhaps he is put on duty at the entrance to Brighton, and one day a group of three desperate-looking survivors show up looking for shelter. They appear to be rough sorts, but they're clearly desperate and starving. They have a brief altercation with Cubitt, who tips his cap to signal the player character and the other sniper to fire. Does the character shoot?

- If the character holds his fire, then Cubitt draws his own pistol and shoots one of the trio, while the other sniper shoots a second. The third runs off down an alleyway. Cubitt follows him like a dog chasing a rat, there's a gunshot, and then Cubitt comes out and strides towards the player character, face black with fury. If the character cannot explain his hesitation, then he's reassigned to drudge work.

- If he does fire, then one of the three gets hit in the abdomen by a stray shot. The wounded survivor runs off and hides in an alleyway. Cubitt hands the player character a pistol and sends him to finish off the intruder. It's easy to find the wounded man – just follow the trail of blood and the smell of the punctured bowels.

- Alternatively, maybe the character is ordered to search for a cache of stolen food. Pinkie suspects one of the families in Ship Street is hoarding food. This suspicion is correct – the Garveys have hidden cans of food in a water-tight bag hidden in the house cistern. They nearly starved before finding shelter in Brighton,

and it's hard to forget that hunger. They beg the character not to report them to Pinkie.

- They offer the character a bribe – what does he want to look the other way?
- Pinkie's gang maintain an iron grip on food production and distribution, but it works – no one in Brighton goes hungry, although supplies are running low lately. A cache of food like that could keep the Garveys alive for weeks, or it could help the whole community when there's a bad harvest.

Nichlas' Paintings: If a character befriends the troubled artist, he may show them some of his paintings. A spend of **Art** or **Reassurance** is needed to convince him to share his art. Ask each player whose character sees the paintings to describe their impressions and the images they discern, then try to work those images into future encounters.

- **Forensics:** The red colours in the painting are a distinctive rusty-red. In fact, it's dried human blood. Where is Nichlas getting his pigments from?

- In fact, he's draining the blood from Oliver Kermit White when his flatmate is asleep. Nichlas believes that the vitality of human blood is necessary to evoke the essence of the images he has to depict.

- Spending too long staring at those paintings can give an Affliction point and a temporary 3-point pool of either **Dreaming** or **Premonitions**.

Romance by the Shore: Optionally, you can introduce an attraction between a player character and an NPC. As the characters are now living in a place of apparent safety, their minds may turn to the future and to families.



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What Happened to Toby?

The lottery picked the Garvey family for a sacrifice. Pinkie's lieutenant contacted Ronald Garvey and told him that his son Nigel had been selected. If the boy was not handed over promptly, the whole Garvey family would be thrown out. Garvey panicked and kidnapped Toby instead. His rather confused plan is to offer Toby as a substitute for his own son.

Befriending Ned: One of the more approachable members of Pinkie's gang is a middle-aged fellow who introduces himself as Ned. He doesn't talk much, so much so that many people assume him to be mute. When he does speak, he has a habit of putting his foot in it. He is clearly from an upper-class background, but refuses to talk about his past. He watches women hungrily, but never approaches them inappropriately.

If a character befriends Ned, then he may learn Ned's unlikely secret. "Ned" is actually King Edward VIII. He is the uncrowned king of England. Before the Apocalypse, he was engaged in political disputes with the government over his relationship with a divorced American woman, Wallis Simpson. Dear Wallis is dead now, and so is Edward's brother Albert and the Prime Minister and all the rest. He doesn't know why he was spared; he wandered from Windsor to Brighton in search of somewhere safe to hide. He sometimes wonders if there was something he could have done for the country, but suspects not.

- **Strategy:** Ned does remember one thing that may be of use, though. Just before the end, he

remembers being told about some top-secret military think-tank that was working on some new weapon. He doesn't remember the details, but believes that it was absolutely revolutionary, some sort of atomic weapon – this new physics is quite beyond him. Maybe that could help. This new weapon is described in *The Nation Set Free*, starting on page 30.

A Mother's Plea

One evening, after the characters have returned from work but before they have had a chance to relax or even change out of their soiled clothes, Rose knocks at their door. Usually, her knock is a hesitant, quiet one, as if she barely has the courage to disturb the characters, but this time it's frantic, fists hammering on the door. When invited in, she is obviously upset; **Reassurance** calms her down enough to get a coherent story out of her.

She can't find Toby anywhere.

She left him with Maureen Garvey this morning, as usual, and Maureen says that Toby went upstairs, but she can't find him.

Something's happened to him. She knows it has. She just knows.

The **Core Clue** for this scene is to visit the Queen's Hotel (see *The Horror in the Hotel*) in search of Toby (or, optionally, to speak to *Ida*).

Searching the common areas of Number 6 reveals no signs of the boy – he's not hiding in any of the empty rooms or closets, or in the cellar or attic. So, either he's in one of the inhabited flats, or he's not in the building. Outside, the characters see darkness falling across Brighton – there's no electricity, and only a few families are allocated lamps. The only light is the blazing illumination of the Queen's Hotel. If the characters are going to search outside, they need to make the most of the dwindling twilight.

- **Evidence Collection:** You find a discarded child's treasure – a book on trains. When you show it to Rose, she breaks down in tears. It is Toby's favourite book, and he would never leave it behind willingly.
- **Streetwise:** Questioning some locals on their way to the Crown, you learn they saw Ronald Garvey heading east down the Promenade with a young boy in tow. They assumed it was young Nigel Garvey. They were heading in the direction of the Queen's Hotel.

The Other Tenants

Questioning the other tenants is the obvious line of inquiry.

- **Nichlas Matikainen:** Which boy? The one from downstairs? No, I have not seen him. At least, not in the waking world. Some nights, I dream I am being born again. Maybe I dream of him, yes?
 - **Assess Honesty** suggests he's telling the truth.
 - **Premonitions** or **Dreaming:** When you examine one of Nichlas' recent paintings, you realise that one figure might be Toby. In the picture, the boy looks like a roast pig, with an apple in his mouth. He's the main course in a ghoulish banquet for a party of shadowy figures. It's impossible to make out any facial features, but the fine cutlery and lace tablecloths remind you of the Queen's Hotel.
- **Oliver Kermit White:** Why ask me about this? What are you implying?
 - **Intuition** suggests he's terrified – he suspects that Dallow was snooping around Ship Street to spy on him.
 - A one-point **Intimidation** or **Reassurance** spend gets him to talk about Dallow and White's



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own fraught relationship with the gang. If Dallow's part of Pinkie's gang, then maybe he has something to do with Toby's disappearance, in which case the characters should investigate the hotel.

- **Ronald Garvey** is not at home.
 - If asked about her husband's whereabouts, then Maureen admits that Dallow came to talk to him yesterday. Maybe Pinkie wants some work done at the Queen's?
 - **Interrogation:** If walked through the events of the evening, then Maureen remembers the order of events. First Ronald came home, then Toby went upstairs, then Ronald left unexpectedly without saying where he was going.
 - It's clear that Maureen dislikes Pinkie and whatever goes on

at the Queen's Hotel, and is unhappy about her husband going there.

- **Maureen Garvey:** Toby? He was here all day, nattering about some book of trains he found. He went upstairs when his mother came home. I can't imagine where he is.
 - **Assess Honesty** confirms she's not lying.
 - **Leadership** or **Reassurance:** Maureen suggests asking Ida Arnold for help. She's always poking around, and knows all the hiding places in Brighton.
 - Young **Albert Garvey** gets aggressive if the investigators hint that his father is involved in Toby's disappearance. The boy can be vicious when provoked.
 - His three-year-old brother **Nigel** has been upset all day.

If the characters talk to him with **Reassurance**, he tells a disjointed story about how sad Father was last night, and how he smelled funny. Father promised that everything would be all right, and that they would never take Nigel away.

- **Andrew Somerset & Georgie:** are not at home.
 - Actually, thinking about it, you haven't seen them much at all recently. They've been strangely secretive and evasive.
 - Breaking into their flat with a 1-point **Locksmith** spend is easy. Looking around, it appears that they intend to be gone for some time — the pantry is bare, and they have clearly packed clothes and toiletries into suitcases.
 - **Pharmacy** finds an empty bottle of sleeping pills on one shelf.



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The label says that it came from Brighton General Hospital – which is outside the Walls. As far as you know, the Hospital was cleared of any salvageable items months ago. Following this clue brings the characters to The Abandoned Hospital.

The Horror in the Hotel

Those expecting the Queen’s Hotel to look like some lurid fantasy of criminal kingpins, with scantily-clad floozies and rooms piled high with plundered wealth will be disappointed – the lobby looks like a post office that got moved to a temporary venue. Pinkie keeps his little kingdom running by the book. There are two clerks on the front desk who deal with the administration of Brighton, and three or four other residents waiting for an audience with Pinkie or one of his subordinates.

Lounging by the (non-functional) elevator is a pair of Pinkie’s henchmen, watching the stairs.

Bureaucracy suggests that reporting the missing child to the clerks is pointless – they are clearly there to keep Pinkie’s gang from being bothered with trivial matters, and have no real power. If the characters ask the clerks or the local residents about Garvey, they get blank looks and shrugs – no-one saw him or Toby recently. It is clear that the characters need to talk to someone in Pinkie’s gang directly, and that means getting upstairs.

Walking In

‘Upstairs is private’ growls one of the two thugs. The other flashes you a grin that’s supposed to be apologetic, but comes across as entirely insincere.

Characters who are members of Pinkie’s gang can just go straight up. The guards block other characters from going up. Spending points from some suitable ability is needed to bypass this obstacle.

- 1 or 2-point **Bargain** spend: If these two are stuck guarding the door,

they can’t have much influence in the gang and don’t get a big share of the loot. What do you offer them to let you through? The size of the spend depends on the value of the item offered in trade.

- 2-point **Intimidation** spend: You glare at the guards, and they back down.
- 2-point **Flattery** spend: You convince the guards that you’ve got important business with Pinkie, and that he will want to talk to you. What do you claim this business is?
- 1-point **Seduction** spend: You’ve heard the rumours about Pinkie’s harem on the upper floors, and hint suggestively that the boss is waiting for you.
- Alternatively, anyone with **Architecture** can tell there must be a back stairs to this place, so the characters could try sneaking in.

Sneaking In

The two guards watch the front stairs and the lobby, but there are many other ways into the Queen’s Hotel, like back doors and service entrances. A relatively easy (Difficulty 4) **Stealth** test gets the investigators in via the back door when one of the cooks leaves the kitchen unattended. Alternatively, a 1-point **Locksmith** spend pops open a locked side door.

Once the characters get upstairs, they can either *Explore the Hotel* or head to the ballroom for *An Audience with Pinkie*.

Exploring the Hotel

Despite the lurid tales told in the Crown about Pinkie’s harem and the debaucheries, the upper floors of the Queen’s seem quite ordinary and homely. Apparently, Pinkie’s trusted lieutenants live only slightly better than the rest of Brighton. They’ve got electricity for a few hours each evening, it’s warmer and dryer and they get the pick of the food, but it is not exactly the sybaritic carnival of sin that rumour claimed.

Most of Pinkie’s followers are out watching the Walls or on other business, or sleeping. Optionally, the characters can run into Ned (see page 30) here; otherwise, they can sneak about freely. Call for the occasional **Stealth** test to raise tension.

Seduction or **Streetwise**: Stories about Pinkie’s harem appear to be wildly exaggerated. You catch a glimpse of some things that suggest there are a few young women living here, but not as many as the stories suggest. There is something tawdry and melancholic about discarded showgirl outfits and dried-out makeup. Where are the missing women?

The Empty Office

One of the first rooms the investigators come across is a bedroom that has been converted into a makeshift office. On the desk are a big black ledger and, strangely, a bingo machine from the Palace Pier.

- **Evidence Collection**: Instead of bingo balls, the machine contains dozens of scraps of paper, all of which have names written on them. You recognise the names – they are the children of Brighton.
- **Bureaucracy**: The book mostly contains names and dates. Most of the names are those of women, but there are a few male names in there too.
- Nigel Garvey’s name is the most recent entry. The date marked is today.
- Georgie’s name is in the ledger too. Her date is in two week’s time.
- **Cryptography**: The names that only have one date next to them are all the names of children from Brighton.

You Shouldn’t Be In Here: While the investigators examine these clues, they hear footsteps coming along the corridor. If they wish to hide, they can do so with successful **Stealth** rolls (Difficulty 5). There are several places to hide – under the bed, in the adjoining bathroom, behind the heavy velvet curtains and so on.



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If they hide successfully, then they see Dallow and Ned enter the room and consult the ledger. The two talk about how there is 'a gap' and 'Garvey had better come through'. Dallow has Ned 'check the figures', suggesting that Ned's grasp of whatever mathematics are involved in those dates is superior to Dallow's. Both appear very concerned.

- 1-point **Intuition** spend: Dallow appears worried but resolute. He reminds you of a soldier on the way to the front.
- 1-point **Intuition** spend: Ned seems disgusted and fretful, as if he cannot quite believe that he is involved in whatever is going on.

Otherwise, they can *Confront Dallow* when they are discovered.

Confronting Dallow

Dallow is Pinkie's second-in-command, and has rooms in the hotel. As the investigators know that Dallow visited the house on Ship Street earlier, they can find and confront him either in the office or in his rooms.

Dallow is a stout, muscular man in his mid-thirties; a broken nose set badly speaks of his violent past. He was loyal to Pinkie before everything changed, but his loyalty has now changed to something closer to religious devotion. Pinkie is the only one who understands this new world, the only one who can keep Hell outside the Walls.

Playing Dallow:

- Think of a dog; a big, nasty fighting dog that's stupidly devoted to its master.
- Ball your fists. Be aggressive. Barely contain your violence.
- These people talking to you are nobodies. Little people. If they disrespect you, hurt them. If they confuse you, send them to Pinkie.

What tack do the characters take when talking to Darrow?

Polite Questioning: Darrow is immediately annoyed at being confronted, so someone needs to spend a point of **Flattery** to calm him down. He tells the investigators that they should not be meddling in matters that do not concern them, and that Pinkie will punish them if they get in the way. He asks if they have seen Garvey – they too are looking for him.

Streetwise: Dallow glances at his wristwatch as he does so, suggesting that there is some time limit on finding Garvey and Toby.

Strategy: If the gang is also looking for Garvey, then perhaps they can work together to find him and Toby. Suggesting this convinces Dallow to bring the investigators to Pinkie.

Aggressive Questioning: Unless one of the investigators is capable of cowing Dallow (requiring either a 3-point **Intimidation** spend or a 6-point **Scuffling** spend), then Dallow responds angrily and shouts for help. The characters can try restraining him to prevent him from crying out by beating him in a **Scuffling** contest.

Once restrained, the characters can force Dallow to talk with **Interrogation**. He admits that he visited Garvey, but it had nothing to do with Toby. The boss wants Nigel Garvey, Ronald Garvey's son. If pressed on this topic, he tells the investigators that Pinkie can explain.

Ned: If Ned is present, then applying **Intimidation** to him works; he immediately blurts out that the lottery picked Nigel Garvey, and that Ronald's done something stupid. Pinkie's going to murder Garvey once he finds him.

An Audience With Pinkie

Pinkie meets with the characters in a room that once overlooked Brighton from the top of the Queen's Hotel. Now,

all the windows are shrouded in thick drapes. Other than a few chairs, a table and a drinks cabinet, the room is bare.

The master of Brighton is an eerily young man in his early twenties. The Boy has cold, slate-grey eyes, old eyes that sit incongruously with his almost innocent face. A tick pulls at the muscles of his cheek when he is angry or nervous. Sometimes, he fondles a glass bottle that he keeps in his pocket.

- **Theology:** He has a St. Christopher's medal hanging from the breast pocket of his suit, suggesting he is a Roman Catholic. St. Christopher is the patron saint of travellers.
- **Intuition** or **Psychoanalysis:** A qualified alienist could probably diagnose Pinkie as a sociopath. A sensitive soul can tell almost instantly that there is something terribly broken inside the boy's mind.
- **Cthulhu Mythos:** Looking into Pinkie's eyes is like looking into the unutterable depths of the cosmos, or staring into the cold batrachian eyes of a Deep One. No pity, no mercy, no human emotion at all, just endless starving hateful emptiness.

Playing Pinkie:

- You don't feel pleasure, or comfort, or any tender emotion. You're a hard shell of control over a blazing core of rage and frustration. You're determined to survive at all costs
- You don't believe in Heaven, but you do believe in Hell. Hell is outside the walls. Your actions keep Hell at bay. You've saved everyone in Brighton, which means you are a good person. Anyone who crosses you is therefore evil, and can be destroyed without hesitation.
- The unnatural fecundity of England is proof that you are doing the right



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thing. God helps those who help themselves – and so God provides all those squalling brats as sacrifices. If someone has a problem with how you have handled this situation, then tell them it's God's fault, not yours.

Alarms!

If the alarm is raised, then the investigators are in trouble. Pinkie has half-a-dozen armed men in the hotel. The investigators may either flee to the streets (where they will run into *Ida Arnold*, page 23), or surrender (in which case, they're dragged before Pinkie).

- Stay in control of yourself at all times. Never betray any emotion. When you look at one of the players, think about how easy it would be to leap across the table and tear their throat out with your teeth.

Depending on how the investigators arrive here – as supplicants, as prisoners or introduced by Dallow or another gang member, then the players may choose to use interpersonal abilities like **Flattery** or **Intimidation**, both of which are equally futile. The only thing that gets under Pinkie's skin is **Theology**.

Likely questions and answers:

- **Where's Toby?** *I don't know, but I'll wager Garvey's got him.*
 - Pinkie is irritated by Garvey's failure. If Garvey had just turned over young Nigel as arranged, then the status quo would have been maintained and everyone could have slept soundly at night. Now, Pinkie fears he will have to throw the Garveys out of Brighton as punishment, and station Cubitt at the gates with a rifle like the Angel with a flaming sword set at the gates of Paradise.
 - **Strategy (Core Clue):** If the characters suggest that they can help find Garvey, then Pinkie agrees – see *Hunting Garvey* on page 23.
- **Has he seen Ronald Garvey?** *Mr. Garvey's late for an appointment, and I don't think he's coming. My men are going to look for him, and we're going to find him, and we're going to put manners on him.*
- **What's going on?** *You don't want to know.*
 - **Assess Honesty:** He actually means this. Pinkie assumes – correctly – that most people in Brighton don't want to know what he does to ensure their safety. They don't want to know the horrible truth, they just want to get on with their sheltered little lives.
- **Yes, we do.** *I'm keeping you all safe, all right. I'm doing what has to be done, what no-one else has the stomach to manage.*
 - If questioned on this point (or needled with **Theology**), then Pinkie grows angry, and declares that he will show the investigators what he means and what he has done for them – but only after they help him find Garvey.



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If the characters agree to help Pinkie's men find Garvey, then Dallow tells them to be at the entrance to the Palace Pier in half an hour. If they do not agree, then he orders them to return home to Ship Street and wait.

Ida Arnold

Ida Arnold is an unlikely nemesis for Pinkie's regime. A lifelong resident of Brighton, Ida was remarkable only for her strong will and her interest in spiritualism before the Apocalypse and Pinkie's rise to power. The Apocalypse and the deaths of her many friends drove her to the brink of sanity. She now lives by scavenging and odd jobs. She is convinced that Pinkie is involved in something ghastly and utterly wrong, and is determined to put a stop to it.

The investigators could meet Ida Arnold at the Crown, or be directed to her by Maureen Garvey or another NPC. Alternatively, she flags one of the investigators down after they leave the Queen's Hotel, or else she meets them when they are out looking for Ronald Garvey.

Ida was a plump, handsome woman, but several years of near-starvation and sorrow have left her thin and etched many lines on her skin. She has bright eyes and a charming disposition, although she can have an unsettling intensity when excited.

Her faith – always fragile – was shattered by the Apocalypse. She knows there is no afterlife, no Heaven with fluffy clouds or blissful oneness with the cosmos (that always sounded boring to her, anyway; life is sex and laughter and friends down the pub, and all anyone really wants is more of that). She still believes in ghosts, and carries an Ouija board in her grimy bundle of meager belongings. If anything, the ghosts have gotten stronger since the world changed.

Most of all, though, Ida believes in right and wrong. She knows that what Pinkie's doing isn't right. Just because the world

changed, that doesn't mean that right and wrong changed too, does it?

Playing Ida:

- Be relentless practical and forthright. Let nothing phase you.
- Smile, make jokes, touch the players. Be charming or motherly.
- Look people right in the eye when you talk to them.

Ida & The Player Characters

The characters may encounter Ida at any point in the first half of *Bright Futures*. She appears out of a side alley and beckons the investigators to follow her, then leads them through alleys near Ship Street and up into an unused tenement where they can speak privately.

Ida explains that she is convinced that Pinkie is a monster. She knew him before the world changed, and remembers him as a hateful, monstrous boy. There's something rotten in Brighton. She's been watching Pinkie's men for months, and knows that they take young women and children out beyond the Walls every few weeks. Ida wants the investigators' aid in exposing what Pinkie's up to.

Oral History (Core Clue): Ida saw Garvey only a short time ago, and knows where he's hiding. There is a warren of flats and houses over on Carlton Hill where Garvey goes to salvage parts and pipes. He's in that area.

Ronald is a good man in her eyes. Maybe he did take Toby, but it could be for the boy's own good. In any event, they have to find him before Pinkie's men do. She knows all the hiding places in Brighton, and can help them find Ronald – but only if they agree to do the right thing by protecting Ronald from Pinkie, and then helping her investigate Pinkie's scheme.

Likely questions and answers:

What do you think Pinkie's doing with the women? *I don't honestly know, but I've heard screams and crying at night. It's something awful. I crept as close as I could down Eastern Road, and the sounds were heartbreaking.*

- **Medicine or Navigation:** The location Ida describes is the General Hospital.
- **Cthulhu Mythos:** If the Creatures are the Deep Ones, then the character remembers stories about bestial acts and vile urges. Could Pinkie have bought Brighton's safety in such a ghastly manner?

Why haven't you investigated it yourself? *It's on the far side of the Wall, out beyond the Eastern Road. There's things out there, and I'm not a young woman any more. I don't have a gun neither.*

- **Strategy:** It is possible to cross through that no-man's land, but it wouldn't be safe. The fact that Pinkie's established this second outpost outside the Walls suggests he doesn't want the other residents of Brighton to know what he is doing.

Why haven't you told anyone else? *Who's going to listen to me? And who's going to do anything about it? No, no-one will do anything until we make them see.*

Why should we protect Garvey? *Because it's the right thing to do. Pinkie doesn't care about right and wrong – he'll just punish Garvey for standing up to him. And because I'm asking you to protect him.*

Hunting Garvey

Pinkie's hunting party consists of Pinkie, Dallow and one other gang member per investigator. If the investigators agreed to aid Pinkie, then they meet with the other searchers at the entrance to the Palace Pier. If the investigators are not part of Pinkie's group, then **Streetwise** spots the gangsters as they gather in the fog. It's obvious that Pinkie is trying to keep the whole affair quiet.



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Garvey was last seen making his way along East Street, so Pinkie's hunters start there, sweeping through empty buildings and knocking on the doors of inhabited ones. They do not check every door - some people are more reliable than others, and would never dare cross Pinkie by harbouring a troublemaker. If the characters are part of this hunting party, then Dallow tells them to check the ruined buildings along Black Lion Street

If the characters have Ida's help, then they know where Garvey is hiding. They may choose to lead Pinkie's men straight there, or sneak off alone.

Thick fog rolls in off the churning seas as night falls. The crumbling buildings loom over the investigators like outcrops of some alien city. The only light comes from the sickly moon and the bobbling lights of the hunters' lamps. Sometimes, the characters catch sight of the reflection of the lamps in the cracked glass windows of shops. Pinkie's men leer out of the fog, the half-light turning their features to those of monstrous gargoyles. They mutter and shout to each other, and their voices seem oddly bestial.

Avoiding Pinkie's Men

If the investigators wish to avoid detection, then play up the tension as they dodge behind rusted cars and sneak down alleyways. Choose the three or four investigators present with the lowest Stealth pools and present them with challenges like:

- The investigator has to cross the street without being spotted by darting across when Pinkie's men look the other way. This calls for a **Shadowing** test at Difficulty 6.
- The investigator takes refuge in an alleyway to wait for Pinkie's men to pass by - but then he hears movement at the far end. He is trapped between two groups of armed gang members. How does he escape? An **Architecture** spend

could spot a drainpipe to shimmy up, **Locksmith** could be spent to open a locked door, or the character could just try hiding with **Stealth**.

- One of Pinkie's men spots movement and takes a pot-shot in the direction of the hidden investigator. The character needs to make a **Fleeing** test (Difficulty 6) to dodge into cover in time.
- To stay ahead of the gangsters, the investigator needs to dodge through a building that may be infested by the Creatures. There may be green shoots of Flowers poking from between the floorboards, or maybe sinister shapes lurk in the murky water. Dodging through that building is worth a 2-point Stability test.

At any point, the investigators may stop hiding and present themselves to Pinkie. Doing so abandons any hope of finding Garvey before Pinkie gets to him.

Finding Garvey

If the characters know where Garvey is thanks to Ida, then they can go straight there after bypassing Pinkie's men (or they may choose to lead Pinkie there. Otherwise, they must find his trail.

- **Outdoorsman:** You spot a footprint in the mud. It's fresh. There's another one! The trail heads towards the Carlton Hill region, just this side of the Wall.
- **Oral History:** You remember talking to Garvey one night in the Crown about his work, and he told you that he'd been scavenging material from the houses along Carlton Hill.
- **Strategy:** You're nearly at the Wall. Garvey wasn't assigned to Wall duty, and was terrified of the Creatures. If he wants to get away from Pinkie, but stay within the safe zone of the Wall, then his path would take him into Carlton Hill.

The characters eventually find Garvey sitting at the bottom of the Wall with his head in his hands. Toby lies next to him, blissfully asleep after all the excitement. As the investigators approach, Garvey looks up. He's obviously terrified and exhausted. **Reassurance** makes him confess.

- Dallow came to Garvey and told him to bring his son Nigel to the Queen's Hotel, and that if he didn't, then everyone would suffer. He couldn't let that happen to Nigel - he's a good boy, he's Garvey's son - and he panicked.
- He admits that he took Toby. His plan, such as it was, was to give them Toby instead of Nigel, but he couldn't bring himself to do it. He hid here while he tried to work out what to do.
- He knows that Pinky and his men do something with the children they take, and the women too - always pregnant women. It's something to do with the old hospital out near the cemetery. He doesn't know how they get there - it is on the far side of the Wall.
- He's desperately sorry. He just wants to keep Nigel safe.
- If the characters brought Pinkie's men here, or if they argue for too long about what to do with Garvey, then run **Vitriol**. Otherwise, the investigators must now decide what to do with Garvey. Do they go back to Ship Street with Garvey and Toby? Do they hand Garvey over to Pinkie? Do they take Toby and let Garvey go? Garvey is terrified - quite reasonably so - at the thought of going 'back out there'. At best, he could try to survive on the streets.

Vitriol

If Pinkie's gang catch Garvey, then Pinkie orders Dallow and Cubitt (or a player character) to drag Garvey up to the top of the Wall. Garvey pleads as they carry him up the barricade of rubble and



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broken furniture, begging them not to hand him over to them. He saw things out there that he never wants to see again, please, take Toby, take Nigel, take Maureen even, but don't send him back outside with those things! He can't bear to see them again!

"Oh, but you won't see them again", says the Boy, and he produces a glass bottle of vitriol from his pocket. He holds Garvey's ruddy, tear-streaked face in one gloved hand, and then pours the acid over his eyes and nose. The stench of burning, melting flesh fills the night air. Pinkie then shoves the blind Garvey down the barricade on the far side.

Looking over the barricade, the characters can dimly make out the shapes of moving Creatures.



If the Flowers are the Creatures, then Garvey stumbles blindly into a bed of white flowers. There's a puff

of pollen, and he shrieks. He crawls into the darkness, coughing, and as the investigators listen, his coughs grow weaker and more congested, as if things were already sprouting in his wet lungs.



If the Deep Ones are the Creatures, then the water is waist-deep on the far side. Garvey pulls himself up out of the mire, staggering as he blindly searches for a foot-hold – and then something drags him under, and he's gone.

The Stability Loss for this scene is 3 points, +1 if the investigators are directly culpable for Garvey's death, and +1 if they promised Ida they would protect him.

"Is that it?" asks Dallow. "Will that do?"

"Don't go milky on me," snaps Pinkie in response, "you know he's too old." Pinkie

then stares out over the Wall, as if trying to sense something from the Creatures.

- A 1-point **Intuition** or **Cthulhu Mythos** spend gives the investigator a brief moment of strange empathy with the Creatures. They hunger for something the investigator cannot name, and Garvey was not enough, not nearly enough.

The Sacrifice

Pinkie needs to make another offering to the Creatures to preserve Brighton, and time is running out. Normally, he would use a newborn child, but the next woman to give birth is Georgie, and she is not due for another two weeks. He intended to fill the gap with a lottery-chosen child – Nigel Garvey – but Toby will do just as well.

If the investigators can be induced to hand Toby over, then Pinkie takes Toby and tells them to go home. If they



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The Violent Option

Should the players wish to put an end to Pinkie right now, they can try attacking the gang. This is rather unwise – the investigators are outnumbered and almost certainly outgunned. Don't bother running this as a full combat. One investigator may shoot and kill Pinkie, but that investigator will then be shot and killed by the gangsters, at which point a stricken and terrified Dallow calls for both sides to stop shooting.

Dallow lacks the nerve to make the necessary offerings, so unless one of the investigators takes Pinkie's responsibility and completes the sacrifice, then Brighton will be overrun (see page 25).

refuse, then he has his men chase them off while he and Dallow take Toby and head for *The Tunnel*.

However, if Pinkie cannot find Toby in time, then Ned arrives carrying Nigel Garvey. Ned looks sick to his stomach, but is unwilling to disobey Pinkie's commands. He hands the boy over to Dallow. Again, the two head for *The Tunnel*.

Challenging Pinkie: Some players may choose to challenge Pinkie at this point, perhaps by accusing him of abusing children or worshipping the Creatures. Pinkie responds to any such challenge with scornful fury. Should the investigator provoke Pinkie sufficiently with **Intimidation** or another suitable ability, then Pinkie angrily declares that the investigators should follow him and see the sort of sacrifices he has made. He then leads them to the tunnel.

The Tunnel

The **Core Clue** here is the existence of a tunnel leading to the abandoned hospital.

- The investigators may be able to use **Streetwise** to follow Pinkie at a distance, and watch him as he enters the cellar of a former public house.
- **Architecture:** You recall stories about Regency-era tunnels running under parts of Brighton. This must be how Pinkie is able to cross the dangerous territory outside the Walls.
- **Evidence Collection:** You find footprints in the dust leading down into the cellar of this pub. Searching around, you find what must once have been a concealed entrance to a passageway.
- **Pharmacy:** You spot something incongruous outside an abandoned pub – a box of medical supplies. It looks as though someone carried them out of the pub as part of a large load of salvage, then dropped them. The box is stamped with the words 'BRIGHTON GENERAL HOSPITAL' – there must be a way through the pub to the hospital.
- **Leadership:** Ida Arnold steps out of the shadows. "I followed you," she admits, "you've got a good heart. You can sort out this mess." She points into the darkness of the tunnel. "They went through there."

Alternatively, Pinkie may force the characters to accompany him down the tunnel.

The tunnel plunges into the darkness. The floor underfoot is slippery; the walls are made of crumbling brick covered with slime. The investigators glimpse graffiti and even some strange symbols scribbled on the walls, but there is no time to stop and examine it.

Half-way along the tunnel, something monstrous – a gigantic Creature, perhaps – slithers across the ground above the investigators' heads, causing the earth to shake and slime droplets to fall from the ceiling. The noise and sudden feeling of crushing terror is worth a 3-point Stability test.


- If the investigators are shadowing Pinkie, then they may need to douse their lamps and find their way along the tunnel by feel. What do they brush against?
- If the investigators are accompanying Pinkie, then he forcibly drags them onwards, angrily determined to prove the virtue of his actions. His intensity is unnerving, and the investigators feel like they are propelled not by the Boy's wiry physical strength, but by the power of his loathing and fury.
- If the investigators found the tunnel independently, then they may wonder who built it? Some Regency-era rake, who built a tunnel to the old workhouse that became Brighton General Hospital? Some 19th-century smuggler? Or is the tunnel older than that, much older, with its mysterious carvings and slime-drenched walls that seem to perversely reveal hints of larger occult inscriptions?


Instead of using the tunnel, the investigators may cross the perilous zone between the Wall and the hospital on the surface. This involves climbing over the wall (possibly near where Ronald Garvey vanished) and then making their way across the region claimed by the Creatures. The investigators have spent the last few weeks or months in the safety of Brighton, so returning to the horrific environment of the Dead White World (or Dead Watery World) may be traumatic (1-point Sanity loss).




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The investigators must navigate hazards like:

 A tall building (formerly a bank) now covered in Flowers. The slightest movement nearby causes the Flowers to disgorge a cloud of seeds. To get past without, the investigators must succeed at a Difficulty 6 **Stealth** test; failure means exposure to the seeds. Alternatively, an **Architecture** spend lets an investigator lead the group through ruined buildings on the far side of the street.


 A bank of Flowers begins clacking in an almost angry way as the investigators draw near. Beyond the Flowers, the investigators see a strange light. A ruined building hides the source of this light, but it shines around the corners and reflects oddly off the white petals. The light is a bluish-white in colour. Call for **Sense Trouble** rolls (Difficulty 6). Those who fail stray too close to the light and lose 1d6+1 points of Health from surface burns. Alternatively, a **Physics** spend lets the investigator identify the light source as being hugely radioactive. Any investigator foolish enough to go around the corner glimpses a blindingly bright sphere of white light hovering above a circle of Flowers before losing another 1d6+1 points of Health from exposure.


 A mobile Flower shambles down the street towards the investigators. The plant is eight feet tall, and its white head sways back and forth. The investigators cannot see how the plant moves; it seems to pull itself forward on its roots, but there is some other movement or action amid the roots that provides the bulk of the forward motion. It is disconcertingly like this Flower is just the tip of some unimaginably larger entity, like a probing tendril reaching up from


deep underground. There are many other smaller Flowers in this area, and the investigators suspect (with **Botany** or a similar ability) that if they make a wrong move like attacking, these smaller Flowers will blanket the area in seeds.

 The Flower picks one of the investigators and moves directly towards him. That investigator may either lead the mobile Flower away from the rest (with a successful **Fleeing** or **Athletics** test at Difficulty 6) or else stand still and let the Flower interact with him. If the Flower catches the investigator, it brushes its stamen across him. The investigator feels oddly like the Flower whispers something to him in that moment, and from now on, that investigator has the same strange blessing as Pinkie – he may offer suitable sacrifices to the Flowers to create temporary ‘safe zones’. If the investigator ran before being caught, the Flower may also choose to rend his flesh for 1d6+1 points of Health loss.

If the Deep Ones are the Creatures, then the characters might encounter:

 A sucking mire that has engulfed much of eastern Brighton. Crossing it without getting stuck in the mud requires a successful **Athletics** test (Difficulty 6) or an **Outdoorsman** spend; those trapped in the mud cannot move unless another player character rescues them (or Ida Arnold, if by some mischance all the investigators get stuck).

 A pack of Deep Ones rises from the waters (see the *Trail of Cthulhu* rulebook, page 129) and pursues the investigators. The investigators must **Flee** (Difficulty 6) or be caught by the monsters. The investigator (or investigators) who fail by the widest margin are caught and dragged into the ocean, never to be seen again.

 Call for a **Sense Trouble** roll (Difficulty 6) from the lead investigator. If this roll fails, the investigator blunders into what looked like a pool of water, but is actually awash with something like frogspawn. The spawn are as carnivorous and hungry as any piranha, and strip the flesh from the investigator’s bones. The investigator loses 1d6+1 points of Health and must make an **Athletics** test (Difficulty 6) to climb back out; each failed test means more damage. Alternatively, someone with **Biology** may spot the spawn and recognise it in time to shout a warning.

The Abandoned Hospital

The tunnel ends in the basement of Brighton General Hospital. This building was once a workhouse for the poor before being converted into a hospital. During the final, chaotic days of the old world, the dying and the terrified crowded in here, and vast snowdrifts of white Flowers blossomed from their corpses.

Most of the hospital is unusable and abandoned, but Pinkie’s gang has reopened one ward and some associated rooms.

Exploring the Hospital

The investigators learn the following:

1. The gang keeps pregnant women in the hospital.
 - **Locksmith:** You pick open a locked door, and find yourself in a room with four unconscious women. They do not even stir when you enter – are they drugged? All four are heavily pregnant.
 - **Reassurance:** You find Georgie, the woman from the basement flat. Her dressing gown struggles to hide her swollen belly. She is alarmed to see you here, but you assure her that everything is under control. She tells you that Andrew Somerset brought her here to have her baby.



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Recruiting Andrew Somerset

If the players intent to thwart Pinkie's plan, and need help, then you can bring Andrew Somerset in to assist them. Somerset obeyed Pinkie's instructions to bring Georgie here, and understands that Pinkie's scheme of repeated human sacrifice is the only way to keep Brighton safe – but he can barely stomach the thought of Georgie's newborn child being sacrificed, and does not know what he will do when that dreadful moment actually arrives. The investigators find him sitting in a corridor of the hospital, rifle in hand, as he contemplates suicide. Any suitable argument against Pinkie's plan convinces him to aid the investigators:

- **Leadership:** *You can take action, man! It's not too late to stop this madness!*
- **Theology:** *You've always struck me as a decent man. Don't be deluded by Pinkie. Stand up for what's right.*
- **Intuition:** *You know this is wrong, Andrew. You can help stop it.*

Stats:

Athletics 4, Health 6, Scuffling 5, Shooting 6, Weapon +1 (rifle)

- **Scavenging:** A storeroom contains a large amount of food and fresh water, as well as medical supplies including clothing for newborn children.
2. Newborn children are taken and used by the gang for some horrible ritual.

- **Bureaucracy:** Some diligent soul has kept hospital records even after the Apocalypse. Dozens of children have been born here in the last three years, but there are only a few children back in the inhabited part of Brighton. Where are the rest?
 - **Theology:** You find an empty crib. Next to it on the table is a Catholic book of prayer and a small bowl of stagnant water. One part of the book is especially well thumbed - a version of the Baptismal rite used for newborn children who are not expected to survive.
 - **Anthropology:** You've read accounts of child sacrifice, but the scale of this abomination is staggering. They have taken advantage of the weird fertility to harvest children on an industrial scale.
3. The ritual takes place in the racecourse across the road from the hospital. They should go there.
- **Evidence Collection:** Pinkie tracked mud up from the tunnel, and the trail of footprints leads out the main doors to the street outside. Following, you see Pinkie entering the gates of the old racecourse across the way.
 - **Intuition:** This hospital is a ruined hulk, with only a few rooms still usable – but someone has carefully put heavy blinds over all the windows facing south. What are they trying to stop people seeing?
 - **Cthulhu Mythos:** Some irresistible force calls you. It's close at hand. The time is now. Come and see.

The Guided Tour

If Pinkie is with the characters, then he leads them through the hospital, justifying himself to them as he goes. See *Good and Evil, Right and Wrong* for more details.

Necessary Evils

The final confrontation of this scenario takes place on the old racetrack. Pinkie, Dallow and their sacrifice (probably either Toby or Nigel) wait under the racestand where the gamblers and socialites of Brighton once gathered. Now, it's empty, a skeletal witness to repeated atrocities.

Here is what happens if the player characters do not intervene: a gigantic Creature shambles out of the darkness, Pinkie presents the child, and the Creature accepts this death as an offering.

Good & Evil, Right & Wrong

As there is no point in concealing the sacrifices from the investigators, Pinkie explains how the whole process works.

- He learned that the Creatures can be bargained with. A death willingly offered up to them creates a safe area for a few days. That is why Brighton is spared destruction – as long as the sacrifices keep happening, the town endures.
- Any death will do. Sacrificing children makes the most sense to Pinkie – they're useless mouths to feed, and don't do any useful work. Enough children will be born naturally in Brighton to maintain the population – it's this unnatural fertility that makes all this possible. Maybe it's all part of God's plan; be fruitful and multiply, and give the excess children to the things from Hell.
- Most people in town aren't stupid. They know the price paid for their security. They may not admit it to themselves, but they know.
- If the sacrifices stop, then Brighton will be overrun. There aren't any other safe places in England. Maybe there aren't any other safe places in the whole world. He's saved the human race.

Assess Honesty or **Cthulhu Mythos** confirm that Pinkie is not lying. His sacrifices really are all that stands between Brighton and destruction.



Bright Futures

Dead Pinkie?


If Pinkie is dead, then Dallow may try to complete the sacrifice. However, he lacks Pinkie's nerve and fails to complete it unless the player characters do it for him.


Likely questions from the player characters:


- **How can you do this?** Pinkie is genuinely confused by this question. How can he *not* do this? What alternative is there?
- **Why not sacrifice someone else?** Who do the characters suggest? A random lottery might kill Pinkie. As for sacrificing the elderly, well – have the investigators seen any old people in Brighton?
- **Don't you see that this is wrong?** *"You cannot conceive, nor can I, of the appalling strangeness of the love of God"* snarls Pinkie.

The Sacrifice

The Creature approaches. The investigators do not see it directly – it comes from the far side of the racecourse, so its approach is hidden by the stand. They hear it, they smell it, they *sense* it. It is old and unimaginably powerful, a shambling god-thing.


 A manifestation of their collective intelligence, appearing as a blazing sphere of radiation that sears the ground and hums eerily as it floats.


 A titanic mass of white Flowers that flows and bubbles and writhes like a floral Shoggoth.


 A figure that looks at first glance like a marble statue of a woman, but is actually made of Flowers – her 'skin' is a closely compacted mass of blossoms.

Not physical at all, but a gathering of *attention*. There's a chorus of clacking, and all the Flowers nearby turn to look at a particular point, like natural plants tracking the movement of the sun. This point of terrible attention moves towards the bandstand, and the investigators instinctively know they will be unable to withstand the psychic pressure if it reaches them.

 A single huge Deep One – perhaps Dagon or Hydra.

 A ravening pack of hundreds of the monsters, loping and howling in the moonlight.

 A bubbling, shrieking Shoggoth.

 Not a creature at all; instead, the ground suddenly falls away and black water wells up from the rents in the earth. The sacrifice must be drowned in this pool.

Either way, hearing the approach of the horror is worth a 3-point Stability test. Witnessing it directly is a 7-point test.

The Decision

What do the characters do?

If they do nothing, then Pinkie takes the sacrifice and steps forward to stand before the creature. The investigators hear the child cry out in terror, and then the sound stops suddenly. Pinkie returns, shaken and angry. The sacrifice is done for another few weeks.

If they try to stop Pinkie in a half-hearted way – say, by trying to grab the child and run, or by restraining him –

then he fights back. He will break free unless the investigators kill him.

If they mortally wound Pinkie (say, by having Somerset shoot him), then Pinkie staggers out and is consumed by the Creatures. He may have deliberately sacrificed himself, or wandered randomly into the Horror's path. Either way, the child is safe.

Endgame

What becomes of Brighton?

If the sacrifices continue, then life continues as it has done for the last three years. A few more survivors find their way to this last refuge, bringing with them tales of worsening conditions elsewhere in England. Pinkie's regime continues. Ida Arnold vanishes – perhaps killed by Pinkie as a punishment, or maybe some other fate befell her. In any event, the player characters have accepted Pinkie's utilitarian solution to the Apocalypse.

If the characters stopped the sacrifices, then Brighton exists on borrowed time. The town's defences begin to crumble immediately. For the first time in three years, Flowers begin to sprout within the walls. Within a week, it is clear that life here is not sustainable, and the survivors must find somewhere else to live. The thought of going back out into the Dead White World is horrifying to those who have become used to the safety of Pinkie's regime. Some commit suicide, preferring a quick death amid the preserved remains of human civilization instead of a slow death out there in an alien world. Ida Arnold remains hopeful that they will find somewhere better to live. Where there's life, there's hope, she says even as the Creatures break down the Walls.

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The Hook

The investigators learn of a top-secret military program to develop a new weapon. This bomb could be used to destroy the Creatures.

The Spine

The investigators discover that the program, code-named TUBE ALLOYS, was based at the Cavendish Laboratory in Cambridge. There, they learn that the program aimed at the creation of an atomic weapon, and find evidence that the program may still be in operation.

They then visit the home of a scientist named Holsten, who was a key figure in TUBE ALLOYS. He hints that the project has driven the researchers insane, but admits that the research still continues at a secret Royal Air Force facility at Fort Halstead, outside London. Although he fears returning to the project, Holsten continued his mathematical research and has cracked a key problem that has stalled the completion of the bomb. He entrusts this research to the investigators.

The investigators visit this facility, where they meet Ernest Rutherford, the head of the TUBE ALLOYS project. He insists that completing the bomb will wipe out the Creatures and save England from being overrun, and asks for the investigators help in completing it.

Finally, the investigators have the choice to use the bomb, or give up on their last chance to defeat the Creatures.

The Horrible Truth

The TUBE ALLOYS project is infested by the alien brain parasites called the Shan. These insectoids worship the dread god

Azathoth. An element in Earth's atmosphere keeps them trapped here, so they intend to free themselves by manipulating the humans into creating a gate to Azathoth's realm, burning a hole in Earth's atmosphere with seething nuclear chaos. The Shan will then depart our world in their templeships, leaving their blind idiot god to gnaw on the very matter of the world.

The Last Trump

In this scene, the investigators learn of the existence of the mysterious TUBE ALLOYS project. After the events in Brighton, the investigators should either be without a safe refuge, or facing the imminent destruction of their last hiding place. Either way, they need to take immediate action if they are to survive.

There are multiple ways for the investigators to learn of TUBE ALLOYS.

Ned

The gangster 'Ned' is actually King Edward VIII. He learned about the project while he was Prince of Wales. It was all very hush-hush and the whole affair was quite beyond him, but he recalls it had something to do with Cambridge.

- **Library Use:** He probably means the well-respected Cavendish Laboratory at Cambridge University.
- **Physics:** Cambridge... military research... that rings a bell. You remember a scientist of your acquaintance named Holsten. A brilliant fellow. Before the Apocalypse, he went away to work on something that he refused to talk about at Cambridge.
- **Interrogation:** Through careful questioning, you help Ned remember more details.

The research took place at the Cavendish Laboratory.

Another Survivor

The investigators encounter a madman, an unfortunate fellow who lost his mind to the horrors of recent years. They learn that he was once a porter at Cambridge University, and that the university weathered the Apocalypse better than other places.

- **Reassurance:** Your calming presence lets the poor man fight off his demons for a few brief moments of lucidity. "*The scientists*", he pleads, "*they had a plan. They can stop this. Cavendish. Cavendish.*"
- **Physics:** Most of the madman's ramblings are incomprehensible, but he mentions a few names you recognise – they're all lecturers and researchers at Cambridge University. "*They're going to build it*", he moans, "*They're going to save us all.*" Then he laughs so hard he starts to bleed.
- **Evidence Collection:** The next morning, you find the man dead of fright. Going through his pockets, you find a crumpled memorandum printed on notepaper from the Cavendish Laboratory. It describes a well-thought-out and comprehensive safety protocol for dealing with the Flowers. Someone at Cambridge knew how to deal with these monsters, so there may still be survivors there.

Intercepted Transmissions

If the characters have access to a radio set and **Cryptography**, they may be able to intercept transmissions from *HMS Hood*, as described in the Introduction page 6. This



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second transmission is a desperate one. In it, *HMS Hood* tries repeatedly to establish contact with 'Cavendish', but there is no response. The radio operator begins the transmission in a professional tone, asking Cavendish to respond in a way that suggests he expects orders to come from there. As the hours go by, he clearly loses hope. The characters may guess that the operator is the only person left alive on *HMS Hood*.

The Military Lorry

The investigators come across a military lorry in the middle of the road. Most vehicles in England have been moribund for years, ever since the Flowers choked their engines. This one was clearly working up until a few weeks ago.

- **Mechanical Repair:** This lorry is the sort used by the Royal Navy. Maybe it was on a ship? There are signs of seawater corrosion on parts of the chassis.

- **Forensics:** The driver was killed by the Creatures. It appears that the lorry's engine finally succumbed to the hostile environment (clogged by seeds or rusted solid), and that he died when he tried to cross the country on foot.
- **Navigation:** You find a map in the driver's compartment. He was heading for a location outside Cambridge.
- **Geology:** The lorry's cargo consists of several heavy metal crates, all of which contain ore. You identify it as pitchblende, a rock rich in uranium. It's quite radioactive.

Psychic Visions

A investigator afflicted with some psychic ability might be drawn to Cambridge.

- **Dreaming:** You have a recurring dream of serious men in white

coats moving through dark rooms, talking of things beyond your comprehension. In the dream, you are very small, and they are titans. You remember watching the chalk-dust fall as they drew diagrams and equations on the blackboard, and seeing it form into strange shapes like flying insects or demons. Recently, the dream changed. In the new dream, one of the scientists picks you up and brings you to a concrete vault where something beautiful and terrible slumbers. You cannot bear to look at it, and always wake up at that moment with the word 'Cavendish' on your lips.

- **Premonitions:** At some point in your future, you will go to Cambridge. You will walk through the grounds of the university, treading the Flowers underfoot. There will be a locked door, and you





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Things in the Laboratory

- Blackboards covered in scrawled equations. Someone has hastily erased the material on some boards, leaving only a few scattered surviving symbols.
- Laboratories stripped of equipment and supplies – empty cabinets, desks scattered with leftovers and debris.
- Cryptic half-built machines.
- Beakers of leaden glass.
- Scribbled notes.
- Strange moulds growing out of petri dishes.
- Playful sketches and caricatures covered in splattered blood.
- A ticking clock that the investigators cannot find.

won't want to open it, but you have to. You'll read the word 'Cavendish' on a plaque near the door.

- **Telepathy:** Sometimes, like a badly tuned radio, you pick up the thoughts of distant strangers. For an instant, your mind filled with equations and numbers, and you knew there was a terrible and wonderful secret concealed within them, a solution that solved... everything. And then it felt like your face exploded with agony, and you blacked out. When you woke up, you were bleeding from your eyes and had forgotten all of those glorious equations – everything except the name 'Cavendish'.

Cavendish Laboratory

The Cavendish Laboratory was founded in 1874, and is located on Free School Street in the heart of Cambridge in a gothic building. The laboratory is one of the most respected centres for physics research in the world.

Cambridge is overrun by the Creatures.



If the Flowers are the Creatures, then the whole town is covered in a white blanket of Flowers, and a trio of especially gigantic specimens grow in the grounds of Christ's College. There is no sound other than the gentle clacking of the plants. It appears that there is no one else alive in Cambridge.



If the Deep Ones are the Creatures, then much of the town has sunk into the mire, leaving spires and tall buildings poking out of the ooze. The river Cam has burst its banks, creating a much wider expanse of water. There does not seem to be any immediate danger, although the investigators can hear monsters in the distance bellowing to each other like wading whales.

The Cavendish Laboratory was used until recently as a refuge.

- **Architecture:** The building was fortified and reinforced. There's a filtered rainwater collection system on the roof, many of the windows are boarded up, and there are sandbags everywhere.
- **Agriculture:** You notice that several of the parks and greens near the Laboratory were converted into farmland. Many people could have survived here for some time.
- **Strategy:** Machine gun emplacements, barricades, lines of fire... this was a military operation.

- **Scavenging:** The laboratory is untouched. The player characters are the first people to visit here since it was abandoned.

The investigators must now break into the laboratory. The doors are locked and secured with heavy chains, requiring **Locksmith** and **Scavenging** to find the necessary tools to cut through them.

Warning from a Dead Man

A large stone strikes the ground near one of the investigators. Looking up, they see a wild-haired man crouched on a nearby rooftop. "Get away!" he hisses. "There's nothing here for you!" He glances around, then turns and runs.

This is Reese Beulay, an American who was working in London as a delivery driver. After the Apocalypse, he escaped the city and after a series of misadventures ended up working for the military at Fort Halstead. He had a gift for keeping vehicles working even in the challenging conditions of the present day. When the military moved TUBE ALLOYS from the Cavendish Laboratory to the fort, he drove one of the trucks.

He glimpsed the Shan, and fled the laboratory. He has hidden in the ruins of Cambridge ever since. Up until now, he was irrelevant to the Shan, but now he may impede the investigators from reaching the laboratory. The Shan can tell that some of the investigators have keen intellects, so they act to remove Beulay. A Shan insect swoops in, attacks his brain, then scurries off again. (It then follows the investigators, ready to play its part in *The Truth*. Optionally, call for the occasional Sense Trouble roll to hear the rustling and meeping of the lurking Shan).

Should the investigators climb up to where they saw Beulay (requiring a perilous ascent of a rusty drainpipe with an **Athletics** test), they find him lying on the ground, staring sightlessly at the sky.



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The following clues are available here:

- **Medicine:** This man seems to have had a stroke. You don't think he will ever recover. He isn't dead, but he seems completely paralysed and non-responsive. It reminds you of curare poisoning.
 - 1-point **Medicine** spend: Beulay can still control his eyes, like a victim of locked-in syndrome. A 4-point **Reassurance** spend lets the investigators 'question' Beulay once they establish a system of coded blinks, but there is no cure for his condition.
- **Photography:** He has a canvas bag with a looted camera in it. Developing the photos, you learn that he kept the Cavendish Laboratory under surveillance. Most of the photos just show the exterior of the building, but there are some exceptions. For example, one photo shows a strange figure leaving the building. He is wearing some sort of pallid mask, or else his face is horribly misshapen. Another set of photos are all weirdly distorted, as if there was a stain on the lens. Most of these distorted photographs have clouds or Flower-garlanded rooftops in the background.
 - **Cryptography:** You find a notebook in the man's pocket. His handwriting is poor and the notes are disjointed, but he seems convinced that "THEY" are watching the laboratory for some sinister purpose, and that he must stop anyone from getting too close. He worries about "Holsten", but appears reassured by the idea that this Holsten will "die out there". Strangely, the notebook is full of dead insects, which he's crushed between the pages like pressed flowers.

Furthermore, a 2-point **Evidence Collection** spend lets the investigators find a key. This key does not match the padlock on the door of the laboratory – it is the key to a nearby garage, where they find a working car repaired by Beulay. A **Mechanical Repair** test at Difficulty 4 is required each day to keep it operational.

Inside the Laboratory

Inside, the laboratory is a warren of lecture theatres, offices, laboratories and storerooms. The investigators find camp beds and other signs that the lab was in use by a number of people for some time. It looks like they were living in the building. A number of clues are available. You may wish to break up the investigation with descriptions of the abandoned laboratory (see the sidebar on pg. 32).

1. The laboratory was abandoned within the last year. They left quickly, but not hastily. Most of their equipment and notes was carefully moved or destroyed – the investigators are picking through the remnants accidentally left behind.
 - **Bureaucracy:** In the kitchen, you find an inventory of food supplies, including dates of spoilage. It looks like they left between a year and nine months ago.
 - **Astronomy:** You find a telescope – someone here was an astronomer. They left notes on their observations. Working back, you calculate the last observations were made around nine months ago. Glancing idly through the telescope, you catch a glimpse of movement on an adjoining rooftop, but when you look back, there is no sign of anyone.
 - **Outdoorsman:** Judging by the autumnal leaves caught in this drain, this place has not been maintained in the past year, but was inhabited up until that point.
2. There was some sort of accident or attack. The investigators stumble across

several bodies wrapped in tarpaulins.

- **Evidence Collection:** There are bullet holes in the walls, but no sign of any damage to the doors. It must have been an internal dispute. It's strange to think that these people were once as closely-knit as you and the other investigators – before they turned on each other.
- **Forensics:** You unwrap one of the corpses and examine it as best you can. The body was wrapped tightly, preventing any Flowers from getting in, though not insects and bacteria. There is no obvious cause of death like an injury, but the decayed state of the body makes a fuller autopsy pointless. (These people were killed by the Shan.)
- **Chemistry:** You step into a room that was once a laboratory. The blackened walls and shattered equipment tell of an explosion. You assume it was an accident, but there is no way to be sure.
- 3. The research related to nuclear physics, and was codenamed TUBE ALLOYS.
- **Physics:** When this place was abandoned, the researchers took most of their work with them. Even if they hadn't, you suspect it would all be beyond you – the finest minds in Europe worked here. As far as you can piece together, they were trying to develop an atomic bomb. You'd heard that some theoretical work had been done in this field, but it appears that they were very close to constructing a usable weapon.
- **Chemistry:** The formulae on the blackboard are partially erased, but it definitely involves uranium and high explosive.
- **Explosives:** This is unlike any conventional weapon design you know of. It's something new – and unimaginably powerful.



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- **Cryptography:** These references to tube alloys aren't anything to do with metallurgy – it's a code name. This is definitely a military project.
4. There's lots of gold dust here.
- **Evidence Collection:** The dust in the labs glitters when you shine a light on it. There's some sort of shiny metallic power mixed in with ordinary dirt. My word – it looks like gold!
 - **Chemistry:** You find several beakers with a residue of elemental gold at the bottom. Presumably, some sort of chemical reaction precipitated the gold out of a solution – but what were they doing with so much gold? And why did they leave it behind? They look the lightbulbs, but left thousands of pounds worth of precious metals.
5. There's something disturbing about the research.
- **Physics:** You try to puzzle through the equations, but can't make them work. The mathematics are wrong. Energy can't be conjured from nothing like that.
 - **Chemistry:** You find a copy of the periodic table with several new elements drawn on it. These elements are in a separate section, and are marked as 'degenerative elements'. One such element is called 'Carolinium' and appears to have been the focus of their research.
 - **Art:** For some reason, you are reminded of musical notation when you examine these equations. You could swear you can hear the sound of a distant flute or pipe.
 - **Occult:** Various alchemical symbols and astrological conjunctions are worked into the equations, but that has to be a joke. What sort of bomb cares whether or not it is Walpurgisnacht?
6. There was a second research facility.

- **Strategy:** These people left with intent. They were going somewhere – and they didn't want to be followed.
 - **Library Use:** Digging through the archives, there are plenty of records mentioning a 'second site', but any reference to its location has been erased.
 - **Evidence Collection:** A handwritten note from one researcher to another mentions the 'move to the new laboratory' and how it will affect their work.
7. One researcher, Holsten, was injured. He lived outside Cambridge. This is the **Core Clue** for the scene.
- **Medicine:** You wander into a room that was once used as an infirmary, although all the medical supplies have been removed. You do find the medical chart belonging to a researcher named Holsten, who was injured in an accident shortly before they left. His address is in his file – he lived outside Cambridge, on a small farm.
 - **Library Use:** Checking the records, you find a list of everyone at the laboratory, including their addresses. Most are noted as 'RESIDENT', suggesting they lived in and around the laboratory buildings, but some have addresses nearby in Cambridge. One address is a farm outside Cambridge.
 - **Cryptography:** In the infirmary, you find a sheet of paper pinned to the wall with a seemingly random series of letters on it. You quickly puzzle it out – some of the letters are actually chemical symbols, and if you take that element's atomic weight and apply it as a Caesar cypher to the next six letters... aha. "CANNOT FOLLOW YOU SOUTH. GONE TO MY FARM AT FEN DRAYTON. FIND ME THERE. HOLSTEN."

The Truth

At this point in the adventure, place an envelope containing Handout #1 on the table in front of the players. Tell the players that if they want to know exactly what is going on and what they should do, all one of them needs to do is open the envelope and read the instructions inside.

As the handout notes, that investigator is then possessed by a Shan parasite and acts to further the inhuman goals of the insects.

The Farm

Professor Holsten owns a small cottage and some farmland outside Cambridge. The cottage is in a sheltered valley. The investigators notice immediately that this valley is strangely untouched by the Creatures. There are very few Flowers growing here, or the ground is relatively dry and solid compared to the mire along the nearby river Ouze. Smoke rises from the chimney of the little cottage.

- **Agriculture:** The place is well-supplied and well-maintained. Really blessed, in fact – whatever kept the Creatures at bay makes this little valley a good place to grow crops. The apples in those orchards look scrumptious.
- **Strategy:** This place is alarmingly exposed. Holsten should be dead. Everywhere else in England, the Creatures have killed everyone. Why did they spare this place?

Silent Sentinels

As the investigators enter the valley, call for **Sense Trouble** rolls (Difficulty 6). Those who succeed have a definite uneasy feeling when they look at the scattered trees that line the edge of the valley. These trees are actually Beings from Xiclotl, the monstrous tree-like slaves of the Shan. The Beings are Holsten's guardians, and will not interfere with



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the investigators unless they try to kill Holsten, or if the investigators meddle with the Beings themselves.

The Bandaged Man

Holsten was acclaimed as one of the most brilliant chemists in the world. He became interested in phosphorescence at a young age when on holiday with his parents in Italy. He watched the fireflies dancing amid the trees near the villa, and was so intrigued he captured some of the insects and dissected them to learn how they shone. This insatiable curiosity about the fundamental nature of matter and energy led him to study physics. His contributions to the TUBE ALLOYS work at Cavendish were invaluable, although Holsten was convinced that the ultimate

purpose of his synthetic ‘Carolinium’ would be to provide limitless atomic power for all mankind.

While experimenting with a tiny amount of Carolinium produced using a cyclotron, there was an accident. The sample exploded, blowing up the machine and severely burning Holsten. He quit the project and moved to this farm. The accident left him disfigured and half-blind – Holsten now wears bandages over his face at all times, and carries a small pair of opera glasses.

He greets the investigators warmly – they are the first survivors he has seen in months. He asks immediately if they are from the Ministry of Supply (the government

department that oversaw TUBE ALLOYS).

Inside, the cottage is warm and comfortable, if rather messy. Holsten potters around and pulls armfuls of books off chairs so the investigators can sit down. He even digs into his precious supply of tea to give them a hot drink, and there is wine under the sink for later. He seems delirious, even manic, at the thought of guests.

Playing Holsten

- Consider your words carefully.
- Hold your body awkwardly.
- Squint and frown (or mask your face somehow, with a scarf or bandage perhaps).



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Holsten's Story

When prompted by the investigators (Interrogation, Flattery or Oral History are all plausible options, although straight Physics works best), Holsten describes the work performed at the Cavendish Laboratory. Initially, he is hesitant to reveal state secrets, but once the investigators get past that barrier, he talks freely.

1. It was a government project to develop a new type of bomb, an atomic bomb. The weapon was designed to eclipse every other explosive developed to date.
 - **Bureaucracy:** You drop enough official-sounding legalese to convince Holsten that you are cleared to know about TUBE ALLOYS.
 - **Leadership:** The old world is dead, you tell him. There's no government, no higher authority. He's not breaking his word.
 - **Physics:** You draw him out with talk of synthetic elements and degenerative radiation. Soon, he's forgotten that it's supposed to be a top secret project and is drawing diagrams on the tablecloth.
2. After the Apocalypse, the scientists banded together to survive. Work on the bomb was abandoned for a while - they had more pressing concerns. He shudders behind his bandages, recalling the horrific days.
 - **Reassurance:** You tell him that you too remember the dead, and the Flowers sprouting everywhere. It's all right, go on.
 - **Interrogation:** You know when to stay silent, and when to prompt. You gently push him to keep going.
 - **Assess Honesty:** He falls silent, but you don't think he's hiding anything. He just doesn't want to talk about that period. He doesn't want to relive those memories.
3. Some weeks later, the mood at the Laboratory changed. Many of the

scientists were seized by a strange belief that the bomb could save the world. They redoubled their efforts to complete the project. Holsten describes how weirdly certain it felt. He knew the bomb was the answer!

- **Theology:** The way Holsten describes it, you cannot help but be reminded of the Pentecost, when the Holy Spirit descended on the apostles and inspired them.
 - **Anthropology:** Sounds like some sort of mass delusion. You ask how it started, and Holsten tells you that the lead scientist, the great Rutherford from New Zealand, led the effort to finish the bomb.
 - **Assess Honesty:** Holsten sounds uncertain, as if he doubts himself. He has clearly lost that strange certainty.
4. Things changed. It was as though the laws of physics themselves were adrift. They kept working, but the bomb was something different now. He cannot articulate this change, but they glimpsed parts of some vast structure beneath the skin of reality.
 - **Physics:** Holsten shows you some notes dating from that time. You can hardly believe it, but the nature of reality has shifted from what it was, as if the whole universe cracked. Another group of equations point to the involvement of a mathematical singularity, like a black hole.
 - **Occult:** Some of Holsten's diagrams remind you of drawings you saw in certain occult books in the restricted section of the college library. You shudder, for those drawings depicted the rites of the witch-cult.
 - **Cthulhu Mythos:** You cannot help yourself - a strange impulse seizes you. You grab the flute from the table and start playing it, blowing the same three notes over and over in a monotonous piping. Holsten looks at you with sudden alarm,

then nods. He's heard that same music in his dreams.

5. The project ran into difficulty. They couldn't work out the right design for the bomb casing needed to implode the carolinium into a critical mass. The bomb needs a precisely arranged configuration of explosives to push the carolinium inwards.
 - **Intuition:** That does seem to be a thorny problem, but Holsten strikes you as the sort of person who would be unable to let it go. You'd wager that he's kept working on it ever since he left the laboratory. His notes must be hidden somewhere in the cottage.
 - **Assess Honesty:** When he mentions this topic, Holsten glances over at a cabinet on the far side of the room. There's something in there...
 - **Physics:** From the scribbled notes on the counter, you suspect that Holsten has continued to work on the problem. The solution is hidden somewhere in this cottage.
6. There was an accident that severely wounded Holsten. He spent weeks drifting in and out of a morphine-induced haze. He remembers telling Rutherford that he wanted to quit the TUBE ALLOYS project - he lost his strange faith in the project's importance.
 - **Medicine:** He must have been terribly badly injured - you would diagnose a severely fractured skull and first-degree burns, as well as possible brain damage. The latter would explain his sudden change in attitude to his work.
 - **Occult:** You recall an account of a 17th century highwayman. He was a clergyman who suddenly turned to a life of crime, and became infamous for his cruelty and depraved deeds. Then he



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was wounded when his flintlock exploded in his hand, and suddenly his personality changed completely. He begged for forgiveness all the way up to the gallows.

7. He doesn't know what happened in the laboratory after that. He was unconscious for days - he contracted an infection, and was delirious with fever - and awoke to find the place abandoned and dead men in bags on the floor. He can only assume that the other scientists were forced to leave suddenly, and he was overlooked in the confusion.
 - **Assess Honesty:** A note of anger and confusion enters Holsten's voice at this point - he's obviously annoyed at being abandoned like a forgotten suitcase at a railway station.
 - **Bureaucracy:** Wait a moment - the laboratory was carefully stripped of all useful equipment. They did not leave in a hurry, which means that Holsten was not accidentally left behind.
8. The other scientists went to Fort Halstead. He decided it was too risky to try making the long journey alone, so he came here.
 - **Interrogation:** Holsten tries to prevaricate, but you push him when he mentioned the 'other site'. They went to Fort Halstead.
 - **Strategy:** The evacuation of the Cavendish Laboratory was a military operation. They must have gone to a military base. You press Holsten and he tells you where - Fort Halstead.
 - **Assess Honesty:** Holsten knows where they went. You look him right in the eye and ask him where they went, and he admits they went to Fort Halstead.

Fort Halstead is on the far side of London. It is a large military base, used for weapons testing and experiments.

The Solution

Holsten's perfected design for the explosive part of the bomb casing is in the cabinet. The investigators must find this document and bring it to Fort Halstead.

If they ask Holsten about his work, he admits that he solved the problem. He no longer believes that the bomb is the solution, but he could not let the puzzle go. He offers the papers to the investigators if they say that they intend to go to Fort Halstead - someone else there will solve the problem eventually, so there is no point in him concealing his work. He says that it is up to the investigators whether or not they wish to hasten completion of the bomb.

The bomb design in the notes resembles the multi-faceted eyeball of an insect. Each facet is a lozenge of conventional explosive surrounding the burning carolinium core.

Beneath the Bandages

Beneath Holsten's gauzy mask is a ruined face. Notably (Medicine or Forensics), there is a gaping crack in his skull. It was hastily repaired, but there was almost certainly brain damage from this accidental trepanation.

The Crowding Trees

While Holsten talks to the investigators, the Beings from Xiclotl creep closer and closer. Under cover of darkness, they crawl down the hillsides and stride across the little farm. They press themselves close to the stone walls of the cottage, a sudden metal grove hemming in on all sides.

When they reach Holsten's pigpens and chicken coops, they can no longer contain their hungers. They scoop up the animals and tip them into their oval gullets, feasting on terrestrial matter as they slither by. Call for Sense Trouble rolls (Difficulty 5) at this point to hear the terrified grunts of the pigs as the Beings eat them.

The atmospheric 'indirect approach' is greatly preferable to the blatant 'direct approach' described below, but one cannot always rely on the co-operation of players.

The Indirect Approach: If the investigators take Holsten's notes and leave the next day, then you can just describe the farm as feeling rather odd the next morning. The ground has been churned up, there are strange tracks in the mud, the pigs are missing, and the investigators are struck by the thought that those trees seemed further away yesterday.

The Direct Approach: Once the investigators have Holsten's notes, the Beings no longer need Holsten himself. Conversely, if the investigators have not taken Holsten's notes, then the Beings force the issue. Metallic tentacles smash down on the slate roof, shattering through and ripping out century-old oak beams. The slaving Beings relentlessly rip away at the walls. Holsten is grabbed and hoisted into the air to be eaten. He screams an incoherent warning as he rises, pointing at the cabinet and screaming "Tell them! Fort Halstead!"

If any investigator is possessed by a Shan, then the Beings are careful not to endanger their slave-master. Other investigators are fair game for the creatures' hungers, although they are under instructions to leave at least some of the humans alive so they can bring the vital solution to Fort Halstead. The Beings will therefore 'herd' the investigators towards an escape route.

Fort Halstead

In the 1890s, the British government built a ring of forts around London. Fort Halstead never saw battle, but in 1935 it became the headquarters of the Ministry of Supply, a government department whose brief was to ensure that the military had the resources and weapons needed to fight the coming wars. They were responsible for purchasing the mysterious seeds that came ashore on the *Lysenko*, and were also in charge of



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the TUBE ALLOYS project to create an atomic bomb.

The fort stands on a hill outside London. The hill and the surrounding land are wreathed in barbed wire and protected by land mines – this is a heavily fortified area.

West of the hill is Halstead Forest, a thicket of oaks and thorn-trees. The approach road to the fort runs by the side of the forest, and the investigators hear huge wasps buzzing in the darkness beneath the trees.

- **Intuition:** There is something unwholesome about that forest.

The Checkpoint

Blocking the road up ahead is a military checkpoint manned by six soldiers. All are armed; two of them carry flamethrowers. The leader of the soldiers is **Captain John Post**. He examines and interrogates the investigators to ensure that they are not Bolsheviks or madmen. Assuming the investigators are not obviously hostile, he deems them safe to enter the Fort, although he cautions them that civilians will be obliged to contribute to the war effort through manual labour.

Captain Post's role at Fort Halstead is to analyse reports about the Creatures. Completing the bomb is only part of the plan – they also need a target. They plan to find the Creatures' leader or headquarters or capital or something similar. They will cut the head from the dragon with a sword of fire.

Playing Captain Post

- Imagine you're carrying a heavy weight. Be burdened by your responsibilities.
- Occasionally, look off into the distance or seem distracted. Apologise when this happens, and ask the investigators to repeat what they just said.
- Keep a stiff upper lip.

If the investigators impress Captain Post, or show him Holsten's notes, then he brings them down to the bunker to meet Rutherford immediately.

- **Leadership:** You impress the Captain with your military bearing and obvious leadership skills. He asks if you have military experience, and suggests that the head of the project may wish to speak with you personally.
- **Strategy:** You discuss the Fort's defences with Captain Post, and he is impressed by your perceptiveness. You'll clearly be a fine addition to the Fort staff in his eyes. He tells you to head straight downstairs to talk to the head of the project.
- **Physics:** The Captain appears pleased to have another boffin on board. He sends you downstairs to speak with the head of the project.

If the investigators have gathered information on the Creatures (perhaps through investigative point spends before *Bright Futures*), then Post interviews them one by one to discuss their findings. See *Captain Post's Interview*.

The Surface Fort

The surface level of the fort is a military encampment. Armed guards walk to and fro, guarding canvas tents full of crates and supplies. A Cruiser Mark I tank sits in the middle of the courtyard, its guns trained on the main gate. There are around three dozen people at Fort Halstead, split evenly between scientists, soldiers, and civilian survivors.

The following clues are available.

1. The fort is in contact with an aircraft.
 - **Cryptography:** There's a radio tower atop the fort, and it's still in use. Who are they talking to?
 - **Chemistry:** Those large barrels contain aviation fuel. They must have an aircraft close by.
 - **Photography:** You spot one soldier carrying a sheaf of aerial

photographs. They were taken recently. They must still have an aircraft in the sky.

- **Piloting:** Standing on the wall of the fort, you spot a makeshift airstrip about half a mile away, near that forest.
2. The military are conducting a survey of the Creatures.
 - **Strategy:** That command post over there is abuzz with activity. You see soldiers looking at maps and charts, collating reports, and planning military operations. They seem to be trying to find the centre of Creature activity, which appears to be somewhere in the Severn Valley.
 - **Photography:** Several photographs – the details are mercifully obscured – show large columns of the Creatures moving... or migrating. From the surrounding terrain, you'd guess it is in the Severn Valley.
 - **Occult:** That map of the United Kingdom shows ley-lines, you'd swear to it. The lines seem to be intersecting in the Severn Valley.
 - **Streetwise:** You can tell that all the action's happening in that building over there, and you sidle up to spy through a window. They're planning something, and it all seems to be centred on the Severn Valley.
 - **Cthulhu Mythos:** My God – you've seen that map before. The military have a map of England, tracking Creature movements and sightings, and you've seen it before. You saw that same configuration on that game-board in that alien city by Blackpool.
 3. The staff here act strangely. They are distracted, haunted, jumpy.



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- **Assess Honesty:** “You’re safe here, sir”, says one of the soldiers, “those things haven’t tried to break in here in years.” His tone is meant to be reassuring, but then he smiles, and it’s like the jagged edge of a tin can
- **Intuition:** The scientist’s attention keeps jumping off you, like a record skipping a groove. His eyes are fixed on a point just behind your left shoulder, but when you look, there is nothing there.
- **Oral History:** You chat to one of the soldiers when he takes a break for a cigarette, asking about trivial things – his life before the Apocalypse, how the base feeds itself, the weather and so on. Disturbingly, he cannot always answer simple questions. It is as though he is only partially there, flickering in and out of his own consciousness.

Should any of the investigators have a psychic ability, they may have an unwelcome revelation here:

- **Mind Reading:** Tendrils of an alien mind brush against yours. For an instant, you feel as though your skin is being flayed, as though your bones are being ground to dust, as though every nerve is wrapped around a needle of pure agony. Suffering beyond measure pours through you – and then, from every mind around you, you sense hunger and joy.
- **Aura Reading:** The soldier’s aura is oddly doubled. There are the warm human colours, and beyond them, something that hurts your mind’s eye.

Captain Post’s Interview

The captain brings the investigator to an interrogation room (ideally, take each player to a private room and question them individually). Choose topics to unsettle the players. Ask questions like:

- Which of the other investigators do you distrust? Why?

- We have encountered creatures that can control or influence human behaviour. Have you encountered any such phenomena? Are you sure?
- Are any of the other investigators unstable? What makes you think this?
- What happened in Blackpool? What did you see there? What did you decide?
- What happened in Brighton? Why was that city safe for so long? Is it still safe?
- What is the worst thing you have seen?
- What do the Creatures want?
- Why is this happening?

If the investigators have not revealed that they possess Holsten’s notes, then Post will question them about their meeting with the scientist.

- What did Holsten say to you?
- What did Holsten give you?
- Can you remember anything about Holsten’s work?

Note that even if the investigators have destroyed Holsten’s work, then they can still remember the rough shape of the casing schematic, and that’s enough for Post’s engineers to make the final assembly.

Captain Post’s interrogation becomes more intense for each subsequent investigator as his Shan parasite becomes more aroused. So, if you question three investigators, be pleasant and helpful to the first one, neutral to the second, and hostile and sadistic to the third. He may use drugs or physical coercion to make the investigators answer his questions. The last investigator to be questioned may learn a clue here.

1. Captain Post is under the influence of some alien force.
- **Interrogation:** The interrogation is more like torture. As he questions

you, the mask slips and you see something inhuman staring out at you from behind Post’s glassy eyes.

- **Assess Honesty:** Post snarls at you when he asks his questions. He’s not interested in the answers. This is pure sadism – and you’re struck by the sudden conviction that it’s not him. He’s in some sort of fugue, and some external force dictates his actions.
- **Intuition:** You glance sidelong at Captain Post, and there is something terrible awkward about him. His face resembles a waxen mask, and he holds himself very strangely, as if his human form was an ill-fitting suit.
- **Evidence Collection:** You hesitate when answering one question, and Post hisses at you. Suddenly, agony blazes along your arm. You could swear that you saw a strand of pale light lash out from Post’s mouth to whip your flesh.
- **Pharmacy:** Post threatens to inject you with a ‘truth serum’, but it’s not a drug you’ve ever heard of, and those syringes fluoresce with an eerie light.
- **Cthulhu Mythos:** You may be hallucinating, but you think you just saw a huge insect crawl into Captain Post’s ear.

The Bunker

To reach the bunker, one must go into the cellars of the surface fort, then pass through a huge set of reinforced steel doors to reach an elevator shaft that descends deep underground to a concrete-lined chamber. Here is the new home of the TUBE ALLOYS project. The room is dominated by scaffolding surrounding two half-assembled atomic bombs. These bombs lack the vital Carolinium core and the explosive lenses needed to trigger a continuous explosion, so they are currently harmless. The work on designing the casing goes on around the bombs. The



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whole place has the air of a temple, and the bombs are like a pair of man-made gods waiting for a sacrifice.

Sneaking In: There is no easy way to sneak in. The investigators' best options are:

- Succeeding in a Difficulty 8 Disguise test to steal uniforms and sneaking in

or

- Succeeding in a Difficulty 8 Filch test to steal keys

Suitable investigative ability spends (like **Seduction** to distract a guard, or **Architecture** to find a good ambush site) can decrease the difficulty.

Exploring the Bunker: If the investigators are allowed to down here, then Professor Rutherford gives them a guided tour.

Otherwise, they must Sneak around. Either way, the following clues are available.

1. The bombs are nearly ready.

- **Craft:** All the components for the bombs are in place. Only final assembly – and the right configuration for the explosive casing – is needed.
- **Bureaucracy:** You spot a project timeline. Everything appears to be in readiness – those earth-shattering bombs are nearly ready to go.
- **Physics:** You stare in wonder at those slumbering stars. A cold fury rises up in you – how could the end have come now, just as mankind was about to harness the power of the atom?
- **Locksmith:** At the back of the bunker is a massive door, like

the entrance to a bank vault. You catch a glimpse of the vault when one scientist goes in there to get a sample of Carolinium. They have synthesised many pounds of the explosive substance – more than enough for those two bombs.

- **Chemistry:** According to this report, they've got more than enough Carolinium to create two critical masses. Both bombs are nearly ready.
2. Everyone is convinced that these bombs will save humanity.
- **Oral History:** You overhear two scientists speculating about how quickly England can be rebuilt after the Creatures are destroyed.
 - **Intuition:** There's an air of excitement and hope in the bunker. You haven't seen such optimism in many years.





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- **Streetwise:** There's a crate of champagne over there. Someone's planning a celebration.
 - **Strategy:** You spot a report detailing how the Americans are believed to have detonated a similar bomb, and that it prevented the seeds from spreading beyond the eastern seaboard. While no-one has had any contact with the United States in years, it does suggest that the bomb is effective against the Creatures.
3. The bomb will affect the atmosphere.
- **Reassurance:** "Don't worry," says one of the scientists. "There's very little chance it will set the sky on fire. The Americans set one of these off three years ago. Ours is a little different, though." So what will it do to the sky?
 - **Geology:** You spot a copy of a familiar scientific paper, a work on the chemical composition of the atmosphere in prehistoric times. Why is the breakdown of elements in our atmosphere before the coming of mankind relevant to a bomb project? Do they expect something to change?
 - **Flattery:** You chat to one of the scientists, and he eagerly shows you some of his calculations. "It will burn a hole right through the atmosphere," he says.
 - **Astronomy:** You find a chart of spectroscopic observations. Why so much interest in the trace elements of Earth's atmosphere?
 - **Theology:** You have a dreadful headache, and words and images from the Bible assail your brain like birds hammering against a windowpane. Why do you keep thinking the destruction of Sodom, the pillar of fire and Enoch's fiery chariot, all juxtaposed with the ungodly clinical work of these bomb-makers?
4. These scientists are acting strangely.
- **Intuition:** All of them are driven to complete the bomb, but some of them have an unsettling intensity.

They cast sidelong looks in your direction, and you feel like a fly trapped in an invisible web.

- **Assess Honesty:** "The bomb will save us all!" says one scientist, and he speaks with the conviction of a fanatic.
- **Physics:** On one blackboard, you see a series of equations and diagrams. They're clearly trying to solve the problem of the bomb casing that Holsten described, but they're making elementary mistakes that you can spot in an instant. These people are brilliant scientists, yet they're forgetting basic laws of physics.
 - 1-point **Physics** spend: Specifically, their calculations seem to assume that two solid objects can move through one another if they approach from the right angle. It is as though they are unable to conceive of Euclidian space.
- **Languages:** You catch sight of a scientist's notes, and they're scrawled in no human language that you can recognise.
 - 1-point **Archaeology** or **Languages** spend: Wait a moment – you have seen those glyphs before. There are stones in the Severn Valley associated with the witch-cult that bore identical markings.
- **Outdoorsman:** You can hear the buzzing of wasps or hornets – but that's impossible. There aren't any insects down here, it is a hermetically sealed bunker.

Baron Rutherford

The head of TUBE ALLOYS is the distinguished Ernest Rutherford, made Baron Rutherford in 1931 in acknowledgement of his sterling work in nuclear physics and his directorship of the Cavendish laboratory. He discovered alpha, beta and gamma radiation,

created the first standard model of the atom with its dense nucleus surrounded by a cloud of electrons, and successfully transmuted nitrogen into oxygen.

Any investigator with **Physics** or **Chemistry** knows Rutherford by reputation as a brilliant scientist with an outgoing, bombastic personality.

Playing Rutherford

Rutherford & The Investigators:

Rutherford greets the new visitors warmly, and shows them around the laboratory. If they present him with Holsten's notes, or give him the clues he needs to complete the bomb design, then he shouts with delight and hurries to put the final touches to the bomb.

Likely questions and answers:

What happened with Holsten and the Cavendish Laboratory?

There was a disagreement, shall we say, about the direction of our research. We had to leave the laboratory in haste. Holsten had already made his desire to leave the project clear, so, um, we decided to leave him. And you tell me he was alive and well on that farm, so we made the right decision.

- **Assess Honesty:** He's not lying, exactly, but he doesn't seem sure of his own answer. He cannot quite fathom why he left Holsten behind, and is trying to cover his own confusion with bluster.

The physics behind the bomb are very strange. How does it work? What will it do?

Yes, well, things are certainly very different now. In layman's terms, the bomb is a continuous explosion with a half-life of seventeen hours. That means in the first seventeen minutes, half the Carolinium will degenerate energetically, then half the remaining matter in the seventeen minutes after that, and so on. The explosion will never stop, not for many centuries, but it will become less intense. We needed Holsten's design for the focussing lenses that implode the Carolinium core, but now that we have those, the way is clear!



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- **Agriculture:** That implies that a large section of England will be uninhabitable for centuries.
- **Physics:** That does track, more or less, with the equations you saw in the Cavendish laboratory. Still, you worry about the possibility that Rutherford is wrong. Some of the work you saw suggests that the bomb could draw energy from some other dimension.

Where will you drop the bomb? *The army chaps have a working aeroplane, with reserve fuel tanks that give it tremendous range. For the last few months, they've been surveying England, trying to find the best place to deploy the weapon. The biggest concentration of the Creatures is near Brichester. That's the primary target.*

- **Strategy:** They don't seem to have a back-up plan. What happens if they don't have access to a working aeroplane? Would some doomed hero have to walk into the very mouth of hell dragging the bomb with him?
- **History or Occult:** Brichester has its share of strange events and unpleasant histories. It feels right that the Creatures should gather there.
- **Cthulhu Mythos:** You flash back to that game board in the sunken city. Rutherford is talking about knocking the Creature's king off the board with a single stroke.

What happens now? *Final assembly should only take a few minutes. We shall signal the plane to return. Then we drop the bomb and... and... Rutherford appears to lose his train of thought. If prompted by a player character, he looks around in confusion. My word, I'm terribly sorry. I was just struck by an idea. I must write it down. Ah, you asked me about the next step. Yes yes yes, drop the bomb, kill the monsters, save the nation. Details, details.* He scribbles some notes and diagrams on a piece of scrap paper.

- **Intuition:** Rutherford appears extremely distracted and confused. That is... not exactly reassuring,

considering the fact that he is about to drop an untested atomic bomb on England.

- **Physics:** Rutherford's notes aren't anything to do with the bomb. It seems to be a theory on how the curved structure of space-time can be folded and twisted with the right mathematics. It hurts your brain when you try to follow it.
- **Occult:** That diagram that Rutherford drew – you saw it in a book about 16th century witch cults. They called it the Devil's Gate, and claimed it was how the devil climbed out of Hell!
- **Archaeology:** You've seen Rutherford's diagrams before – there was an expedition to Antarctica that claimed to find pre-human ruins, and some of

the photographs they took of bas-reliefs resemble those twisted lines.

Rutherford suggests that the investigators return upstairs and have Captain Post radio the aeroplane and call it back to base. Soon, the bomb will be ready...

TUBE ALLOYS

Several things happen in a short period of time in this scene. Unless the investigators split up, then they may not be aware of everything that happens until events overtake them. These events happen in roughly the following order around sunset.

Contacting the Aeroplane

Captain Post orders the radio operator to contact the aeroplane. Currently, the aircraft is circling above the target zone near Brichester. Static partially occludes the connection, but the investigators

Uncooperative Investigators

The final scenes assume that the investigators bring Holsten's notes to the Fort, help complete the bomb, slowly realise the Shan presence, stop the bomb from detonating, and then flee. However, if the players mistrust the TUBE ALLOYS staff, or object to the plan to use an atomic weapon based on disturbing alien science, then they may come into conflict with the military soon after arriving at Fort Halstead.

First, Captain Post will interrogate the investigators and try to force them to reveal what they know about Holsten's work (or get them to admit they met Holsten, if the investigators are being *that* secretive). This is a 2-point Stability test; an investigator who attempts the test and fails cracks under the pressure.

If that fails, then Captain Post may try torturing the investigators using Shan neural whips. This calls for a 6-point Stability test, as above. If all else fails, then the Shan call for Beings from Xicotl to creep up to the edge of the fort by night. The investigators will be handed over to the Beings and dragged into the woods to the Shan pyramid-ship. That is likely the end of the investigators and the campaign, as they will be dissected and have the secrets of Holsten's bomb design dredged out of their dying brains.

The investigators will certainly try to escape. Any plausible escape attempt should work (using **Locksmith**, **Intimidation**, **Seduction** or some other ability). At that point, **Strategy** warns them that Fort Halstead is certainly doomed and the investigators should flee.



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overhear the conversation between Post and the pilot. Post calls for the aeroplane to return, and the pilot acknowledges the order. He then runs into difficulty. The transmission keeps breaking up, so the investigators hear only fragments.

<STATIC> buffeted by winds <STATIC> to climb, but <STATIC> my God, it's moving, the whole <STATIC> all alive, all alive<STATIC> have to land, there's an airfield near<STATIC> side Brichester<STATIC>

This gives the investigators a **Core Clue**.

1. The aeroplane is near Brichester.

- **Outdoorsman:** It sounds like the pilot intends to land the plane somewhere near Brichester.

- **Cryptography:** You're good at putting fragmentary communications together. The aeroplane is going to land near Brichester.
- **Piloting:** There are several small airfields near Brichester. If you found that aeroplane, you're confident you could fly it.
- **Evidence Collection:** Searching the radio room, you find a logbook. The last transmission from the aeroplane suggested it ran into difficulty, and has landed somewhere near Brichester.

Captain Post continues to try to contact the aircraft until *The Shan Depart*.

Completing the Bomb

Down in the bunker, Baron Rutherford and the other scientists complete the bomb assembly. If the investigators wish to assist, they can do so by spending points of **Craft, Physics, Chemistry, Mechanical Repair, Electrical Repair** or **Explosives**. They have enough material for two bombs, but only Rutherford only completes one device. They leave the other bomb in the cradle.

Once the bomb is complete, Rutherford orders two soldiers to close the doors to the bunker. He then activates the bomb timer.

- A successful **Sense Trouble** roll (Difficulty 6) lets an investigator





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Sabotaging the Bomb

Should an investigator wish to sabotage the bomb, they can do so with a successful **Stealth** or **Filch** test at Difficulty 8. Should they arrange a distraction, reduce the difficulty of the test. Sabotaging the bomb requires a 3-point spend from either **Craft**, **Physics** or **Chemistry**, or a 9-point spend of **Mechanical Repair**, **Electrical Repair** or **Explosives**. A full spend allow the investigator to dictate what happens to the bomb – does it go off early, does it not detonate at all, or is it a squib that destroys the bomb without setting off the Carolinium core? A smaller spend means the Keeper decides whether or not the sabotage has its intended effect.

Destroying the bomb is easier – a Difficulty 5 **Mechanical Repair** or **Explosives** test can destroy it beyond repair.

spot a change in Rutherford's demeanour just as the bomb is completed. He goes from excitement and enthusiasm to a strange detachment in an instant – and then starts to arm the bomb.

Lights in the Forest

Next, an eerie pale light appears in the forest outside Fort Halstead. The light does not shine in straight lines, it oozes and coils around the trees and seeps like a luminescent mist across the land. As the light grows brighter, the investigators can make out a pyramidal shape rising through the trees. The stars above the pyramid ripple and flare.

- **Architecture:** No human built that pyramid. It's not made of any terrestrial metal.
- **Astronomy:** Those stars are not any constellation you recognise. It is as though there is a hole in space above that pyramid.
- **Intuition:** The pyramid strains against the bonds of gravity. It yearns to leap into the sky and vanish, but it is held back by some force.

Seeing the pyramid is worth a 3-point Stability test.

The Shan Depart

As one, the Insects from Shaggai abandon their host bodies. The discarded humans crumple to the ground, seemingly dead.

- **Medicine:** They are not dead, but appear completely paralysed.
 - 1-point **Medicine** spend (or free if the investigators examined Beulay in Cambridge): They're also suffering from locked-in syndrome like Beulay. They are still alive, but completely paralysed.
- **Biology:** That insect just crawled out of Baron Rutherford's face and flew through a wall. Agh!

Capturing the Shan: One of the investigators spots an Insect pulling itself out of a nearby victim. Normally, the Shan can flit through normal matter as easily as a human moves through the air, but this Shan's legs are caught on the victim's dental fillings, which are made of a dense amalgam. If the investigator reacts quickly, he can attack or trap the shan. He might use **Scuffling** to grab the insect, or **Scavenging** or **Preparedness** to grab a dense lead-lined container off a laboratory counter to hold the insect. Otherwise, the Shan pulls itself free and escapes.

The Shan Temple-Ship

Especially brave investigators may essay an attack on the Shan vessel. Describe their passage through the dark woods, how they have to plunge through the trees, how the branches claw their faces. The eerie mist engulfs the investigators, glowing brightly as if marking their position. It seeps into their lungs, and they taste something vile and chemical that burns their throats.

Finally, they come to the heart of the woods and see the pyramidal temple-ship as it folds space and time. Through the widening portal, they see the unimaginable gulfs between the stars, and the horrors that throng there. **Fleeing** is the only safe course of action; anything else means instant death for the investigators (a generous Keeper, or one steeped in pulp action, might allow the investigators to bring the ticking bomb to the pyramid just before it explodes, thus saving the world from being eaten by Azathoth. The temple-ship is unaffected by the atomic blast.)

The investigators cannot communicate with the trapped Shan, except in one way – an investigator could deliberately merge with the Shan, gaining access to the information in Handout 1.

Possessed Investigators: When a Shan abandons an investigator, that investigator must make an 8-point Stability test *and* a Difficulty 8 Health test. If the Health test fails, the investigator is permanently paralysed by the departure of the Shan. The investigator is still conscious and aware, but cannot move in any way other than moving his eyes.



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Countdown

So, by this point in the adventure, the investigators are likely the only non-paralysed individuals in Fort Halstead. They may be trapped in the locked bunker with a ticking atomic bomb, or locked out of the bunker watching the temple-ship prepare to depart. There are several options available to them at this point:

- **Run Away:** The investigators flee the fort, either on foot or in a stolen motor vehicle. The Shan have no interest in stopping them.
- Under normal circumstances, the bomb blast would kill them, but the underground detonation saves their lives. Behind them, they see Fort Halstead crumble from within as the bomb hollows out a vast glassy cavern under the surface. The sky catches fire with a weird aurora borealis, and the temple-ship leaps into the air and vanishes in a direction the investigators cannot name or recognise.
- Should any investigator return to the explosion site, they look down into an unimaginably deep pit to see the seething nuclear fire of Azathoth writhing far below. The bomb is still exploding – it will keep exploding forever, gnawing away at the world like a hungry worm of fire, never sated, never stopping. This crater will keep growing until the fire consumes all the world.
- **Break in or out of the bunker:** Breaking out of the bunker requires either a 2-point **Locksmith** spend or a Difficulty 6 **Scavenging** test (to find the key) or **Explosives** to blow the lock.
- **Disarming the bomb:** So, the investigators wish to disarm a ticking atomic bomb? Good luck. This requires a Difficulty 6 **Explosives** test (or Difficulty 10(!) if the

Beings from Xiclotl

Following the destruction of their homeworld, the Insects from Shaggai travelled to several other planets before arriving on Earth. On one of these worlds, they enslaved the native creatures and brought them to Earth. The Beings from Xiclotl resemble metallic trees from a distance – until their tentacles unfurl and the fang-lined maw opens.

The Beings are immensely strong and tough, but are simple-minded. Strange instincts drive them. They are always hungry for meat, and were compelled to sacrifice themselves to the plant-gods they worshipped back on Xiclotl. Now, they are controlled by the Shan, who use their nerve whips to keep the slaves in line.

Game Statistics

Abilities: Athletics 6, Health 40, Scuffling 20

Hit Threshold: 3 (sixteen-feet tall and slow-moving)

Stealth Modifier: -1 (when moving) or +4 (when pretending to be a tree)

Weapon: +3 Smash, +5 Bite. A Being may make up to three Smash attacks or one Bite attack in an round.

Armor: -5 vs any (hide)

Stability Loss: +0

Investigation

Agriculture (or Outdoorsman): Those trees look a little like birches, but there isn't a birch-wood in these parts. Were they there last night? I don't remember driving past them...

Forensics: He must have been caught in some sort of industrial accident, poor devil, and got pulped by the machinery. They pulled what was left out and dumped the body in these woods. Those tooth-marks? I'd guess a big dog got to the body before we found it. What else could it be?

Oral History: The locals call it the Witch-Grove. They say the witches held their blasphemous Sabbats there, surrounded by swaying trees.

investigator wishes to wait until all the other investigators are clear of the immediate blast zone). Spends of suitable investigative abilities like **Physics** can reduce the Difficulty.

- **Stealing the bomb:** Once the immediate danger of being vapourised

by an atomic blast (or devoured by Azathoth, which amounts to much the same thing) is removed, the investigators may easily salvage what they need from Fort Halstead. With the protective aegis of the Shan gone, the Creatures will soon swarm the fort and destroy it.



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- **Stealing the second bomb:** The second atomic weapon is unassembled, but can be salvaged if any of the characters have **Craft** or make a successful **Mechanical Repair** test against Difficulty 6. Assembling the bomb under pressure of time requires a 2-point **Craft** spend or a Difficulty 10 Mechanical Repair test. Spends of suitable investigate abilities like **Physics**, **Craft** or **Chemistry** can reduce the Difficulty. The results of failing in an attempt to assemble an atomic bomb are left to the player as an exercise to discover.

- **Helping the Survivors:** The other victims of the Shan will never recover. The investigators can at best prolong their suffering.

The Nation Set Free

The last vestige of the British government – the Ministry of Supply and the TUBE ALLOYS project – is gone.

If the investigators were able to salvage one of the bombs, then they have a potential weapon against the Creatures. If they go to Brichester, they could exact some measure of retribution on the Creatures.

Even if they failed to recover a bomb, they know that there is still a working aeroplane in England, and that it waits somewhere near Brichester.

And so does the ultimate horror behind the Creatures.





Slaves of the Mother

As the last vestiges of the world the investigators once knew are washed away, the source of all these horrors, the primal, unbegotten Mother, rises to claim her new dominion. The investigators are drawn back to Brichester, where they may grab one last chance to strike back, one last chance to escape – or where they finally succumb to defeat and despair.

The Hook

The investigators know that the Creatures are gathering somewhere in the Severn Valley, and that there is a working aircraft there.

The Spine

The investigators travel to Brichester in search of the Mother - or, perhaps, a way to escape this doomed land. On the way, they come across the trail of a mysterious gardener named Grundig, who they come to suspect is an agent of the Great Race of Yith.

They visit Brichester Library, where a few survivors try to preserve all human knowledge. Unfortunately, some books contain knowledge that predates humanity, and they have unleashed the horror of Y'gonolac.

Clues in the library lead the investigators to the Goatswood, where they learn that the Mother was worshipped in this place in ancient times – and that her worship has continued to this very day. Grundig reveals that the Great Race of Yith believes that the Apocalypse can be averted, but he requires their assistance. They may go with him to confront the Mother, or flee to the airfield.

The Horrible Truth

England is doomed. The Creatures are *reclaiming* what was always theirs. Humanity were the trespassers, the infestation, and now we are being washed away.





Slaves of the Mother

The climax of this adventure involves the investigators struggling against despair. They literally have to find something to hang on to, or they will succumb to the Tugging and leap to their deaths. Ideally, not all the investigators will pass this test. Try to hammer away at the investigator's Pillars of Sanity throughout this adventure, so when the final horror comes, at least one of them chooses to die rather than keep fighting. One or two failures will make the heroism of the others stand out more.

The Blooming Land

The land is changing. Everywhere the investigators look, they see signs of this change. The nature of the change depends on their previous actions.

The Blight -

The Bomb Was Detonated


- The change begins in the region around the bomb (so, around Fort Halstead). As the continuous explosion continues to gnaw away at the planet's crust, the radiation destroys the signs of the Creatures. Flowers wither and die, or the murky flood waters recede and the land dries out.
- Familiar plants and animals return with startling speed. Once again, the countryside is covered in green grass and oak trees. Foxes and hares dart out of the undergrowth.
- All these returning plants and animals exhibit unnatural strength and vitality. The trees grow so big that they topple under the weight of their own branches. Animals grow fat too quickly, and then fall


apart. Their meat is flaky, grey-coloured, and inedible.


- These regions of unnatural growth radiate out from the detonation site like rays. Between the 'rays', the landscape is unchanged.
- The largest and most intense of these rays points towards the Severn Valley.


New Eden -

The Flowers as Creatures

 The Flowers begin to bloom. Where once there were only white flowers, all identical like snowdrops, the alien plants suddenly diversify into a myriad new forms. Flowers grow in riotous colours the investigators cannot name, and take on strange new shapes. Alien forests sprout, and these forests are strangely reminiscent of the previous landscapes. It is as though the Flowers are mimicking the plants they drove out.

 In places, the Flowers seem to mimic their human victims. The investigators spot what could be familiar faces made from leaves and branches, or see plants that look disturbingly like jumbled copies of human anatomy.


 An investigator might see what appears to be a deceased Source of Stability in a grove of Flowers, only to discover that it was an illusion – that particular configuration of many-coloured flowers happened to bear an uncanny resemblance to the dead friend.


 An investigator dreams of his mother – and awakens to find himself outside, lying amid the Flowers. His mouth is wet, as though he drank from the Flower-tainted stream nearby in his sleep.


The heart of this new growth is in the Severn Valley.

A Sea-Change -

The Deep Ones as Creatures

 The drowning of England continues. Most low-lying areas are now entirely flooded. Crossing England requires the use of boats or rafts, or else taking circuitous routes over hills and through marchlands.

 The weather changes. Titanic storm-clouds gather over England, leading to biblical downpours that last for weeks. Conversations about the weather become strained and desperate in the face of these never-ending torrents. The investigators spot the outlines of huge creatures moving through the clouds, although they never see them clearly.

 Strange coral structures grow around the centres of activity of the Deep Ones. These structures remind the investigators of the architecture of the sunken city they glimpsed off Blackpool.

The Surge of Life

Even in places so far unaffected by the Creatures, there is a sudden surge of new life.

- Wounded investigators recover Health abnormally quickly.
- When searching an abandoned house for supplies, the investigators hear a familiar but unexpected sound – the ticking of a grandfather clock. Despite damage to the mechanism, this clock has come back to life.
- The investigators find that their garden or farmland is suddenly overrun with fruiting vines and crops ready for the harvest.
- The investigators see numerous wild animals, including species they have not seen in several years.
- Nature rapidly reclaims abandoned buildings and cities not overrun by the Creatures, packing the work of



Slaves of the Mother

hundreds of years of erosion and growth into a few short weeks. England becomes a landscape of picturesque ruins, as though the world were trying to accomplish hundreds of years worth of reclamation overnight.

The Aircraft

During the events of *The Nation Set Free*, the investigators learned that the Ministry of Supply operated a working aircraft with reserve fuel tanks, and that this plane landed somewhere near Brichester. If they find this plane, they can escape England.

It is possible that the investigators failed to learn about the aeroplane. In that case, here are some other ways for them to learn about it.

- **Evidence Collection:** Documents salvaged from Fort Halstead include transcripts of radio transmissions from the aeroplane. In the last transmission, it landed near Brichester.
- **Cryptography:** You intercept a radio transmission from a military aircraft. It was forced to land near Brichester.
- **Interrogation:** You encounter a survivor from Fort Halstead. His experiences have driven him mad, but before he smashes his own skull open by running head-first into a brick wall, he tells you about a military aircraft that was last seen near Brichester.

The Bomb

If the investigators salvaged the bomb from Fort Halstead, they may intend to deploy it as a weapon against the Creatures. Baron Rutherford's plan to use the bomb to kill the mysterious master of the Creatures may still work, if the investigators can transport the bomb to Brichester.

With **Scavenging**, the investigators find a way of moving the bomb, such as a working van or just a horse and cart.

Optional Scene: Contamination

If the bomb went off in Fort Halstead, but you still want the investigators to have the means to strike back at the Creatures, then you can run this scene. It works best if the investigators did not sacrifice one of their number in the *Sandgrown* scenario in *The DeadWhiteWorld*.

One of the investigators becomes contaminated by the weird radiation from the bomb. Anyone with **Physics** or **Medicine** or **Biology** (or **Cthulhu Mythos**) can guess that the investigator's cells have been infected with the synthetic element carolinium. There is no cure.

Over the course of this scenario, the investigator's unnatural vitality grows. He gains one point each in **Athletics** and **Health** per day; his body swells and his blood thickens until it is like reddish-grey syrup. He no longer sleeps. It is clear that the investigator is going to fall apart or even explode under the pressure of this alien life force.

The contaminated investigator loses one point of **Sanity** per day. When reduced to 2 **Sanity**, he loses his original **Drive** and gains **Self-Preservation** instead (see *The Apocalypse Machine*). The investigator believes that he is transforming into something glorious – a living god, perhaps, or a creature that can survive on this blighted world. He sees dreams and visions of the Court of Azathoth.

At the end of the adventure, the investigator reaches a critical mass of carolinium and explodes. The other investigators may be able to turn their former friend into a weapon against the Mother, but this will not be a heroic moment of self-sacrifice. They will have to kill him themselves to 'detonate' him at the right moment.

The Tugging

The investigators may not be immediately aware of it, but a force draws them to Brichester. Even if they discount the stories about Creature activity there, even if they do not try to use the bomb, even if they discount the possibility of escape on the airplane – they will still come to Brichester as the Mother calls them home. This psychic call is referred to as the Tugging.

More likely, though, the investigators will follow their **Drives** or the various **Clues** that lead them to Brichester, and never experience the Tugging directly. Nonetheless, it calls them towards the dark place underground. Over the course of the adventure, they may come to realise that their reasons for going to Brichester are hollow and meaningless,

and are really justifications for the underlying cause – they cannot help go where the Tugging brings them.

Various non-player characters may question the investigators' reasons for going to Brichester. If doubt creeps into the investigator's minds, they may be able to obtain the following clues with an appropriate spend.

- **1-point Strategy spend:** You have deep misgivings about this course of action. All the survival instincts and caution you and your group learned over the last three years has been abandoned in this headlong rush towards Brichester.
- **1-point Intuition spend:** You have a moment of clarity – you are lying to yourself. You are not



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going to Brichester – you are being drawn there.

- **1-point Cthulhu Mythos spend:** You can feel something tugging at your mind, reeling you in. There's no escape from it. The only way out is through.

The Green Man or The Lurker: The investigators may also perceive the Tugging indirectly, in the form of the Green Man (if the Flowers are the Creatures) or the Lurker (in the case of the Deep Ones). At times, one of the investigators should spot a strange entity watching them. This entity appears to only one investigator at a time, and only when that investigator is alone or the others are distracted.

The Green Man is a frightfully thin man with a leering face, who hides amid the branches of trees or in the shadows. The investigator might also see him perched on the edge of a building like a gargoyle, or peering in through a window, or standing on a distant hilltop. He is absolutely filthy with the leaf-mold and debris of the forest floor; in certain lights, it almost looks like he is made of twigs and moss. He carries a small animal, perhaps a bird or a rat, in the hollow of his chest and whispers to it. He never interacts directly with the investigators, but sometimes leaves signs that he was there, such as little arrangements of twigs and twine or dead vermin. (Of course, since the Green Man is the manifestation of the Tugging, it may be that the investigators are unconsciously arranging twigs and murdering small animals, then finding their own creations.)

His counterpart is the Lurker. Unlike the Green Man, the Lurker is never seen directly. It is a *presence* in certain bodies of water. The investigator who sees the Lurker sees only a dark shape moving under the surface, roughly ovoid with trailing tentacles. The Lurker is able to change its size – sometimes, it might be human-sized, and sometimes it might

slither into a small puddle, or grow to fill a wide lake. The stench of rotting seaweed heralds the approach of the Lurker.

The Changed World

As the investigators travel across England to Brichester, they explore the changing world. Several potential encounters for the investigators are described below. The Keeper is encouraged to tailor these encounters to the investigator's Drives and Investigative Abilities. For example, give investigator with the Drive of Duty a chance to choose between their Duty and safety – perhaps the Abandoned House becomes an Abandoned Hospital for a nurse. Give an investigator with lots of points in Architecture a chance to navigate a maze of ruined buildings, or one with Seduction a chance to mingle at the festival.

The Graveyard

The investigators pass a small country graveyard. The adjoining church collapsed under the weight of ivy and moss growing on its green roof, leaving only a tilted spire and a pile of debris. The graveyard, though, is still in use. The old gravedigger emerges from his little hut and greets the investigators. He inquires if they would like to be buried 'to avoid the rush'. He appears quite convinced that the final end is close at hand, and the final extinction of humanity is only days away.

- **Anthropology:** My word, what an ugly chap this gravedigger is. His features are unlike any you've seen before; animalistic, almost wolfish. Some congenital deformation, perhaps. Unsettling. And as for the smell!
- **Bargain:** You politely decline the gravedigger's offer to bury you, and instead trade some excess supplies for a hot meal. He cooks a tasty haunch of fresh pork for you, and offers you beer to wash it down. Afterwards, you feel refreshed and invigorated. He even gives you direction to Brichester that are worth a 3-point pool for any spends or tests made while travelling.

- **History:** The old gravedigger is surprisingly well informed about local history, and speaks as though he had personal experience of events in Brichester's history. He talks about the witch cults who worshipped strange gods in the caves under the forest, but cannot recall exactly where. *'Those who were called to 'em could find 'em, and the king's men never could.'*

- **Intimidation:** This villain has obviously murdered and buried other passers-by. You threaten him and demand that he show you the recent burials. He brings you over to a trio of recently dug graves, and you can indeed hear muffled knocking from below! You hastily open these graves, and successfully rescue one of the three men who are buried alive here. The fellow introduces himself as **Ivan Brackenbury**. Before the Apocalypse, he was a stage performer and occultist. He survived for several years, but has become convinced that further struggle is futile. He claims that his interment will allow him to enter into psychic communion with the vegetable essences of the world.

- **Psychoanalysis:** He seems quite stable for a man who wishes to be buried alive. Obviously, his delusions are deep-seated.
- **Intuition:** Something in Brackenbury *wants* to be buried alive. His nonsense about vegetable essences and psychic powers are just his way of justifying his actions to himself.

The Abandoned House

The investigators see lights burning in the distance. As they draw closer, they see these lights are candles, burning in the windows of a well-appointed country house that stands alone on a small rise. The farmhouse and the land surrounding it are oddly unaffected by



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the Creatures, in a manner reminiscent of the area around Holsten's cottage (in *The Nation Set Free*).

The front door of the house is ajar. Inside, the investigators find themselves in a well-equipped refuge. Heavy cabinets contain stacks of canned food and preserves, as well as other useful supplies. Cords of firewood near the hearth suggest preparations for the winter. Upstairs, there are four bedrooms, one of which shows clear signs of recent occupation.

- **Agriculture:** The garden outside is exceptionally well cared-for – apart for the bootprints that stomp across it, heedlessly trampling the fragile plants. The bootprints go in a straight line. Oddly, you spot the same bootprints around the edges of the garden, suggesting the booted man was the careful gardener.
 - 1-point **Navigation** spend: Those footprints head towards Brichester.
 - 1-point **Evidence Collection** spend: You find a recently dug hole in one corner of the garden. It's quite deep. At the bottom, you find a square-shaped depression, suggesting something was removed.
- **Evidence Collection:** The house was abandoned recently – there are still candles burning in the windows, but they're nearly drowned in puddles of wax. The apples in the bowl are still fresh, but the stew in the pot is cold and congealed. You'd guess the owner left a few hours ago in haste.
- **Occult:** You find a curious book, wrapped for some reason in grease-proof paper. It's entitled *Les Clavicules des côtes de glace* by Dave Desgagnes, and is about the Piri Reis map that purported to depict the coastline of Antarctica under

the ice. Curiously, there are handwritten annotations in a language you don't recognize, as if whoever owned the book knows what the continent should look like without its coat of ice.

- **Languages:** You find a diary. From it, you discover that you are in the home of Edward Grundig. He was the gardener for this house, and moved in when the family who lived here died in the Apocalypse. The first part of the diary was clearly an attempt to stay sane when everyone around him died. The middle part is mostly observations on the weather and the harvests, and is rather dull. In the third section, he complains of 'being watched' and strange dreams about caves, interspersed with nightmares about being back at school. Towards the end, he complains about blackouts and missing time.
 - **Cthulhu Mythos:** Yithian possession? Shan infestation? Or simple madness?
- **Archaeology:** There are relatively few books in the house, but one catches your eye and you pick it up. It is a slim monograph entitled *Bones of Granite* on the archaeology of Brichester by Chester Crispin – the fellow who discovered the Yithian letters in *Letters from Ghosts*. The book itself is of little interest, although Crispin does mention work done by other writers, notably an obscure Supremus Press book entitled *Prehistoric Habitation and Ritual Sites of the Severn Region* that may be more useful.
 - **Library Use:** There's a bookplate in the monograph – it came from Brichester Library.
- **Chemistry:** In the kitchen, you find a strange collection of chemicals, probably looted from some school laboratory or university. You can't

make head or tail of what Grundig wanted from them, but there are very obscure and dangerous chemicals here.

The Gibbering Ravine

Some tremendous force ripped up the land south of Brichester, tearing through the countryside outside Gloucester like a wrathful titan and hacking out gaping ravines. These steep-sided ravines make travel difficult, as the investigators must either sidetrack around them or climb down into each ravine and up the other side.

- **Geology:** These 'ravines' are actually collapsed tunnels. In some places, the tunnel came close enough to the surface to become exposed to the open air when the roof collapsed, but elsewhere, the tunnel dove underground and is now choked with fallen stones. Some of the rocks are partially melted, as though exposed to great heat.
- **Biology:** Some of the markings on the rocks remind you of striations left by burrowing worms or fossil trilobites.

Crossing the ravine-torn region takes several hours. Towards the end of this journey, the investigators hear grunts, running footsteps, the clamour of a crowd. They come to the lip of one ravine, and look down to see a huge group of people running through the ravine. There must be at least two hundred people down there, closely packed together, all dressed in rags, all thin and pasty-pale. They howl and gibber, chanting in no known human tongue. In an eyeblink, they are gone – the bizarre crowd vanishes into a tunnel entrance at the end of the ravine.

Should the investigators pursue, their path is blocked when the tunnel entrance collapses. Hundreds of tons of rock fall at the north-east end of the ravine, completely engulfing the



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tunnel mouth. Pressing their ears to the ground, the investigators can still hear the mad whooping and chanting of the crowd as they run blindly into the depths of the earth.

The Houseboat

The investigators' path runs alongside a canal for some time. Ahead, through the dank mists, they see a lantern-light approaching, and soon a curious grey canal-boat comes into view. The captain of this boat greets the investigators. He claims that he retired to this houseboat just before the Apocalypse, and that he quite enjoys the quiet and the solitude that comes with the end of the world. In the last three years, he traded supplies between several communities of survivors, but they are all gone now. The investigators are the first people he has seen in months.

The barge looks safe and secure, and could be a good way to travel. Inside the cabin, the investigators see the Captain's collection of glass bottles. Inside in each bottle is a lead pendulum that raps, seemingly at random, against the glass.

- **Streetwise:** You heard rumours about a captain on a barge. He had a dangerous reputation, and you remember something about ghosts in bottles and strange powers.
- **Bargain:** You offer some supplies you can spare in exchange for passage, and the captain welcomes you on board.
- **Occult:** Something about those lead bottles reminds you of stories about trapped ghosts and necromancers.



One night, the Captain gets drunk and takes out one of his glass bottles. He shakes the bottle, listens to the rattle, then laughs and points at one of the investigators. "That one? Really?" The Captain believes that the ghost trapped in the bottle is a person known to the

investigator – perhaps a loved one, or a Source of Stability, or a deceased Player Character. Should the investigators convince the Captain to show them how to communicate with the dead (with an **Occult**, **Bargain**, **Flattery** or **Seduction** spend), then they may 'speak' with the ghost in the bottle. This is a chance for the investigators to ask any unresolved questions, to recover Stability, or to reminisce about their previous adventures before the end.



The investigators are in danger. Like Pinky in Brighton, the Captain made a dread bargain with the Deep Ones to ensure his own safety. He takes passengers on his barge, then sacrifices them to the Deep Ones. Some of the beds in the barge are located above concealed trapdoors. In the dead of night, the Captain creeps up with a billhook on a rope. He hooks the sleeping victim, then opens the trapdoor. The victim ends up trailing underneath the barge, bleeding like a stuck pig, and drowning. Soon, once the thrashing stops, the Deep Ones come. A dozen partial skeletons dangle from rusting hooks beneath the keel of the barge, all toothmarked and torn.

- **Outdoorsman:** You are impressed that that the Captain was able to keep his boat intact despite the rise of the Deep Ones. When you ask him how he managed it, he mutters something about hard work, then changes the subject.
- **Mechanical Repair:** The design of the barge's hull is odd. You wonder if it has a hidden compartment underneath or something similar.
- **Assess Honesty:** The Captain's demeanour worries you. He's hiding something.
- **Forensics:** You find a rusty, bloodstained hook on the deck. There's a lot of blood on it – this is a murder weapon. And why are there so many small fish following the boat?

- **Bargain:** Looking through the Captain's trade goods, you find a bag containing women's clothing, ammunition, medical supplies and other personal items. He's clearly looted these from some dead traveller.

The Festival

Near the outskirts of Brichester, the investigators encounter a small village. There were clearly people living here until recently – the village is surrounded by bountiful farmland, and the houses are in good repair and show signs of habitation, but there is no sign of anyone here now. In the middle of the village is a bizarre structure – either a sort of altar with a maypole rising from it (for the Flowers as Creatures), or a huge brass cauldron filled with salt water (for the Deep Ones).

- **Agriculture:** They clearly just brought the harvest in. This must be some sort of harvest celebration.
- **Occult:** This looks like a harvest festival. What powers do they venerate?
- **Outdoorsman:** Looking at the muddy tracks around the village green, it looks like everyone left together. The trail of footprints leads into Goatswood. You try to follow it, but some huge animal has torn up the earth and dragged itself across the trail, obscuring it completely.
- **Forensics:** Examining the altar, you find scraps of flesh in the grass nearby, as if some sacrificial animal was torn to shreds.

Searching the village, the investigators find a small Catholic church. The doors are barred from the inside. The church is home to **Fr. Thomas Shea**, the parish priest. He watched his congregation turn from Christianity to an older, darker faith. He remonstrated with them, and they turned on him. Fr. Shea is dying, even if it is not immediately obvious.

- **If the Flowers are the Creatures,** then they forced him to eat



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communion wafers impregnated with the Seeds. Even now, the Flowers germinate within the priest's vital organs. Soon, the alien plants will force their way up his windpipe, suffocating him so they can feed on his tissue.

- **If the Deep Ones are the Creatures**, then the Mother visited the ritual site, and Fr. Shea glimpsed Her in her terrible glory. When the investigators arrive, he's sipping cyanide-laced wine from the holy cup.

The investigators may force the door with **Locksmith** or brute force, or persuade the priest to open the door with **Reassurance**. Inside, they find the priest sitting on the foremost pew. An investigator with **Medicine** can immediately tell that he is terribly sick. Fr. Shea rambles in a melancholy way, describing the events of the past few years.

- The initial disaster mostly spared this little village of Camside – their water supply comes from a mountain spring that rises from a dark cleft, and avoided contamination by the Flowers. Nearly two dozen people survived, and more survivors joined them over the years.
- The Creatures rarely troubled them.
- They traded food and supplies with another community of survivors at Brichester Library.
- The winter of two years ago was terribly hard. Some of the villagers took refuge in Goatswood, and returned strangely changed. They spread the veneration of the Mother among the other villagers.
- The next harvest was astoundingly plentiful, and more of the other villagers joined in worship of the Mother.

- In the end, they committed 'abominable acts'. Fr. Shea refuses to describe what happened, muttering to himself about such things as 'the limp, crawling light', 'the call of the mother', 'the carven stones', and 'the black pit'.
- He doesn't know where the villagers went. He intends to go to Brichester Library, and help Dr. Cotter there.
- At this point, he struggles to his feet, but his strength fails and he falls back down, convulsing and dying.

Brichester Library

A cataclysmic storm breaks over Brichester as the investigators arrive. Fat droplets of caustic rain batter the crumbling, weed-wrapped town. The investigators have to wade through partially flooded streets in search of shelter.

Brichester Library is a large three-storey granite building in the middle of the town, looming like a grey monolith over the high street. The investigators hear the distinctive staccato of a diesel generator at the back of the building, and see the glimmer of electric lights by night. This place is still inhabited.

Drawing closer, they see the lobby of the building is crammed with boxes and piles of books. A narrow path winds through the tottering towers of paper, like a trail gnawed by a mouse. Following this path, the investigators find themselves in the main library, where owlsh librarians scuttle back and forth between the stacks.

The Librarian

Head Librarian **Dr. Lewis Cotter** challenges the investigators when they arrive. He peers at them through cracked half-moon glasses. He survived the Apocalypse by mischance - he accidentally locked himself in the library cellar for several hours, and emerged

into a changed dead world. He felt that there was no hope of humanity surviving in these new conditions, so he dedicated himself to the quixotic goal of preserving human knowledge. Over the last three years, he has gathered a small band of fellow librarians to aid him in salvaging books from shops and other libraries.

The investigators need to show they are trustworthy.

- **Bargain (or Scavenging):** Look, we've got these rare books for you, you say, pressing some salvaged books into his hands. He lays them reverently on a teetering pile.
- **Reassurance:** You assure the librarian that you are no danger to him, his followers, or to his work.
- **Library Use:** Cotter's eyes light up behind his glasses. *Ah! A fellow adept. If you could lend a hand, thenm that would be most welcome.*

Playing Cotter

- Keep your voice quiet and even. Don't get excited.
- Have a book or a pair of glasses to hand.
- Concern yourself with niggling details and small matters. Avoid acknowledging the outside world.

In the Library

Several important clues are available in the stacks of books.

1. The researchers have salvaged books and documents from across the country. You could find almost anything here.
- **Library Use:** Looking through the pile, you find books from libraries, from universities and from private collections. There hasn't been time to organise them properly, and you help out for a few hours, winning the gratitude of the Brichester librarians.



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- **Reassurance:** Once you show them that you are not going to murder them - and, more importantly, that you can keep quiet - the librarians welcome you. They scurry around you, carrying bundles of documents and books.
- **Scavenging:** You overhear two of the librarians talking about mounting an expedition to Oxford to raid the collections there. You discuss the prospects for salvaging that material, and convince them that Oxford is too dangerous to be of use. They thank you for your insight.
- **Bargain:** You offer the librarians some books you picked up along the way, and they are almost pathetically grateful. They cradle the books like children.
- 2. They intend to preserve knowledge for the future. Humanity may go extinct, but our knowledge will live on to be inherited by some future race.
- **Chemistry:** There's a strong chemical smell at the back of the library. Exploring, you find a curious laboratory full of vats of bubbling chemicals. Two librarians methodically process a stack of books - each page is 'painted' with a chemical preservative. The fumes make your head spin. You question the librarians, and they explain that they are preserving the books forever
- **Evidence Collection:** Some of the books feel strange to the touch. Experimenting, you discover that you are unable to tear or mark the paper, no matter how hard you try. These books will last forever.
 - 1-point **Evidence Collection** spend: You have seen this before! The letters that Bill Shakespeare brought had a similar texture!
- **Oral History:** You idly chat with two librarians on a tea break, and they explain the purpose of the library. They believe that it is their final duty to preserve all human knowledge. They have a liquid that makes paper indestructible, and intend to preserve key books for





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- future generations. Generations of what, they cannot guess.
- **Biology:** You pass a librarian painting a copy of *On The Origin Of Species* with some resinous goop. He explains that the chemical will preserve the paper indefinitely. You discuss evolution, and wonder if some other intelligent race will arise in millennia to come. The librarian expresses the hope that these inheritors will find the library and translate the collected knowledge of humanity. In these books, humanity will live on.
3. They obtained the preservative from Edward Grundig.
- **Chemistry:** You recognise the chemicals they use. This is the same experiment that Grundig carried out in the abandoned house. You confirm your suspicions - Grundig was here. Apparently, he had an interest in certain occult books in the basement.
 - **Interrogation:** You subject one of the librarians to a barrage of quick-fire questions. How did they discover this formula? Who gave them the idea to preserve all human knowledge? What contact do they have with the outside world? He stammers out an answer - a stranger called Edward Grundig visited them several times in the last few months, and he showed them how to make the preservative. On his last visit, Grundig then consulted some occult books, and then went into Goatswood.
 - **Agriculture:** You find a bag of apples of the same sort that you saw in the abandoned house - and nearby, a walking stick. Edward Grundig came here. You ask one of the librarians, and he confirms that Grundig was a regular visitor to the library.
 - **Bureaucracy:** Consulting a list of borrowers, you spot Grundig's name. He recently consulted some books found in the basement of the library.
4. One of the researchers is acting strangely.
- **Intuition:** Dr. Cotter seems worried. You ask him what concerns him, and he admits that one of his staff, Ms. Roesmith, is acting strangely and refuses to come out of the basement.
 - **Streetwise:** You eavesdrop on two librarians. They're talking about one of their colleagues, Ms. Roesmith. Apparently, she's become eccentric and won't come out of the basement.
 - **Forensics:** You idly pick up one book, and discover that the pages have been chewed - and those are human toothmarks! You ask a librarian, and he snatches the book from you and insists that it is none of your business. He shoots a worried glance towards the stairs leading down to the basement.
 - **Anthropology:** You can read a situation and spot trouble, and these librarians are worried about something underground. There's a stairs down to the basement over there - maybe you should check it out.
5. **Core Clue.** The occult books are kept in the basement of the library.
- **Library Use:** Wandering through the stacks, you notice a distinct lack of books on certain topics - nothing on the occult, nothing on military science, nothing on local history. Maybe they've been moved. The basement is the obvious place to check - there are more stacks down there.
 - **Archaeology:** You look around for more of Chester Crispin's books, but can't find any. They must have been moved to the basement.
 - **Navigation or Strategy:** You find a cache of military documents and papers, and look for a map that might show the location of an airfield where that scout aircraft

might have landed. Some of the documents are missing - maybe they've been filed elsewhere? You resolve to check the basement.

- **Occult:** There are no books on the occult. You ask a librarian for a copy of *Cutting the Puppeteer's Strings*, an infamous book that links bomb-throwing anarchists to supernatural forces, and he refers you to the basement.
- **Intuition:** You have a gnawing feeling that you're missing something vital. It must be here somewhere - perhaps in the basement.

The Paper Labyrinth

The basement of Brichester Library makes the upper levels look like models of cleanliness and order. The cramped stone cellars are packed floor-to-ceiling with books. In years past, the library kept damaged or obscure books down here, and in the last three years, they used the basement to store extra copies of books they had already preserved, as well as books deemed too poor or erroneous to be added to the preserved corpus of human knowledge. Now it is a maze of overflowing shelves, lit by a handful of flickering electric lights.

The custodian of this mess is - or was - Lillian Moore, a poetry student from America who was stranded in England when the world fell apart. She volunteered to go through these books in case the other librarians accidentally misfiled something of importance. In the course of her work, she came across a sinister book entitled *The Revelations of Glaaki*, and became possessed by Y'gonac. The other librarians - pallid, bloodless gnomes - are of no interest to Y'gonac. The investigators, on the other hand...

When the investigators come down to the basement, there is no immediate sign of Ms. Moore. They are confronted by a maze of bookshelves, and she is somewhere in the maze. She hears them coming down the stairs, though, and calls out to them: "Hello, who's there?"



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She then guides the investigators into the maze of books (“oh, you’re looking for Crispin’s works. Yes, they’re here near me. Just turn left and keep going - I’ll show you where to go”). As the investigators wander through the maze, they realise that something terrible surrounds them.

- **Library Use:** These books are not arranged according to any sane system, but they are not stacked randomly. You feel that if you press on, you might be able to understand the purpose behind them.
- **Architecture:** This is impossible - the library basement cannot be this big. Either they broke into some other underground complex, or some force is warping the very space around you.
- **Navigation:** You try to keep track of the twists and turns, and quickly realise that this maze is spatially impossible. Along one corridor, for example, taking the entrance on the left or the entrance on the right leads to the same book-lined vault.
- **Biology:** You step into one corridor of books that resembles the inside of a wasp’s nest. Someone has chewed the pages and regurgitated the papery mulch along the walls. You spot books and maps embedded in the mess.
- **Chemistry:** The smell of chemicals is strong down here. Many of these books were treated with the same preservative resin. Examining the stacks of books, you discover that whole sections of books have been glued together with the indestructible compound. This isn’t a library, it’s a prison.
- **Assess Honesty:** “Left... now straight on...you’re almost there.” Ms. Moore is your Ariadne, guiding you through the labyrinth of books - but you cannot trust her. There’s a hunger in her voice that disturbs you.

- **Outdoorsman:** The hairs rise on the back of your neck. Something big is in this maze, and it’s hunting you.

At a suitable juncture, the lights go out. If the investigators have no light sources, they must blunder in the dark. If they do (perhaps with Preparedness), then when they fumble for their torches and get them lit, they discover that the walls of the maze have moved and they are separated.

All the investigators are struck by a sudden feeling of terror (a 3-point Stability test). They hear something huge and monstrous, like a bull, thundering through the maze in pursuit. They may now engage in a contest of **Fleeing**. The *losing* investigator gets to meet with Y’gonalac in *The Hands of Y’gonalac*. One of the investigators must also pick up a clue pointing them *To Goatswood*.

To Goatswood

This **Core Clue** can be dropped in at any point during the exploration of the maze. It can be found by the investigator who runs into Y’Gonalac, or by another, luckier character. You may use all the different versions of this clue if you wish – there are multiple reasons for the investigators to travel to Goatswood. The Tugging takes many forms.

- **Strategy:** You find a military document half-stuck to one stack of files. It notes the location of a secret airfield in the forests near Brichester. That must be where the Ministry of Supply airplane landed.
- **Archaeology or Library Use:** You find the remains of a book entitled *Prehistoric Habitation & Ritual Sites in the Severn Region*. Some vandal unpicked the binding and trampled the book’s yellowed pages and printed plates into the ground. Still, you recover a handful of pages describing archaeological evidence of a ritual site in the wood. With a thrill, you realise that this site is close to the caves where you found the Yithian relics.

- **Cthulhu Mythos:** You don’t know what you saw in that maze of paper, but you stumbled out with fragmentary memories of looming trees and a cyclopean shape gnawing and slithering towards the surface. It’s in Goatswood. You have to go there.

- **Agriculture:** You find a book describing the trees of Goatswood. Flipping through it, you find a letter that someone used as a bookmark. It’s written on headed notepaper from the Ministry of Supply, and discusses possible sites for a secret airfield. You know where the plane must have landed.

- **Evidence Collection:** You rifle through a collection of ordnance survey maps, and find one showing Goatswood. Someone has made notes in pencil, and you recognize the handwriting – Edward Grundig.

The Hands of Y’gonalac

The unlucky investigator blunders into the heart of the maze. Suddenly, there is no sound of pursuit, no hellish breath on his neck from the rampaging monster.

He finds himself in a small room. The brick walls are lined with bookshelves. There’s a camp-bed and a lantern. Sitting on the bed is Lillian Moore, an attractive young woman. She holds a heavy leather-bound book in her lap. Smiling brightly, she wonders why the investigator had such trouble following her directions, and then offers the book to the investigator to read.

The book is *The Revelations of Glaaki* – reading it will open the investigator to Y’Gonolac.

- **Occult:** You recognize the book – it is the dread *Revelations of Glaaki*. Legend holds that those who read this book are cursed.
- **Seduction:** Lillian leans forward invitingly as she offers you the



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book. She's trying to seduce you, but there's something very wrong here. It's too polished, too cynical for what you know of her.

- **Assess Honesty:** "Read this", she whispers, "it can save us all!" She sounds excited, but her eyes are cold and watchful. There's no emotion in them at all.
- **Forensics:** In the flickering light of the lantern, you see scar tissue at the base of her neck and on her hands. She must have nearly been decapitated at some point, judging by those old wounds.
- Alternatively, Lillian may try to seduce a receptive investigator. Technically, this is exactly the same as reading the book – Lillian, the book and Y'Gonolac are all aspects of the same entity.

I Read The Book!: Should an investigator read the book in the presence of an avatar of Y'Gololac, he must make a Stability test against Difficulty 5 immediately. If the test fails, the investigator becomes attuned to the influence of Y'Gonolac. At the next opportunity, he commits some ghastly act of lechery or decadence, at which point he must make another Stability test, again at Difficulty 5. If this test also fails, then the investigator may become possessed by Y'Gonolac just like Roesmith.

The one benefit of this is that the investigator is now immune to the Tugging, which may be of use in the final scene (see page 47).

After reading the book, the investigator faints. When he recovers, Lillian and the book are gone.

II Don't Read The Book! Lillian undergoes a bizarre transformation. She stands, and her head *melts* like wax, flesh and bone running in rivulets down her torso. Her body swells obscenely, forcing the

investigator back against the wall. Her hands reach for the investigator, and ruby-red lips part in the palms as the mouths open. **READ** she says, and the voice comes from her hands and from deep underground. That's a 7-point Stability test right there.

The investigator now has several options:

- Reading the Book
- Fainting and submitting to Y'Gonolac's perverse whims
- Running away – this requires a Fleeing test at Difficulty 6
- Grabbing and throwing the oil lamp to set the paper maze on fire. This destroys the *Revelations of Glaaki* and banishes Y'Gonolac, but also traps the investigator in a blazing inferno (+1 damage every few rounds until the investigator escapes). The fire will spread to the rest of the maze, possibly endangering the other investigators and definitely endangering the library upstairs (although the preserved books are fireproof).

Into Goatswood

The investigators visited this region once before, in search of Crispin's letters. This time, they enter the woods further to the north. The unnatural fecundity is especially strong here – the woods are positively Jurassic. Trees have swollen to ten times their normal size, the underbrush is so thick that machetes are needed to cut through it, and huge swarms of insects buzz amid the clammy mists. It is hard to shake the conviction that the investigators have entered some prehistoric realm – they feel like tiny animals slipping through the undergrowth in a land of dinosaurs.

As they push through the forest, the investigators come upon carved stones and the remains of structures poking out of the black, life-rich loam. They also find decayed bones and other grave goods spilling out of the soil, in concentrations

that suggest that thousands of people were buried here over the centuries.

- **Archaeology:** These are the remains of some ancient settlement – or perhaps a temple. Picking through the artefacts, you realise there are whole strata of archaeology here. That stonework over there, for example, is clearly Roman, but that squat fertility figurine resembles those Venus figures found in prehistoric caves in France, and those clay pots you'd guess as Bronze age. There's continuity right through to the present day – Victorian coins and discarded tin cans suggest there were people here recently.
- **Forensics:** Examining the bones, you find telltale scrapes and breakages suggesting violent deaths. Decay suggests that the bones range in age from only a few weeks to... well, this boggy forest floor could preserve human remains for centuries. The sheer quantity means some subterranean mass grave has vomited up its contents.
- **Geology:** It's uncanny, but you think that this whole region is undergoing a massive shift. The ground beneath you is rising up incredibly quickly, geologically speaking. These ruins and bones were somehow pushed up by something coming up from below. It doesn't seem to be volcanic in origin – there's no shaking of the earth, no steam, or anything like that. It is as though something was burrowing up from below.
- **Outdoorsman:** Tracks – recent tracks – go through this area. A single, heavy-set man moving at a steady pace. They're fresh.

The Yithian

Sitting in a clearing strewn with ancient bones and gap-toothed ruins, the



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investigators come upon Edward Grundig. The gardener sits on the trunk of a fallen tree, and is clearly waiting for them to arrive. He has a rope and other climbing gear slung over his shoulder. His eyes glimmer with an alien intelligence, which the investigators recognise as a sign of possession by the Great Race of Yith.

Grundig knows who the player characters are. If any of the investigators are especially suspicious of him, then he produces a letter from a Yithian-abducted **Source of Stability** as a means of introduction. The letter asks the investigator to trust Grundig - in his own way, he too is a brave investigator, and needs the player characters' help.

- **Cryptography:** This letter was written before the final letters discovered earlier in the Yithian vaults.

In millennia to come, the best minds of the Yithians will leap from the bodies they inhabit in the distant past to other forms - to the coleopteran species destined to conquer Earth long after the extinction of humanity. The fate of humanity is of little interest to the Great Race, except as a scientific curiosity. Their own security, though, is a matter of paramount concern. They must ensure that the destiny of the insect race remains intact.

- **Assess Honesty:** It's hard to read Grundig - the alien mind inhabiting his body does not act as like a human - but you think he's broadly telling the truth.

The granite city visited by the investigators was - among other things - a monitoring station, established to keep watch on a slumbering entity that dwelt deep within the Earth. The Creatures serve or worship this entity. Now, that entity is rising, which concerns the Yithians. Grundig's task is to retrieve the records from the Yithian monitoring devices located nearby.

What about our bomb?

If the investigators have the atomic bomb with them, then Grundig expresses misgivings about using it. The bomb's detonation may be responsible for the discrepancy between the Yithians' calculations and what is actually going on. However, the decision is ultimately up to the investigators - the Yithians' chief concern now is ensuring that their own future remains intact.

(If one of the investigators is contaminated, then Grundig can explain the changes, and recommends to the other investigators that they kill their friend "from a safe distance" before the transformation is complete.)

The Airfield

Grundig leads the investigators through the forest to the top of a hill. From here, through a gap in the trees, the investigators can see a gash in the forest, a cleared area containing a strip of concrete and a few weathered prefabricated buildings. Parked on the runway is a De Havilland Dragon aircraft. From this distance, the investigators cannot tell if it is intact and functional. Grundig says that there is an entrance to the underworld close to the airfield.

Exploring the airfield, the investigators discover the following clues.

1. The airfield is intact, but abandoned.
 - **Architecture:** Prefabricated buildings, tin huts - this is a military base. There's no sign of anyone alive here.
 - **Evidence Collection:** You quickly search the barracks and tower, and find no-one alive here. This place is undamaged but abandoned.
 - **Forensics:** You find some decayed remains. It appears that the staff of this airbase were all killed by the Flowers years ago. The base seems to have gone undisturbed ever since.

- **Bureaucracy:** In a drawer upstairs you find a sheaf of papers. This airbase was established by the Ministry of Supply as part of a network of refueling stations for cargo planes. You even find a docket mentioning the *Lysenko*, the cargo ship that landed at Dover. Apparently, the Ministry intended to transport those seeds via the air at some point.

2. **(Core Clue)** The airplane from Fort Halstead landed here. The airplane is still working, and can easily be made ready to fly. With luck and a good tailwind, it has the range to reach the United States.

- **Mechanical Repair or Piloting:** The airplane is nearly ready to fly, and there are drums of fuel nearby to fill its external fuel tanks. Everything seems to be in order.

- **Botany:** You minutely examine the machinery of the airplane's engine. Most complex machines were clogged and destroyed by the seeds, but this plane is free of such problems. It's ready to fly.

- **Navigation:** On the plane, you find maps and charts, including a course plotted across the Atlantic to the United States. Apparently, the pilot planned to travel to the United States.

3. The pilot went underground.

- **Evidence Collection:** You find a few scribbled notes stashed inside the airplane. A storm forced the pilot to land for several days to repair his airplane. He reports seeing 'strange, mad people' and 'walking trees' at night. It is clear that he loses his grip on sanity over time. He describes how he kept dreaming of a cave. The last entry notes that he is 'going for a walk in the woods.'

- **Intuition:** In the back of the plane, you find the pilot's bed. There's a rope tied around it, suggesting that he was tying himself down at night, like



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a madman who suffers from night terrors. Scratched into the paint near the bed are crude drawing of trees and what appears to be a cave.



- **Photography:** The airplane is equipped with a powerful aerial camera. Developing the last photos, you see that there are many caves beneath the forest. There is an entrance nearby, and the aircraft circled it several times as if the pilot was unwilling to fly away from it. You suddenly wonder if the pilot went to that cave.


Into the Pit

The investigators plunge deeper into the forest. The trees here are black, leafless and thickly intertwined. Their rubbery branches form an almost impenetrable canopy overhead, so the investigators must use torches to light their way through the shadowed region. They pass more chunks of carved stone and cryptic ruined structures. Bones crunch underfoot.




They come to a cave entrance. The cave slopes steeply downwards, and the cave floor is slick with greenish slime. A short distance in, they come to a dizzyingly deep shaft, a cyclopean well that plunges straight down for miles. The beams from their torches can only barely reach the far side of the well, and come nowhere near reaching the bottom. They make out more tunnels entering the well from other directions, suggesting that all the tunnels under Goatswood meet here.

If the Flowers are the Creatures:

-  Then the 'lid' of the well is a silvery glass-like object, hundreds of feet across and shaped like a huge lens or eye. Strange beams of light like moonlight shine from this lens, plunging into the depths as if signaling or calling to something far below.
-  The walls of the well are covered in a furze of white Flowers. Their clacking echoes around the well.

-  The investigators can hear huge things moving through the other tunnels parallel to the one they are in. They sometimes glimpse black tentacles writhing in the tunnel mouths.

If the Deep Ones are the Creatures:

-  Then the well is mostly flooded with foul-smelling dark water.
-  Water cascades down the walls of the well, pouring out of some of the other tunnels.
-  The investigators can see humanoid shapes moving in and out of the water far below. It is impossible to tell at this distance if they are human or something else.

Should the investigators choose to flee any point, run *The Mother of All Horrors*.

Grundig's Mission

Grundig attaches his rope to a convenient rock and tells the investigators to wait while he retrieves the Yithian records. He rappels down the rock face, heading for another tunnel entrance about fifty feet further down the well, then vanishes into the darkness, leaving the investigators alone. (If an investigator is foolhardy enough to accompany Grundig, then have the Mother rise before they get to the Yithian 'monitoring machines'.)

From far below, the investigators sense something rising up the well, faster and faster, like an onrushing freight train. The Mother is rising, and She calls her slaves to attend her. The investigators spot movement in other tunnels.

- A crowd of people arrive at the mouth of one tunnel. They pause for a moment, then start jumping down the well, plummeting into the depths. The fall is undoubtedly lethal, but they keep jumping.
- Something slimy and many-eyed slithers out of a nearby tunnel and crawls along the wall of the well. It's approaching the investigator's

tunnel. It looks like a ghastly iridescent slug, but those eyes are eerily human – and must be the size of footballs to be visible at this distance.

- The investigators hear movement in their own tunnel, from behind them. It could be someone on the surface, or it could be some horrible monster that is now between them and their only route of escape.

All this is worth a 5-point Stability test.

After an agonizingly long wait, Grundig emerges from the lower tunnel carrying a notebook. He starts to climb back up, but is interrupted by the rising of the Mother. He throws the notebook to the investigators before one of the Mother's outstretched limbs snatches him and dashes him against the rock wall, killing him instantly.

The Mother of all Horrors

The Mother is the source and the wellspring of the Creatures. They are born from her, and worship her. Depending on the Creatures, she may take one of two equally ghastly forms.



She is Shub-Niggurath, the Black Goat of the Woods. The Flowers are her adopted Young – they were created by humans, but as their vegetable consciousness grew, they came to worship the primordial source of growth and reproduction, and called the Mother out of the Depths.

Shub-Niggurath does not rise – she *manifests*. The Moon-Lens in the roof of the well flares into life, flooding the chamber with an alien light, and that light precipitates Her out of the ether. Suddenly, She is there, Her numinous tentacles and hooves congealing into being. Her hide reflects the moonlight, so She shines darkly. For a moment, She looks like a gigantic Flower, fed on the rich humus of all those human sacrifices and pregnant with a trillion trillion seeds.



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Dropping the Bomb

Should the investigators succeed in bringing the atomic bomb from Fort Halstead to the well, they can detonate it when the Mother arrives. There is not enough time for all the investigators to escape the blast radius – some will have to stay behind to set off the bomb while the others escape in the plane.

Alternatively, if one of the investigators is contaminated, killing him in this confined space channels the blast right into the maw of the Mother.

The nuclear explosion is powerful enough to collapse the well and the warren of tunnels under Goatswood. Even if the Mother is not destroyed by the blast, She is certainly buried and all her worshippers destroyed. The investigators have inflicted a mortal blow on the Creatures, although at the cost of loosing Azathoth upon the world.



The Mother is Hydra, the consort of Dagon. Dive into the coldest reaches of the ocean, into the lightless depths, and there are yet deeper shafts that lead into subterranean seas undreamt-of by humanity. One such ocean lies directly beneath England. The well plunges down for miles to empty out into this nameless ocean, and it is from those stygian depths that She arises.

Hydra resembles a titanic Deep One. She dwells not only in the deepest oceans, but in the reptilian hindbrain. She is the primordial mating instinct, the first female. The waters are the source of life, and She is the mother of that life. It is through Her that humanity and Deep



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One can interbreed; the hybrids are Her special children. Those who look upon her are seized by the desire to offer themselves to the Deep Ones.

Seeing the Mother in either form is worth an 8-point Stability test, with a +3 Sanity point loss, and minimum losses of 2 Stability and 2 Sanity.

Fleeing the Mother

If the investigators do not flee, they will perish. However, they are subject to the Tugging – the same instinctive drive that brought all the other slaves of the Mother also holds them in thrall.

They may wish to turn and run, but cannot. Every instinct screams at them to throw themselves into the well and join in the orgiastic oblivion of the Mother.

So, why do they run? Each investigator must state why they want to live. They may choose to invoke a Drive, or a Source of Stability, or a Pillar of Sanity. What do they have left to believe in? Those who find a reason to live may flee up the tunnel. Optionally, if there are lots of surviving investigators, call for a **Fleeing** contest and have the Mother devour the hindmost.

The Aeroplane

The investigators' only remaining route of escape is on the waiting aircraft. Piling onto the aircraft, they accelerate down the makeshift runway as the concrete cracks and buckles. They take off in the nick of time as the Mother emerges from below. England is hers now, lost to the Creatures forever.

- **Navigation (Core Clue):** Judging by rumours and reports, all of Europe is equally ruined. The only hope is to head west, across the Atlantic, and seek safety in America.



The New World

The investigators' aerial flight marks the end of this phase of the *Cthulhu Apocalypse* campaign. The world the investigators knew is gone. What awaits them in America?

Unlike England, no single catastrophe may be big enough to wipe out the whole of the United States. The investigators may face a range of horrors. *The Apocalypse Machine* sourcebook provides mechanisms for exploring different catastrophes,

and its ghastly fates may be visited on different parts of the new world.

Grundig's notebook could be translated with **Cryptography** and **Cthulhu Mythos**. The curvilinear glyphs used are the same as the ones the investigators saw in the alien vaults under Brichester. Perhaps the Yithians hinted at a way to change time and avert the apocalypse, or maybe the investigators can escape the horrors of the present and join

their loved ones in rugose, conical bodies millions of years ago.

Alternatively, you can conclude the campaign here. The investigators are the last humans alive; that little aircraft is all that remains of human civilization. It doesn't have the range to cross the Atlantic – the only consolation is that the investigators get to die like humans, plummeting into the icy oblivion of the ocean instead of an unnatural death on the Mythos-tainted land.





In Requiem

A haunting song echoes through the streets of a dying city. Shapes move beneath a limpid lake. Who mourns for the death of humanity?

For further guidance, see the Floods/Monsters Disaster section from *The Apocalypse Machine*.

The Hook

The investigators are ambushed by monsters, but just before they are torn apart, the monsters hear a song and flee. What drove them away?

The Question

Who is singing the song?

The Horrible Truth

The singer is a young woman, Susie Goodheart. The survivors in Minneapolis keep her in a gilded cage, as only her song keeps the monsters from the lake at bay.

The Spine

Minneapolis was a city of lakes before the Apocalypse. Then, a storm blew down from the north, and it rained for months. Today, the city is half-submerged; the city centre rises like the spine of some drowned beasts from the stagnant, murky waters of this new great lake. Still, there are a few survivors in Minneapolis.

Some need – hunger, shelter, fuel, supplies, or some other errand – brings the investigators to the ruins of Minneapolis. As they wade through the flooded streets, they realise they are not alone – something stalks them. They see movement under the water, glimpse scaly backs and limbs, notice yellow eyes like glowing lamps staring at them. The creatures herd the investigators towards deeper water, so the investigators

find themselves swimming instead of wading. One investigator, then another and another gets dragged underwater and savaged by fangs.

Suddenly, the investigators hear beautiful singing in some unknown tongue. The creatures sink back into the depths and vanish.

- **Languages:** That was a human voice, but it wasn't any human language.
- **Architecture:** It came from that bank over there.

The Bank

Investigating the bank, the investigators meet **Nicholas Andrews**, one of the leaders of the local community. He was a practicing psychologist, so he was forewarned of the coming Apocalypse. If only he had read the signs, he might have correlated all the patients complaining of strange dreams with the other weird portents, but he foolishly assumed that all the tales of monsters were just the products of diseased minds. Now, too late, he knows better, and is more determined than ever to protect the few survivors left in Minneapolis.

Andrews cautions the investigators not to stay in Minneapolis. The town does not welcome outsiders. Once the flood waters recede a little and the road is somewhat passable, they can be on their way.

- **Intuition:** Andrews is blustering to hide his worries. He wants the investigators to stay away from Susie.
- **Streetwise:** While most of Minneapolis is a soggy ruin, this area is moderately secure; no wonder the locals have stayed here,

despite the threat of those things from the lake.

- **Strategy:** The bank is guarded. In addition to Andrews, there are two armed men at the front door and another on the roof.

The singer is **Susie Goodheart**, a singer who worked at a local jazz club before the Apocalypse. She is a slim, dark-eyed young woman with a curious cast to her features. She has a curious gold talisman hanging from a necklace.

Andrews explains that nearly a hundred survivors cluster into the buildings surrounding the bank. The city was overrun in the early days of the Apocalypse, but Susie's singing keeps the monsters away. No-one knows why her song has power over the creatures.

- **Oral History:** Susie tells the characters that she was a foundling, an orphan. She was found as a baby on the edge of White Bear Lake, and raised in an orphanage. She does not know where she came from.
- **Art History:** That necklace – it's unlike anything the investigator has seen before. It looks almost like the skeleton of some sea creature, only transmuted into gold. Susie claims that the necklace was around her neck when she was found.
- **Reassurance:** Casting a wary glance at Andrews, Susie asks the investigators to help her. Her friend **Cornelius Rix** is missing. He'd gone back to the jazz club where they both worked before the Apocalypse. Andrews says there's been no sign of him, but... could the investigators look for him?



In Requiem

- Spending points of **Oral History** or **Reassurance** gets some background details; Rix was a drummer in a jazz band; he and Susie were lovers, but when the Apocalypse came and she discovered the strange powers of her voice, she felt she had to stay until the locals abandoned Minneapolis. She and Rix planned to flee north; she's heard there's safety there.

If the investigators agree to help, call for **Sense Trouble** rolls (Difficulty 5); those who succeed realise that the locals are watching them. Going in search of Cornelius Rix means meddling in something that the locals want to keep quiet.

The Jazz Club

Reaching the jazz club safely is tricky. Susie's voice can keep the creatures off the streets, but if she sings for the investigators, the locals realise that the investigators are looking for Rix and try to stop them. If they don't ask Susie to sing, then they need to sneak past the creatures in the water.

The jazz club was in a basement, and is now underwater.

- **Evidence Collection:** There's a discarded bullet casing near the door.

As the characters search the flooded basement, they sense movement in the water. One of the creatures is in there with them, slithering through the dark muck. This creature does not attack; instead, it swims over to one corner, where the water begins to churn. It dredges up a rotten corpse and deposits it on the little stage where Susie once sang.

- **Evidence Collection:** Clutched in the corpse's hand is a diamond engagement ring.
- **Forensics:** Rix was shot several times in the back and legs. From the state of the corpse, you'd guess he was trapped down in the basement for several hours, maybe even days, before he died of blood loss and dehydration.
- **Intuition:** Rix wanted to marry Susie and take her away from

Minneapolis, but without Susie, the creatures would overwhelm the little pocket of survivors. The locals killed Rix to keep Susie in their thrall.

No Fury

Revealing the truth to Susie drives her mad with grief. She thought she was a heroine for protecting the settlement; now, she realizes they were just using her. A strange fey mood floods through her. She stands, her joints unfolding in a way no human should move. She raises her voice and sings a different song, and as she does, she begins to *change*.

- **Cthulhu Mythos:** Susie's a hybrid of a human and one of those lake creatures – and now she's embracing her inhuman side. *Run*.

The waters rise, and the creatures rise with them, drawn by their sister's song. Unless the investigators flee immediately, they'll be devoured or drowned along with the rest of the survivors.



Beasts of Men

Lost in a strange new world, the characters find signs of civilization and safety near the ruins of Lexington. The Apocalypse has driven everyone insane – but what is the price of retaining one’s humanity in the face of cosmic truth?

For further guidance, see the Barbarism/ Monsters Disaster section from *The Apocalypse Machine*.

The Hook

Some of the characters are captured by degenerate horse-riding barbarians.

The Question

What do the barbarians want with their captives?

The Horrible Truth

Both the academics of the university and the survivors of the ruined city have reached their own accommodation with the Mythos, and both groups have sacrificed their humanity. The barbarians possess a drug that reduces their intelligence, making them blissfully ignorant of the implications of the Mythos. The academics have, rationally and logically, become worshippers of Yog-Sothoth and conduct ghastly rites in his honour.

The Spine

The characters learn of a safe place near Lexington. They might pick up a radio transmission, or meet some other survivor, or some across a message scrawled on a wall, but they all promise the same thing – safety and protection from the horrors that stalk the United States.

The refuge is in the remains of Transylvania University, a small college outside Lexington. A small

forest surrounds the university. As the characters approach the trees, they spot a number of riders on horseback approaching. These riders are human, but are dressed in rags and tattered furs like some Dark Age raiders, instead of men from 1939. The riders charge towards the characters, and try to capture them with nets. Ideally, at least half the investigators are captured by the riders, while the rest manage to flee into the safety of the trees.

Run scenes with one group of characters, then the other, until the investigators are reunited.

Those who escaped the riders meet another survivor in the forest – **Sir Hugo Deepings**, an English aristocrat. Sir Hugo came to Lexington with his friend Donald Herring to buy racehorses. They were accompanied by Herring’s valet, **Henry Slingsby**. Poor Donald was murdered early several years ago, but Sir Hugo and Slingsby managed to survive. They too heard there was a sanctuary at the university, and were on their way there when Slingsby was captured by those barbarous brutes. Sir Hugo isn’t sure whether to press on to the university or to try to rescue Slingsby.

- **Strategy** (if using *Cthulhu Apocalypse*) or **Outdoorsman**: Going after the captives will be risky – the barbarians seemed well-armed and dangerous. Maybe the characters can find help at the university?
- **Assess Honesty**: Sir Hugo’s hiding something about Herring’s death. It wasn’t murder – it was something much more horrific.

The barbarians drag the captured investigators through the streets of ruined Lexington. Bones and corpses litter the streets; some places have melted in some weird way – it is as though the buildings themselves are intact, but *space* has become warped and degraded in those zones, so the laws of geometry no longer hold true. The barbarians treat their captives roughly but not cruelly; they are restrained by not hurt.

- Examining the barbarians with **Anthropology** suggests they are driven by base impulses, and are little more than animals. They communicate through grunts and gestures, they have little in the way of social order, and have no ability to make plans. They are like a stone age tribe, scavenging in the ruins of a greater civilization.
- **Pharmacy** notes that the lips of the barbarians are stained with something bluish-green. They all carry bottles and flasks with them – could they be addicted to some narcotic?

The investigators find the university to be eerily calm, although there are curious alien structures dotted around the campus. There are around fifty people living here, mostly former students and academics. Their leader is **Martin Bollivar**, a historian. The academics elected him their leader in acknowledgement of his work in translating certain stone carvings discovered in the Amazon basin. He welcomes the investigators, and is sympathetic to their requests for help, but the security of the refuge cannot be risked for a hopeless rescue mission. He will, he says, consider it.



Beasts of Men

- **Anthropology:** The people of the refuge sometimes slip into a sort of fugue state, in which they speak some alien language and behave as if controlled by some alien intelligence.

At the barbarian camp, the prisoners meet the bedraggled **Henry Slingsby**. The former valet lies huddled in the corner of the cellar. **Reassurance** gets him to talk.

Slingsby describes how he and his employer, Richard Herring, encountered a horror in the woods. They were within sight of the university, when this unholy bubbling mass of luminescent spheres descended from the stars. Herring was... not killed... transfigured, remade, contorting through time and space, and Slingsby saw... Oh God, do not make him remember!

Afterwards, the thing returned to the university. Slingsby fled and was captured by the barbarians. He wishes he could forget. He would give anything to forget.

The next morning, Bollivar returns to the investigators. He has considered their request, and is willing to help. In exchange, the investigators must submit to the rite that protects the university.

After the Apocalypse, Bollivar explains, the doors at the Earth's poles opened, and certain things from Outside could come in. He contacted one such entity through his translations. The rite opens the third eye and invites the alien god into the recipient's soul. Bollivar and all the other people here are *part* of the god, subordinate to its divine will. The god does not merely control them when it wishes - it *is* them, their higher consciousness. Union with the god is a terrible bliss, as it reveals the true nature of existence.

Sir Hugo agrees to undergo the rite - he doesn't believe all this nonsense about gods and magic, but the university is an island of safety compared to the things out there. Bollivar shows him into a small room, and a moment later, the investigators hear the sound of a gunshot. Hugo shot himself. Bollivar sighs; Sir Hugo's human weakness prevented him from accepting the god.

No matter - which of the investigators is next?

Should all the investigators refuse, then Bollivar and all the other worshippers of the god freeze in place and start chanting. The sky above the university begins to boil... The barbarian chieftain - a towering brute of a man - enters the cellar. He carries a tin stewpot, filled with a foul-smelling blue liquid. He

gestures to it and calls it *soma*. With a great effort of will, he remembers a few words of human language. "Drink", he says, "drink and forget".

- **Pharmacy:** This is definitely a drug that affects the higher functions of the brain. These people have chemically lobotomized themselves.

The chieftain does not force anyone to drink the *soma*. Slingsby takes the drug willingly - better to become an animal than to remember the thing he saw in the forest. Characters who join him in oblivion become non-player characters, join the tribe, and live out their days in simple idiocy, the burden of caring or worrying or remembering lifted from them.

Those who refuse the drug may leave, and should do so quickly. While the barbarians instinctively offer the gift of oblivion to strangers, they may decide that the investigators who refuse are animals to be hunted and eaten instead.

- **Flattery or Bargain:** With an appropriate spend, the investigator convinces the chieftain to help rescue the other investigators from the university before Yog-Sothoth arrives to devour them.





Cold Feet

Exploring the frozen remains of Calgary, the investigators learn of the last days of that doomed city. Will the same fate befall them?

For further guidance, see the Cold Disaster section from *The Apocalypse Machine*.

The Hook

The city of Calgary survived the Apocalypse better than anywhere else the investigators have visited, but is completely abandoned.

The Question

Where did everyone go?

The Horrible Truth

The god-thing Ithaqua dwells atop an impossible mountain nearby. He carried off the inhabitants of the city, and will carry off the investigators if they linger too long.

The Spine

Rumours (through **Oral History**, **Streetwise** or **Bargain**) claim that the

city of Calgary in Canada survived the Apocalypse wholly intact. It's a place of safety – or at least, an excellent place to scavenge for supplies.

As the characters approach Calgary from the east, they are struck by the mountain range that looms over the city. Calgary lies on the shoulder of the Canadian Rockies, but the mountains behind the city now are much, much taller than they once were. Thick whitish mists surround the snow-laden peaks.





Cold Feet

- **Geology:** Those mountains cannot be a natural phenomenon. The smallest of them makes Everest look like a hillock.

Exploring the City

The city certainly seems intact, although there are several feet of snow on every surface.

- **Streetwise:** Other scavengers have been here before, but the place seems deserted now. There is still plenty to salvage.
- **Library Use:** The *Calgary Herald* continued for two years after the Apocalypse. The early issues are a litany of horrors, mixed with quiet relief that none of the disasters reached Alberta. The province was spared the blight of the Flowers, the rising tide of the oceans, and the weird effects of the experimental atomic bombs detonated on the eastern seaboard. No horrific creatures slithered out of the dark places of the earth to inhabit the ruins.
- The newspaper records stop abruptly fourteen months ago.
 - 1-point **Library Use** spend: Weirdly, there is no mention whatsoever of the new mountain range that sprang up in the north-west.
 - **Occult:** The investigator discovers a diary written by another refugee from Europe. The nameless narrator was a native of Helsinki. The cold weather slowed the growth of the Flowers, sparing most of the population from that horrible fate. The survivors huddled together in the city as the world outside grew strange and horrible. Then, one night, the skies blazed with an aurora of incredible intensity and nameless colours. The next day,

everyone (except, apparently, the narrator) went mad and started worshipping ‘The One From Beyond’ and talking about ghost cities at Earth’s poles where the gods dwelt. The diarist fled Helsinki in a stolen yacht before this spontaneous cult could catch him.

There is something strange about the snow in the city. It clings and clumps strangely.

- **Physics:** The snow sometimes behaves as though the temperature was changing. It flows as though it were slush, then compresses down to rock-hard ice.

The Scavengers

The investigators are not the only people exploring the city. They encounter a part of survivors, a former explorer and guide named Hank Davis and his friend, a Native American named Punk. Davis explains that he and Punk live out in the wilderness, far from the shadow of ‘them cursed mountains’, but they needed supplies like whiskey and ammunition from Calgary, so they came here. Davis suggests that the two groups work together.

- Scavenging is easy in Calgary; all difficulties to find items are reduced by 2.
- **Assess Honesty:** The pair seem oddly gleeful to meet other scavengers in Calgary. They cast avaricious glances at the investigators’ equipment.
- **Streetwise:** Hank keeps asking questions about the investigator’s supplies.
- **Craft:** Both of them are dressed in tattered clothes – but their boots are new.
- **Sense Trouble:** Something about the pair worries the investigator. They’re dangerous men.

The Field of Snow

Punk leads the characters to a wide, open area – a snow-cloaked park – to show them ‘the drawings’. Indeed, someone has incised curious lines into the smooth blanket of snow.

- **Occult:** These lines remind the investigator of the Nazca lines of Peru.
- **Navigation:** These lines are designed to be seen from above, like landing lights at an airport. They would be clearly visible from the mountains.
- **Streetwise:** There’s something very out of place, here – over by that wall, there, are some long poles with hooks on the end. What are those for?

Punk urges the characters to examine the lines more closely; if they refuse, he tries to push them into the snow.

If anyone steps onto the snow, it freezes around their feet, trapping them in place. Breaking free is almost impossible; it requires a successful **Athletics** test against Difficulty 15. Failing the test costs 1d6 points of Health. Cutting away or melting the snow (perhaps using **Craft** or **Preparedness**) can reduce the Difficulty, as can help from another investigator – but anyone who steps into the part also risks being frozen in place.

- **Evidence Collection:** Clearing away the snow leads to a horrific discovery – a pair of frozen feet. Something tore the rest of the body away, leaving the feet locked in place in the snow. Everywhere the investigators brush away the snow, they find feet and more feet. Adult feet, child feet, feet in boots, feet in shoes, bare feet, black feet, white feet – all frozen solid.



Cold Feet

The investigators hear a howling wind descend from the mountains to the west. The Windwalker is coming.

The Coming of Ithaqua

Punk and Davis retreat as soon as they hear the howling wind. They intend for Ithaqua to kill the investigators; they will then scavenge the investigator's supplies, using the long-handled hooks

to retrieve any items from the snowy field. They encountered the Windwalker themselves, long ago, and have no desire to repeat the encounter, only to make offerings to it.

Give the investigators a few minutes to try to escape before the Windwalker arrives. If they can come up with a cunning plan to break the ice-hard snow

(or, failing that, if they wish to cut off their own feet with a bone saw and crawl to safety), they may survive. Otherwise, the investigators lucky enough to avoid the snow-field may flee before the god flies down and carries away their friends – ripping their legs from their ankle joints and leaving the frozen feet behind as a grisly memento.





The Elder Patmos



This scenario is an optional coda to the *Cthulhu Apocalypse* campaign. It offers the investigators a chance to avert the Apocalypse, to unwrite their own histories and save the world – or, at least, exchange one catastrophe for another.

The Hook

The investigators are abducted by the Great Race of Yith.

The Question

Can the investigators travel back in time and stop the Flowers from spreading?

The Horrible Truth

Humanity's fate is sealed. One Apocalypse or another is inevitable.

The Spine

The investigators are drawn back in time by the Great Race of Yith, who wish to recover the information found in Grundig's notebook. They find themselves in new bodies hundreds of millions of years ago. The Yithians can be persuaded to return the characters to November of 1936, just before the *Lysenko* crashed in Dover and released the seeds. From there, the investigators must rush to Dover and stop the seeds from being released.

Prisoners of the Great Race

The investigators fall asleep, or die, or otherwise lose consciousness. When they wake up, they are not where they were. All the investigators have the same sensations – they cannot move, and cannot feel their legs. Their fingers are numb. Their stomachs churn. All of them have some clamp attached to the back of their heads, so they cannot look around; all they can do is look at a blank stone wall.

A voice – electronically distorted, but familiar to one or more of the investigators – comes from somewhere behind them. It's the voice of the Source of Stability who was abducted by the Yithians back in *Letters from Ghosts* (see *The Dead White World*). The Source urges that investigator to remain calm, and insists that he is safe here, that there is nothing to worry about any more – but that the investigator must be ready for some surprising changes. These changes were necessary to bring the investigator to this place of safety. “*Are you ready? I'm going to remove the clamp now.*”

The investigator hears a slimy, slithering noise, like the sound a slug makes only much, much louder. Then the clamp holding his head – or, more accurately, his eye-stalk is removed, and the investigator can look around. He is in a stone chamber with several cone-shaped beings. Several of the cones (one per other investigator, obviously) are clamped in place. Another one of the cone-things stands next to the investigator, clawed-tentacles wide in a gesture of welcome. From a machine strapped to its alien form, the thing produces a familiar voice.

“*Welcome. I'm so glad you could join us. Our hosts will want to talk to you.*”

- If an investigator was abducted during *Letters from Ghosts*, he suddenly remembers his entire experience here in the distant past. He spent many years here, learning to use his new body. The Yithians made him record all his impressions and experiences of the Apocalypse.

Guests of the Yithians

Once all the investigators have had a chance to speak with their lost Sources

of Stability, and have learned the basic motor functions of their new conical bodies, they are led through an arch to another, larger chamber lit by glowing globes. There, surrounded by machines composed of rods and glassy tubes, is another Yithian. This elder specimen is clearly possessed by its original mind – it moves with a cruel certainty and grace that the human-inhabited Yithian bodies can never achieve. It gestures towards a nearby pedestal, where the investigators see a huge book with metallic-foil pages and some sort of writing implement.

The Yithians normally communicate through clicking and claw-gestures, but this one also has a mechanical device for producing human speech. “*Which of you saw the readings from the observation device in the Pit?*” it demands, referring to Grundig's notebook. The Elder Yithian is capable of telepathy, so trying to deceive it is futile.

Once one of the investigators volunteers, the Yithian uses a form of mechanical hypnosis generated by one of its machines. This gives the investigator perfect recall, allowing him to precisely transcribe Grundig's notes. The Yithian then dismisses the investigators.

Their Sources of Stability lead them to a garden terrace overlooking the weird city of the Great Race. Jungles of titanic ferns grow under the hot sun of three hundred million years ago. Strange cyclopean buildings with barred windows loom out of the jungle. In the distance, the characters can see even taller towers, but these ones are made of basalt. None of the windows face in that direction, and the Sources of Stability explain that the Yithians do not like to think about those towers.



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After several days – the Yithian bodies do not require sleep, and there is an ample supply of the vegetable slurry they consume for nourishment – the characters are escorted back to the central chamber and the Elder Yithian.

The Choice

“Many millennia after your time,” explains the Elder, “we shall transfer our minds forward *en masse*, to inhabit the insect race that inherits the Earth after humanity’s demise. That is certain. It must happen. However, the... interregnum in which your species evolved and died is more fluid. Time can be altered. We iterate through your endings, searching for the one that best suits our purposes.”

It gestures to the book. “We have analysed this information. It is

permissible to return you to a time before your civilization was destroyed, if you wish. But there is a cost.”

- The Yithians can send the characters back to before the train crash that began this weird adventure, back to November of 1936.
- However, as the minds of the Sources of Stability come from *after* that point, they will not be part of the changed timeline. They will be erased – as will any investigators who remain behind. In the new timeline, these minds will not exist. Their bodies will be present, but left empty.
- Even if the investigators manage to stop the release of the Flowers, that does not guarantee the survival

of humanity. The Apocalypse will occur in some other form, but the time of that Armageddon cannot be known in advance. The world might end in 1937 instead of 1936, or it might continue for thousands more centuries before humanity finally goes extinct.

The investigators must decide whether or not to take this offer. The Sources of Stability may counsel them one way or another, depending on their personalities. They have all lived in the Yithian city for many, many years, and are comfortable and happy here. If the investigators do return to 1936, they condemn their friends and relatives to non-existence. Is averting the Apocalypse worth this sacrifice?



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Alternatively, the investigators are welcome to remain with the Yithians. They will be treated as honoured guests, as long as they are willing to relive and transcribe their experiences over and over again. The Yithians wish to know as much as they can about the human experience of Apocalypse, in preparation for their own inevitable destruction when the Flying Polyps emerge from underground.

Choosing to remain in the Yithian city ends the campaign on a tranquil, resigned note. The investigators have escaped the horrors of the end times by fleeing to a primordial scientific Eden, ruled by hideous conical scholars.

The Journey

Assuming the investigators agree to the Yithian offer, the Yithians prepare the transfer machines. To avoid certain consequences that the Great Race are unwilling to discuss, there is only a small window in which the transfer can be made. The investigators will be returned to their original bodies on the 1st of November, 1936, giving them only a few hours to stop the wreck of the *Lysenko*.

For a third time, the investigators are brought to the chamber of the Elder Yithian. It does not address the investigators, but clacks a message to its subordinates in the curious claw-speech of the Great Race.

- **Languages:** It said “*and with strange aeons even death may die*”.

The machines activate, and the investigators’ minds flit through three hundred thousand millennia. For a moment, they are outside time, and can see the whole span of Earth’s history passing before them. *There* is when the Earth congealed and cooled; *there* is when the star-headed Elder Things filtered down from the sky, and left their footprints on archean rocks; *there*

is the birth of terrestrial life, billions of years of single-celled organisms that suddenly give rise to a brief riot of multi-cellular life. Hideous tentacled horrors led by a nightmarish priest descend upon our planet, reign for a time, then sink beneath the waves to slumber fitfully. Civilisations rise and fall. The Earth, from this perspective, is like some rotten fruit, gnawed by vile worms and infested with fungus and crawling things.

Then there is an eyeblink, a flash in which something moves fitfully over the face of the Earth. In comparison to the races that come before and after, the time of humanity is pathetically brief and limited; mankind never delves into the stygian depths of the world that the investigators can perceive from their extra-temporal perspective, nor do any of mankind’s works last for more than instant. Humanity’s existence lasts but an instant before it is blotted out by some amorphous, unnamable darkness. The Yithian time-machines send the investigators to the far end of that brief span...

And then the god-like perspective fades, the investigators rotate back to linear time, and find themselves in London.

The Wedding Party

It is the evening of the 1st of November, 1936. All the investigators are in London. In the original timeline, they took a train to Dover early the next morning, by which time the *Lysenko* had already crashed and released its deadly cargo. For the investigators to succeed, they must race to Victoria station to catch the last evening train to Dover.

Emphasise the crowded streets, the press of humanity, and the unutterable strangeness of the mundane. For the investigators who have spent years surviving in the chaos of the post-apocalyptic world, London is a shock worthy of an 4-point Stability test.

The train races through the gloomy November evening. Around the investigators, people talk of trivial things – the American election, the launch of the new television service, the terrible weather. Rain splatters against the windows as a storm blows in from the east. As the train approaches its destination, it rattles and bumps over a particularly sharp bend. Why, if the driver were asleep or dead, that could derail the train.

At five minutes to midnight, the train arrives in Dover.

The *Lysenko*

The Russian freighter *Lysenko* is docked at the port of Dover. She is moored at the end of one of the long wharves, alongside several other freighters. In the original timeline, a mysterious earthquake jolted the *Lysenko*, sending it smashing into the dock and breaking open her sealed cargo deck, releasing the Flowers. That earthquake will happen again soon.

The *Lysenko* is under the aegis of the Ministry of War. The sailors on board are armed.

The investigators may discern the following.

1. They need to move the *Lysenko* quickly.

Intuition: That ship carries the seeds. They need to get there immediately.

History: From what you recall, the *Lysenko* was – will be! – damaged sometime within the next few hours. You should get to her quickly.

Interrogation: When you interrogated the Russian – either tomorrow, or many years ago, depending on how you look at it – he said that the ship was damaged by a freak wave caused by an earthquake during the night. That might happen at any moment.



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Geology: You sense faint tremors in the earth, and the waves lap against the quays with added intensity. The quake is building.

2. The ship is guarded.

Locksmith: The fence blocking access to the jetty has a simple lock, but as you open it, you spot someone walking back and forth on the deck of the *Lysenko*.

Evidence Collection: As you watch the ship, you catch sight of a sudden glimmer of red light – someone’s standing on the stern of the ship, smoking.

Strategy: The Ministry of War brought the cargo of this ship from Russia. They’re obviously trying to keep it secret, but you also suspect it’s guarded.

3. There are several ways onto the ship.

Outdoorsman: Swimming in this cold night would be unwise, but there’s a little rowboat moored at the pier over there. You steal that, row over, and then climb up onto the *Lysenko*.

Bureaucracy: You met several Ministry men in the future, and recall some of their names and codewords. You convince the guards that you are inspectors from London, and bluff your way onto the ship.

Architecture: You spot a rusty ladder leading to the roof of a nearby warehouse. From there, you pick your way across the rooftops until you can climb down close to the ship.

Alternatively, the characters can just walk up to the guards and explain who they are and why they need to move the *Lysenko*. Mentioning the seeds in the cargo bay is enough for the guards to take the characters seriously and escort them at gunpoint to the captain.

Moving the Ship

Once the investigators are on the *Lysenko*, they need to move it away from Dover before the earthquake.

Covertly

If they can sneak past the guards (with a successful Stealth roll against Difficulty 5), then the investigators may make their way to the engine room and start the ship’s engines with **Mechanical Repair** or **Piloting**.

Seizing the Ship

The *Lysenko* has a skeleton crew of six, including the Russian (see *The Dead White World*, page 19) and the Captain. All are armed with handguns or rifles. The crew have Health scores of 4 and Firearms and Scuffling scores of 6, with the exception of the Captain and the Russian, who have scores of 10 in all three abilities. To seize the ship, the investigators need to sneak up on the guards or otherwise surprise them, then spend **Intimidation** to cow them.

Speaking to the Captain

The Captain of the *Lysenko* is an Englishman, although he lived in Russia for many years. He was a former agent of the Ministry who defected, and now hopes to buy his way back into the Crown’s good graces with the seeds. To convince him that they are not saboteurs or anarchists, the investigators need to use **Leadership** or **Intimidation**. The Captain felt the small earthquakes earlier, so suggesting that the ship is in danger if it remains at the pier convinces him to move.

Captured by the Guards

If the investigators surrender or are captured by the guards, they are marched to the captain. Spending **Reassurance** or **Flattery** convinces the captain to listen to them; from that point, they can work on getting the ship away from the jetty.

From Below

The *Lysenko* casts off from the Dover docks, wallowing in the water as her

engines struggle to pull the laden freighter away into deeper sea. The lights of Dover dwindle as she pulls out into the English channel.

Far below, in the lightless noisome depths of the sea, things stir. The hideous sea-creatures that the investigators glimpsed coming ashore in *The Dead White World* are on the marsh. The fall of their cyclopean hooves shakes the bedrock, causing the unnatural earth tremors felt on the surface. One of the creatures now approaches the *Lysenko* from below. It clambers up an underwater ridge and breaks through the waves a few hundred metres astern of the slow-moving freighter.

Call for Sense Trouble tests at Difficulty 4 (or the spend of a **Cthulhu Mythos** point) at this point. Those who succeed see a ghastly shape rising from the water behind the ship.

Ramming Speed

If the characters spot the monster and act in time, then they can turn the ship around (with a 2-point **Leadership** or **Navigation** spend) and turn the engines to full power, sending the *Lysenko* ploughing through the creature. Doing so damages the creature enough to send it back into the depths. The *Lysenko* takes the impact on her prow and keel – the two strongest parts of the ship. The crash rattles everyone on board, and cripples the ship forever, but the cargo hold is mercifully undamaged.

Stopping the Seeds

If the characters do not act in time, or do not see the monster rising, then the creature’s rugose hide brushes against the *Lysenko*’s hull. The ship lurches; metal tears and buckles, and the characters hear the cargo containers breaking free of their restraints and rolling across the hold. The seeds are loose, but have not yet germinated. As soon as the water sloshing in through the damaged hull touches them, though, the seeds will germinate and spread, and soon the



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Flowers will consume all of England again.

Sinking the ship at this point is no good, as the seeds must be kept out of the water at all costs. **Intuition** or **Strategy** points to only one solution – fire. The *Lysenko* must burn. **Explosives** or **Mechanical Repair** can turn the ship's diesel fuel tanks into an effective bomb. Give the investigators a choice – if one of them

remains behind to ensure everything works correctly, there is no chance of the seeds escaping the explosion. If they all flee in lifeboats before the blast, then it is likely but not certain that all the seeds are burnt before they can spread.

Aftermath

The Great Race iterates through apocalypses. The Elder Yithian hinted to the investigators that even if they

stopped the seeds from spreading, some other doom would one day overtake mankind. The investigators have seen too much to ever sleep soundly again. Everything is tainted, made abhorrent by the knowledge that it will all inevitably be destroyed.

Apocalypse, after all, is the revelation of hidden truths, and the investigators can never escape this knowledge.



Handout 1

An insect just nested inside your head. You can feel it scabbling through your brain, its claws picking through the folds of your grey matter, its feather wings brushing lightly against the inside of your skull. As it merges with you, alien memories flood your mind.

- The creature is called a Shan. It and the rest of its swarm came to Earth long ago in their temple-ship, folding space in a way you cannot comprehend.
- Some element in Earth's atmosphere trapped them here. Their ship can no longer teleport.
- The Shan planned to wait until they found a way to correct this problem, but can no longer afford to do so. This world is doomed. They have to leave soon.
- The humans were already on the path to completing the holy rite that summons the god Azathoth - you cannot hold the Shan equation-name for Him in your primitive mind. The Shan assisted them, pushed them onwards.
- There is a problem. The same element that stops teleportation also interferes with the Shan ritual. Only a human can solve this problem. It is an Earth-problem, so only an Earth-brain can work on it.
- Once this problem is solved, the ritual (or the bomb, from your limited perspective) will be ready. Then the Shan can leave.
- The Shan control the military project codenamed TUBE ALLOYS. Many of the scientists there, including Rutherford, have Shan in their brains. These scientists cannot solve the problem.
- Another scientist, Holsten, left the project after an accident. The Shan do not control him - they are deliberately leaving him alone in the hopes he solves the problem.

For the rest of this adventure, your investigator is under the control of the Shan. Your tasks are:

- To look for a way to solve the problem and complete the bomb. If all else fails, bring the other investigators to the TUBE ALLOYS project at Ford Halstead.
- Protect the Shan and their temple-ship. Conceal their existence from the uncontrolled humans.

Your investigator is otherwise unchanged. The Shan cannot control your every action, but can influence and plant suggestions. They can also kill you. You may, if you wish, blurt out a few words of warning to the other investigators, but you will die a moment later.