

TRAIL OF CTHULHU

The Dance in the Blood

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THE DANCE IN THE BLOOD

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You might be interested whether the places I have mentioned actually exist. Most do. Keswick is a pretty town in the Lake District, popular for walking holidays. Castlerigg Circle is nearby, although the Blackstone Hotel and Keswick Hospital are fictional. Manesty is a genuine and tiny village, although I have based its grey-slate buildings on nearby Grange. Both Derwent Water and Maiden Moor are real, but the Maiden House is not. Everything is more pleasant in real life than I have described it. The monsters under the soil are not, I hope, real.

This is the third Purist adventure in a series of four. In the next and last, The Rending Box, the Investigators find the creature that spawned the monsters under the soil.

TRAIL OF CTHULHU

Table of Contents

Introduction	4	Manesty	15
The Hook	4	The Wareing House	15
The Horrible Truth	4	The Leeward Inn	16
The Spine	5	The Old Schoolhouse	16
The Investigators	5	Clues In Manesty	16
Creating Your Own Investigators	8	Keswick Hospital	18
Clues	8	Low Manesty	19
Cast of Characters	9	The Dance In The Blood	20
The Blackstone Hotel, Keswick	10	The Maiden House	21
Bringing The Investigators Together	11	The Ritual	23
Keswick	12		
Dreams	13	Epilogue	24
Static	14		
Castlerigg Stone Circle	14	Handouts	25



The Dance in the Blood

INTRODUCTION

In a forgotten, secluded place, in the North of England, lies a village of many secrets and terrors. When the Investigators find this village, they uncover a mystery that has killed many and doomed others.

The Dance In The Blood is the third Purist scenario for Trail of Cthulhu. In the previous scenarios, The Dying Of St Margaret's and The Watchers In The Sky, there was little fighting and no hope of winning. All the Investigators could do was flee.

In The Dance In The Blood, the Investigators cannot even flee. Because, as they will discover, they are the monsters themselves.

The Hook

In a hotel in the English Lake District, a group of strangers discover they are related. Although they did not know it, they were born in the nearby village of Manesty and adopted in early childhood.

The Horrible Truth

Beneath the Lake District, a race of monsters swims through the soil. They are wormlike, humanoid and loathsome. These creatures regard the land above as their own.

Every 119 years, when their power is greatest, they rise from the earth, tear apart the village and murder its inhabitants. They have done this many times. In 1697, they tore apart a village by the lake. In 1816, they tore apart the village that was built in its place. Now,

Manesty stands on their land. Soon, they will tear it apart.

When the monsters are young, they live with the people of Manesty and appear human. Indeed, biologically, they are human: only later in life do they shed their skin, revealing their wormlike form.

More importantly, they believe they are human. Many leave Manesty to pursue

lives elsewhere. When their time comes, however, they find a reason to return to Manesty. There, they dream of a ritual they must perform: a dance that runs in their blood.

In Manesty itself, there is a dynasty of these monsters, called the Wareing family. In 1895, Jack Wareing, one of the monsters, married Victoria, a human. Soon thereafter, Victoria gave birth to a new generation of monsters.

Timeline

As the scenario progresses, the Investigators will discover more of the timeline. To help them keep track, use the following timeline which can also be found at the back of the book as a handout. Cut it into strips, one for each date. The, as they discover facts, give them the corresponding strip of the handout.

1697 The town by the lake, Lower Manesty, is destroyed. It is later rebuilt as Low Manesty.

1816 Low Manesty is destroyed. It is later rebuilt as Manesty, the village that now stands.

1870 Jack is born.

1900 - 1904 The Investigators are born.

1905 The Investigators are photographed as children. Also in the photograph are their parents, Jack and Victoria, and another child, Geoffrey.

1905 Victoria has the children adopted.

1905 Victoria commits suicide.

1925 Jack, now aged 55, marries Mary.

1929 Jack and Mary conceive the twins. Jack disappears.

1930 The twins, Lisa and Bethany, are born.

1935 The present day.

TRAIL OF CTHULHU

The Dance in the Blood

These were the Investigators, plus one other: Geoffrey Wareing.

Eventually, by piecing together local folktales and the family's history, Victoria realised what her children were. She had them adopted, far away from Manesty, then committed suicide.

Years later, Jack remarried. Mary, his new wife, gave birth to twins: two new monsters.

Then Jack began to dream of his ancestry. Shortly afterwards, when he realized what he was, he disappeared. He had been called to join his brethren under the earth.

Now it is time for the monsters to rise again and reclaim the land. The children of Jack Wareing have been called back to Manesty. There, they will destroy the village and those who live in it. Those children, of course, are the Investigators.

Use the Family Tree handout on page 26 to keep track of the family tree. There are two versions. If you are using the sample Investigators, use the first one. If the players are creating their own Investigators, use the second, and fill in the Investigator's first names.

In both versions, the Investigators are shown in italics.

The Spine

The Investigators are staying in the Blackstone Hotel, in Keswick, a town in the English Lake District. They do not know each other. However, they find a photograph of themselves, together, as children. Also in the photograph is Geoffrey, the brother of one Investigator, and an unknown man and woman.

When they investigate, they discover that the photograph shows the Wareings, a family who lives in Manesty. The Investigators discover themselves to be

the Wareing children, adopted soon after birth.

The Investigators begin to dream of a strange ritual: dancing on a hillside, within a stone circle, and performing a sacrifice with an ancient knife. Additionally, they notice that all local radios emit static. Nevertheless, the local inhabitants seem to hear the radio as normal.

When the Investigators travel to Manesty, they find Geoffrey, who has drifted there for reasons he does not understand. His pulse has stopped and the skin is loosening around his fingertips.

Also in Manesty, the Investigators find Mary Wareing, Jack's estranged second wife. They then discover a secret haunt of Jack Wareing: the Maiden House, on a deserted moor.

At the Maiden House, the Investigators find Jack's old documents, which reveal his monstrous nature. In the upper rooms of the house, they find the sacrificial knife that appeared in their dreams.

Soon afterwards, Jack begins to talk to the Investigators, through a radio in the Maiden House. He is now a monster, swimming beneath the earth. He encourages the Investigators to sacrifice Geoffrey. This will release his monstrous form, so that he can join his brethren in the soil below.

In the final scene, Geoffrey and the Investigators feel themselves called

to Castlerigg Stone Circle. Geoffrey's skin is splitting, revealing the monster beneath. They must choose whether to perform the sacrifice, releasing him, or leave him to die.

The Investigators

Here are five Investigators designed for *The Dance In The Blood*.

For each Investigator, the name given as their family name is their adopted name. At birth, their family name was Wareing. For example, Rosa was originally Rosa Wareing, but is now called Rosa Parker.

Similarly, where a **Source of Stability** is listed as a family member, they are a member of the adopted family. There is one exception: Michael Laws is genuinely Geoffrey Laws' brother. At birth, they were Michael and Geoffrey Wareing, and were then adopted by the Laws family.

Occupational abilities are marked with an asterisk.

Rosa Parker

Concept: Spinster antiques dealer

Drive: Ennui

Occupation: Antiquarian

Sex: Female

Sources of stability: Priscilla, my sister. Derek, the antiques dealer with whom I served my apprenticeship. Martha, the newsagent who lives near me.

Pillars of sanity: Honesty is the best policy. Somebody will love me for what I am. Deep inside, I am a good person.

Investigative Skills: Archaeology 2, Architecture* 2, History* 2, Library Use* 2, Assess Honesty 1, Bureaucracy 1, Credit Rating 3, Intimidation 2, Oral History 2, Evidence Collection 1.

Simpler

Although the backstory seems complex, it's simpler in play. There are two main facts for the Investigators to discover: they are related and they are monsters. Essentially, that's all you need.

TRAIL OF CTHULHU

The Dance in the Blood

General skills: Driving 5, Fleeing 5, Health 10, Sense Trouble 10, Preparedness 8, Stability 10, Firearms (shotgun) 10, Riding 5, Sanity 10.

It has been said you are a plain woman. This is perhaps true, although you resent being judged on that alone. You are also highly intelligent and, when someone gets to know you, loyal and loving. Yet what people remember is a large and brash woman. This saddens you.

You are a successful antiques dealer, living in Stroud in Gloucestershire. Your clientele consists of well-heeled locals, mostly middle-aged women, and knowledgeable collectors, who travel great distances to view your latest stock. As a woman in the backbiting world of antiquarians, you have become bullish and tenacious. Shouting in auctions has made you strident. You are conscious, too, of being a couple of rungs lower on the class ladder than your clients, which adds a defensiveness to your character.

Yet, despite your exterior, you are a deeply loving person. Your sister, Priscilla, is the dearest thing in your life. She lives in Cornwall and you communicate with her by letter and telephone. Your relationship with your mother, who lives with Priscilla, is also close.

Above all, you are proud of getting things done. You are in Keswick for an antiques fair, at which you expect to fight dealers down to bargain prices. When you know what you want, those who stand in your way are doomed to fail.

Dr Michael Laws

Concept: Extroverted hospital consultant

Drive: Thirst for Knowledge

Occupation: Doctor

Sex: Male

Sources of stability: My brother,

Geoffrey Laws. My mentor, Dr Parker. My wife, Cynthia.

Pillars of sanity: I save lives. Humanity is essentially good. Being in the country makes me human again.

Investigative skills: Architecture 1, Biology* 1, History 1, Languages* 2, Library Use 2, Medicine* 2, Physics 1, Assess Honesty* 2, Bargain 1, Bureaucracy 2, Credit Rating 4, Flattery 1, Oral History 1, Reassurance* 2, Photography 1.

General skills: Athletics 10, Driving 10, Health 10, Scuffling 6, Stability 10, Firearms 10, First Aid* 10, Sanity 10.

Your work in medicine is an extension of your love for people. Admittedly, you have never been a bookish sort: you would claim to be academically competent rather than brilliant. Nevertheless, your bedside manner is excellent. You can put people at ease with a few words. That, you consider, is what makes you a great doctor, and you are quite frankly bloody good at your job.

Your love for humanity extends to those around you. Geoffrey, your brother, is a constant in your life. Cynthia is your greatest comfort, although you must admit you have not been entirely faithful. Nevertheless, you would do nothing to hurt those close to you.

Although you practice in London, you have come to Keswick for a welcome weekend away. Perhaps you will walk a little. Inevitably, you will haunt the bar! And one never knows whom one might meet. Perhaps you will find a young lady: that would certainly help the week pass pleasantly.

When you get back, you will see those you love: you must call Geoffrey, since you have not seen him for a while. For the moment, though, your time is your own and you intend to explore this area a little.

Jonesy (Tom)

Concept: Gentleman tramp

Drive: Duty

Occupation: Hobo

Sex: Male

Sources of stability: Mrs Travis, an exceptionally kind old lady. My dear old mother, God bless her. Tiny, the other tramp in the library.

Pillars of sanity: I'm British through and through. Everything will turn out all right in the end. I'll outlive you all.

Investigative skills: Archaeology 1, History 1, Library Use 2, Bargain* 2, Flattery 2, Intimidation 1, Oral History 2, Reassurance 2, Streetwise* 2, Art 1, Locksmith 1, Outdoorsman* 2,

General skills: Athletics* 10, Filch* 10, Health 10, Sense Trouble* 10, Preparedness 5, Scuffling 8, Stability 10, First Aid 5, Mechanical Repair 5, Sanity 10, Stealth 6

This really is the most delightful village. Absolutely delightful. Keswick, you say? What a splendiferous part of the world. One wonders whether it was Wordsworth that said that fresh air strengthens the soul.

You are Mr Jones, although you are commonly known as Jonesy, not that there is anything common about you! On the contrary! You consider yourself a gentleman. Although the bowler hat, coat and stick are undeniably tattered, they are of exceptionally good quality.

Now, to be frankly honest, your gentlemanliness is something of an affectation. You are from humble stock: your dear old mother, God bless her, is a seamstress in Canterbury. She even has a telephone these days, although you particularly have little occasion to telephone it. Your accent, too, is entirely affected and not entirely accurate, and your command of the English language is perhaps indeed not all that which it

TRAIL OF CTHULHU

The Dance in the Blood

should be.

With all your affectation, however, you are proud to be English and justly so! Justly so! You feel a duty to investigate anything remotely rum and report

it within the purview of the proper authorities if that seems in the least appropriate in your considered opinion.

There not being anything rum in the immediate vicinity, however, you would

be much obliged if someone would stand you a drink. Ordinarily you would pay yourself, but you find yourself a tad short at the moment. A gin-and-tonic-water would be delightful, if it is not too much trouble. How awfully kind.

Drive Yourself Crazy

One of the pleasures of Trail of Cthulhu is going mad. To assist players in this process, the following alternative rules hand the responsibility for Stability checks over to them.

Firstly, as Keeper, give the players a copy of the Stability Loss Chart, from the Trail of Cthulhu rulebook or the Keeper's Resource Screen.

Now, rather than calling for Stability Checks yourself, encourage players to call for them, whenever something happens that disturbs their character. Allow them to set their own potential Stability Losses, using the charts as guides. Remind your group of the mental illness rules, informing them that the first Investigator to reach -6 Stability will get a mental illness. Try to make this sound like a prize: as indeed it should be, since being the subject of the mental illness rules is wonderfully enjoyable. In this scenario, the Epilogue "1953" is intended as a prize for the first Investigator to reach -6 Stability.

Since these rules emphasise the pleasures of going mad, ignore the usual penalties associated with low Stability: that is, continue to allow Investigative Abilities to be used by Investigators who are shaken, and add no additional penalty to General Ability checks.

Throughout the scenario, the players should be looking for opportunities to drive their Stability down. If they argue that the potential Stability loss should be higher than you think, you know they are using these alternative rules correctly. Each time they lose Stability, encourage them to roleplay their growing madness, particularly when they pass the thresholds of 0 Stability (shaken) and -6 (blasted).

These alternative rules will not suit every group. They will seem alien to players used to the traditional, adversarial method of the Keeper demanding Stability Checks. Nevertheless, they work well, and are particularly suitable for The Dance in the Blood.

With this in mind, events that might cause a Stability Check, within this scenario, are marked with the following symbol, showing the potential Stability Loss.



When these symbols occur, ask the players whether they want to check Stability. All such checks are Mythos-related.

Viscount Hilary Exeter

Name: Viscount Hilary Exeter

Concept: Socialite and dabbler

Drive: Arrogance

Occupation: Dilettante

Sex: Male

Sources of stability: My elder brother Marmy, a surgeon. My elder brother Perry, an archaeologist. My younger brother Jack, a priest.

Pillars of sanity: My birthright. The finer things in life. I am biologically superior to the lower classes.

Investigative skills: Anthropology 1, Archaeology 2, Architecture 2, Biology 2, History 1, Library Use 1, Medicine 2, Occult Studies 2, Physics 1, Bargain 1, Credit Rating 6, Flattery 2, Intimidation 2, Oral History 2, Art 1

General skills: Athletics 10, Driving 10, Health 10, Scuffling 6, Stability 10, Firearms 10, Riding 10, Sanity 10

You really have no idea where the bloody hell you are. One moment, you were on a train to Glasgow, with a couple of bottles of Moet. The next, you were...well, you presume you got off too early, then you got chucked off another train in the middle of nowhere and then you seem to recall a taxi. What the hell is this place? At least it has a bar. Small mercies, you suppose.

Although you think of yourself as a dilettante, you are, in reality, an unfocused brat. As the third eldest in your family, there were no particular expectations on your shoulders. Hence, believing your family name will see you through, you are content to drift between bars, women and card games.

TRAIL OF CTHULHU

The Dance in the Blood

Nevertheless, you have found time to study. Admittedly, you mainly studied so that you could argue with your brothers. When Marmaduke went into medicine, you were damned if you would let him beat you. You trained for a year, then dropped out, thereby gaining enough ammunition to shoot his arguments down. In a similar way, you learned about architecture to argue with Peregrine. No, hang on, archaeology, that was it. Damned confusing.

When your younger brother became a priest, you took a different tack: with no desire to master theological arguments, you read every blasphemous tract you could find. Although you do not win arguments with him, you stall these disputes by annoying him beyond belief.

All things considered, there is little to your life other than your family name. And since the sun is over the yardarm, it is time for a drink.

Helen Long

Name: Helen Long

Concept: Tempestuous surreal artist

Drive: Artistic Sensitivity

Occupation: Artist

Sex: Female

Sources of stability: Gloria, my mother in Chelsea. Julie St Clair, a fellow artist in Camden. Jack, the tramp who sleeps outside the building.

Pillars of sanity: Art lies within the human soul. The city is your home. There is beauty in insanity.

Investigative skills: Architecture 2, Art History 2, Library Use 1, Assess Honesty 2, Bureaucracy 2, Credit Rating 3, Flattery 2, Intimidation 2, Oral History 1, Reassurance 1, Streetwise 1, Art 4, Photography 2.

General skills: Athletics 10, Driving

10, Filch 6, Health 10, Sense Trouble 5, Preparedness 5, Stability 10, Mechanical Repair 5, Sanity 10.

God knows why you agreed to come but you're here, in the Lake District, otherwise known as the middle of bloody nowhere. A client and admirer of your work sent you to Keswick, to paint the Lake District. He is paying for the hotel, so you can hardly complain.

Wait. Actually, no, you can complain. You're a bloody artist, after all. What is there here to inspire you? Bluebells? Meadows? What are you meant to do, paint watercolours? You're a surreal artist. You paint nightmarish landscapes. There's nothing nightmarish here, other than the excruciating boredom, and you can't paint that. You need something to inspire you. Something dark, something twisted. And what do you get in Keswick? A bloody pencil factory.

You wish you were back in London. You should visit your mother, who is getting on a bit. Also, you feel an urgent need to get drunk with Julie, another artist, who is still trying to make Cubism work. Unless something interesting happens in the next few days, you're going to get the train straight back.

Creating Your Own Investigators

Alternatively, you can allow players to create their own Investigators. Ensure that:

- They are aged between 30 and 35.
- They do not know each other.
- They have different reasons to be in Keswick.
- They do not take the drive In The Blood (see sidebar page 8).

- Someone takes the **Medicine** ability.
- One has a brother called Geoffrey, preferably as a **Source of Stability**.

Some abilities are particularly useful within the scenario, particularly **Library Use, Physics, Archaeology** and **Art**. Others are not and should be avoided: these include **Art History, Cryptography, Law, Cop Talk, Chemistry** and **Pharmacy**. Although Investigators might have these abilities, they should have others more useful to the scenario.

Clues

Throughout the scenario, clues are presented as follows. First, the clue itself is given, then examples of how a specific skill might reveal that clue. All clues cost one skill point (except Core Clues). For example:

1. *Geoffrey is not, according to normal human biology, alive.*

- *Medicine: You try to take Geoffrey's pulse. However, you cannot find it: neither in his wrist, nor anywhere*

Not In the Blood

This scenario, as you may have realized, explores the Drive "In The Blood". No matter why the Investigators think they are in Keswick, they are actually here because they have been called through the blood.

However, the Investigators should not take In The Blood as a Drive. If they did, it would lessen the impact of the mystery: if the Investigators know that strange behavior runs in their blood, they won't be surprised to discover their alien heritage.

TRAIL OF CTHULHU

The Dance in the Blood

Name Recognition

If you enjoy perplexing your players, try the following trick. It complicates the backstory slightly, but is worth the complexity.

Replace the name Wareing, throughout the scenario, with the surname of any Investigator. For example, if one of your Investigators is called Harold Whitelea, use the name "Whitelea" throughout the scenario, so that the family in Manesty is the "Whitelea family" and the NPCs are Jack, Mary and Victoria Whitelea.

This creates an eerie, mystifying moment, when one player slowly realizes that the family in Manesty has the same name as their Investigator.

The explanation is as follows. The Investigator that shares the family name was adopted, not by a stranger, but by a distant branch of the family in Manesty. For example, when Harold Whitelea was adopted, Jack and Victoria Whitelea sent him to distant relatives, also called Whitelea.

This is a wonderful device for bewildering the players. However, if you find it bewildering, ignore it.

else in his body. He feels clammy and he complains that the skin around his fingertips feels loose. There is no medical way that this man should be alive.

- *Reassurance: You notice Geoffrey trying to take his own pulse. Taking his wrist gently from him, you try to find his pulse, but cannot. Geoffrey begins to cry. He does not feel alive. He thinks he is breathing less than normal. He fears he is dying.*

Here, **Medicine** and **Reassurance** are just examples of how the clue might be revealed. Any skill, plausibly used, will reveal the clue. For example, an Investigator might use **Biology** to realise that Geoffrey's heart is not beating. Alternatively, you might invent a way that **Occult** would reveal the clue: perhaps, for example, the Investigator remembers the phenomenon of still hearts from an occult tome.

Again: any skill, plausibly used, will reveal any clue. Sometimes, it is not plausible that a skill would reveal a clue. For example, it is hard to see how **Architecture** would reveal that Geoffrey is not alive. However, if, as Keeper, you think a skill would work, then give the clue away.

Some scenes have many clues. Do not feel you must reveal them all.

Cast of Characters

Here are brief descriptions of the major characters in the scenario. Each description contains three things you can do, at the gaming table, to bring the character to life.

If you need statistics for these characters, they are:

Abilities: Fleeing 5, Health 5

Hit threshold: 3

Weapon: -3 (Fists, inexpertly used)

Nigel Jones, The Barman of the Blackstone Hotel

Nigel does not like his job or the people he must deal with. He wants everyone in the bar to go away, so he can read his book. It is an Agatha Christie, Murder on the Orient Express, and he thinks he knows which suspect is the murderer. The last thing he wants is a disturbance:

raised voices, people fainting, anything that looks like trouble.

To portray Nigel:

- Mime pouring a drink.
- Speak with bored calm.
- Think "Shut up shut up shut up shut up" to yourself, when the players talk to you.

Dr Henry Rochdale

Henry is an old, patient and brilliant doctor, who works at Keswick Hospital.

To portray Dr Rochdale:

- Speak patiently, firmly and exactly.
- Consult imaginary notes.
- Pause, while you gather your thoughts.

Mary

Mary is a quiet country woman who keeps herself to herself. Her husband left some years ago and she wants no reminder of him. Above all, she wants her daughters, Lisa and Bethany, to be raised correctly: that is, protected from any strange influences.

To portray Mary:

- Keep your knees together and your hands clasped tightly.
- Speak with suppressed anxiety.
- Look from Investigator to Investigator, as though one of them might change into a monster.

Lisa and Bethany

Mary's daughters, Lisa and Bethany, are small children. They are quiet, innocent and secretly eldritch horrors.

TRAIL OF CTHULHU

The Dance in the Blood

To portray Lisa or Bethany:

- Look directly at the Investigator speaking to you.
- Play with an imaginary toy or, if there is one nearby, a knife.
- Smile pleasantly when you talk about things you like, especially if they are horrific.

Ada Walworth

Ada is the landlady of the Leeward Inn in Manesty. Since her husband's death, she owns it outright. The patrons, all locals, provide her with a modest living. With them, she is friendly; with outsiders, she is guarded.

To portray Ada:

- Speak confidentially, as though about to impart a secret.
- Lean on the table with one elbow.
- Look guarded.
- Occasionally serve another customer, with a much more friendly attitude.

Eugene Gregson

Eugene is a farmer, living his final years in a farmhouse in Manesty. Although he is not as young as he used to be, he is agile enough to tend to his sheep. These makes him a small living, which he largely spends on beer. Although he seems quiet, a few pints of beer makes him remarkably loquacious.

To portray Eugene:

- Sigh occasionally.
- Cradle your glass between your hands.
- Look at a distant far-off point while you tell a story, looking back at the Investigators occasionally.

Geoffrey

Geoffrey is a mild-mannered, unmarried man. His plans for a quiet, routine life have been frustrated by heart problems. Specifically, it has stopped beating, but he feels fine, and hence he is terrified. He does not know why he is in Manesty.

He is the brother of one Investigator.

To portray Geoffrey:

- Speak softly, looking directly at the person you are addressing.
- Widen your eyes.
- Frown occasionally.

Jack

Jack is a monster, swimming under the Earth, who communicates with his family by radio. Having been under the soil for several years, he is losing his English vocabulary. He is delighted to be talking to his sons and excited they will shortly join him.

To portray Jack:

- Look away from the Investigators: because you are on the radio, there will be no eye contact.
- Sound excited and happy, especially when describing unpleasant things.
- Occasionally, struggle to remember a specific word.



THE BLACKSTONE HOTEL, KESWICK

The small town of Keswick sits in the grim countryside of the Lake District. As the Investigators approach it, by different routes, they pass through hills that look more alien than natural. The rain is intense, making visibility poor and roads treacherous.

If Investigators arrived by car from London, they have driven all day, watching the landscape change from fields to factories and finally to forbidding hills. If they arrived by train, their journey has been similarly tiring, beginning at Euston Station in the morning, changing at Penrith and completing the last leg by bus.

That evening, they find themselves at the Blackstone Hotel, which overlooks Keswick's market square. This old, fading building retains little of its former charm. The red-and-gold wallpaper turned red-and-ochre a long time ago. The carpets are frayed, the furniture scuffed and a smell of mould permeates. Most disturbingly, the imitation gas lamps are turned so low that the corners are dark and the shadows long.

The time is now half-past eight. Ask why each Investigator is in the hotel. Investigators with **Credit Rating 3** or higher are probably staying for the night. Those with **Credit Rating 1** or **2** might be stopping for a drink in the hotel bar, before repairing to a cheaper bed-and-breakfast establishment for the night. Investigators with **Credit Rating 0** might beg at the kitchen doors for leftovers.

Also, ask where the Investigators are in the hotel. This gives the players a moment to establish their characters: do they drink alone at the bar, eat quietly in the restaurant or engage the staff in conversation? Eventually, most

TRAIL OF CTHULHU

The Dance in the Blood

will drift to the hotel bar, which is where the scenario begins properly.

On the wall are sepia-toned photographs of local dignitaries. From across the room, one photograph catches an Investigator's attention. On closer examination, the reason becomes clear: it shows that Investigator as a child. Indeed, the Investigator has never seen a photograph of themselves at such a young age.

Probably, they think this is a coincidence. If so, the coincidence rapidly gets stranger. One by one, the other Investigators notice the photograph: perhaps it catches their eye too; perhaps the first Investigator draws it to their attention.

All the Investigators are in the photograph. They are all children. Stranger still, their first names are listed correctly at the bottom of the photograph, although their second names are given as "Wareing".



This photograph is the Hook for the scenario. The Investigation starts here.

Bringing The Investigators Together

To notice the photograph, the Investigators must all be in the bar together. This takes some work, but isn't hard. After all, it is an English hotel: everyone goes to the bar at some point.

If an Investigator is in the dining room, a waiter will suggest they take coffee in the bar. If an Investigator is in their room, a disturbance will bring them down to the bar to investigate.

Similarly, if an Investigator is begging at the kitchen doors, something will

Inns, Hotels and Pubs

Here is a quick explanation of how inns, hotels, pubs and bars differ in England.

A pub is a place to meet and drink. It often contains more than one bar: a spartan public bar, containing wooden tables, chairs and bar stools, which is traditionally the haunt of men; and a more convivial lounge bar, with more comfortable chairs.

An inn is like a pub, but has rooms to rent. They are the traditional resting places of travelers.

A hotel is like an inn, but grander. Its purpose is to rent rooms, rather than serve drinks. Probably, it has a bar, which is where one goes to drink.

tempt them inside: a scream or an unattended wallet. Or perhaps an Investigator screams, when she sees herself in the photograph.

Better still, let the players bring their Investigators together. Simply tell them: find a reason to be in the bar. It's slicker than railroading them into the same location. And they always find a reason.

Finally, if this sounds too complicated, here is an alternative. Start the scenario with all the Investigators together, in the bar, after they have noticed the photograph.

Noticing The Photograph

Let's explain, slowly, how the Investigators notice themselves in the photograph.

First, tell one of the older Investigators that the photograph catches their eye. Something is strange about it. When they look closer, they notice a child in the photograph, aged 4 or 5, that resembles them.

This child resembles pictures that the Investigator remembers seeing, in their family home, of their childhood self. However, the child in this photograph is slightly younger. The Investigator has not seen a picture of themselves this young before.

Stranger still, the child's first name, as inscribed below the photograph, is that of the Investigator. The family name, however, is different.

So far, so strange. Give that first Investigator a moment to react.

Now, repeat the process with another older Investigator. Perhaps they see the first Investigator looking at the photograph. They then notice a child, in the photograph, that resembles photographs of their childhood self. Again, the first name matches.

Leave another pause for the two Investigators to react. Perhaps they talk. Perhaps they question the barman. Certainly, they should notice each other looking.

Next, use these two older Investigators to bring in a third. Perhaps they notice this third Investigator elsewhere in the bar: that Investigator strangely resembles another child in the photograph. Alternatively, perhaps the third Investigator, noticing the first two, decides to see what they're looking at.

Use Geoffrey, too. When the Investigator related to Geoffrey notices themselves in the photograph, tell them Geoffrey is pictured too. Again, the name matches.

The youngest Investigators, being babies in the photograph, resemble their childhood selves less closely. Nevertheless, it is plausible that they are the children in the photograph.

Thus, the Investigators gradually notice their childhood selves in the photograph. Immediately afterwards, the Investigators need not be totally convinced they are related. They need only be curious enough to ask further questions.

TRAIL OF CTHULHU

The Dance in the Blood



Keswick

Scene Type: Investigative

The photograph suggests that the Investigators were born together, as part of the Wareing family, then adopted by the people they believed to be their biological parents.

However hard they try to disprove this, they cannot. For example, if any Investigator telephones their parents, they will confirm the adoption. If an Investigator has a **Pillar of Sanity** connected with their ancestry, this revelation might affect or even destroy it.

Stranger still, people in Keswick recognize the Investigators. They stop them in the street, addressing them as “Jack” or “Victoria”. Of course, the people quickly realize their mistake, but the recognition remains disconcerting.

Of course, many Investigators, particularly those with strong family leanings, will deny their heritage. Let them. Do not force them to acknowledge they are Jack’s children. Instead, let the realization creep up on them over the course of the scenario.

As the Investigators explore further, by talking to hotel staff or Keswick residents, the following clues are available.

Core clue: The Wareing family come from Manesty, a small village close to Keswick.

- **Oral History:** Later that evening, you find Bob, one of the local residents, in a dark corner of the bar. In return for two large gin-and-tonics, he discourses freely about local history. After sitting patiently through tales of ghosts and mysterious disappearances,

you drop the name of the family in the photograph. Yes, he says, Jack Wareing. He came from Manesty, but has not been seen for years.

- **Photography:** Against the protests of the barman, you remove the photograph from the frame. There are few clues in the photograph itself, but you find a photographer’s mark on the back. It lists a location: “Manesty”. Taking the photograph from you, the barman suggests you go there to investigate. It is, he says, a small village on the other side of Derwent Water.

From now on, strange things begin to happen to the Investigators. When they sleep, they have dreams; and when they listen to a radio, they hear static.

The Dance in the Blood

Dreams

Scene Type: Antagonist Reaction

When the Investigators sleep, they dream. Give one of the following dreams to each Investigator. You need not use all the dreams, but ensure someone gets the first and second. More than one Investigator may get the second dream.

The other characters in the dreams are Geoffrey and the other Investigators. If the dreamer has met these people, they recognize them instantly. If not, they will recognize them when they meet them later, in real life (all dreams are a Stability 3 check).

1. **The Sacrifice.** You are standing inside a stone circle. Others dance around you, with bizarre, ritualistic movements, whirling as they hold their arms horizontally. When you look down, you see Geoffrey, lying prostrate beside an open grave. In your hand is a curved, ancient knife of a strange metal. You know what must do. You slice Geoffrey's throat, shoulders and calves, with diagonal strokes. You wake up.
2. **The Dance.** You are dancing within a stone circle. Your movements are strange: you hold your arms to the side, leaping and whirling. Yet you execute the steps without thinking, your body moving instinctively, as though you have known the dance all your life. In the middle of the circle is a figure holding a shining knife above a human sacrifice. As the figure brings the knife down, you wake up.
3. **The Burial.** You are lying down. There is a familiar, comforting smell around you, although you cannot place it. Then you realize: the smell is soil. You feel enclosed, safe and warm. When you open your eyes, you see only soil; and when you open your mouth, soil

rushes in. Yet you can still breathe. You are not scared. You sink deeper and deeper into the earth, feeling safer and safer.

4. **The Shovel.** You are walking across a ridge in the hills, with a shovel in your hand. In the distance is a lake, glittering in the dark night. You are tired: you have walked so far! Nevertheless, there are duties to perform and you must continue. Ahead is a stone circle. You head towards it.



Don't just read these dreams to the Investigators. Tell them how each dream starts, then ask them what they do. Don't worry if the dream ends differently because an Investigator does something unexpected. For example, in the first dream, the Investigator might drop the knife and run away. This is fine: just tell the Investigator that, as they run away, that they feel they should be cutting Geoffrey. And they know, instinctively, where the knife should go.

With that said, the dreams give the Investigator no real chance for action. They can react to events, but not truly participate. These dreams are portents, not investigative scenes. Keep them short.

If the Investigators try anything difficult, ask for an appropriate ability check. For example, if, in the third dream, an Investigator tries to escape from the grave, give them an **Athletics** roll. If they succeed, let them genuinely succeed: perhaps the Investigator climbs from the grave, emerging within the stone circle. When the Investigator awakes, any points spent in the ability check remain lost. After all, the dream seemed real.

Within these dreams, not everything is clear. It is at your discretion, as Keeper, how much the Investigators see. For example, Investigators in the second dream might not be able to identify the human sacrifice, nor see the surrounding landscape. An Investigator in the third dream might know there are duties to perform, but not what they are.

After waking, the Investigators may choose to investigate their dreams. If so, encourage them to do so without leaving the Lake District. For example, encourage them to telephone a colleague in London, rather than travelling there. Emphasise that Keswick has all the facilities they need for investigation, including an excellent library.

While investigating the dreams, the following clues are available. Note that the second clue might be discovered simply by asking someone, rather than using an ability: after all, the stone circle is famous and something of a tourist attraction.

1. The knife is impossibly ancient.

- **Archaeology:** Casting your mind back to the dream, you picture the knife, trying to think rationally about its design. Yet the technical proficiency of its construction seems impossible, considering its apparent age. Moreover, the style of design resembles nothing you have seen. Certainly, it is not of modern craftsmanship.

- **Credit Rating:** You telephone a friend at Sotheby's, the London auction house. Yes, he says, the knife matches one he sold, years ago, to an anonymous bidder. It was clearly extremely old, but the style did not match that of any known civilization.

2. The stone circle is Castlerigg Circle, which is nearby.

The Dance in the Blood

- **Flattery:** At breakfast, you ask one of the staff about the stone circle in your dream. Is there a stone circle near here, you ask, perhaps overlooking a lake? You'd be extremely grateful for his help, you say. Yes, says the boy, that sounds like Castlerigg Stone Circle.
 - **Occult:** When you wake, you try to keep the image of the stone circle in mind. At breakfast, you sit alone, trying to remember the local folktales. Eventually, you recall: the circle is Castlerigg Stone Circle, a local oddity.
3. The dancing ritual resembles historic rites of death and rebirth.
- **Anthropology:** After the dream, what remains with you is the dancing. It reminds you of an illustration you once saw: a drawing, in a dusty book, of someone doing the same dance. That morning, you investigate Keswick library. Although it does not have the same book, you find an identical illustration in a history of dance. Evidently, the dance is Aboriginal in origin. It is a ritual of death and rebirth.
 - **Art (Dance):** What bothers you, on waking, is the dance. It reminds you of no dance you have performed or learned about. Yet something about it stays with you: a sense of numinosity, as though the dance was religious. Suddenly, you remember. You once read about the medieval dancing plagues of England, in which villagers would dance, uncontrollably, until they died. The dance was like the one in your dream. The church denounced it as a pagan ritual of dance and rebirth.

Static

Scene Type: Antagonist Reaction

Whenever the Investigators find a wireless, it is emitting static. Tuning it does not help: on every band, there is static.

However, others hear the wireless as normal. This becomes suddenly clear when an NPC begins singing, to music that the Investigators cannot hear.

If they listen long enough, the Investigators begin to hear things in the static: first fragments of tunes, then traces of a human voice. Yet they are never sure what they hear. The sounds hover for a moment, then disappear, leaving the Investigators wondering whether it was their imagination.



Wirelesses might be found in almost any building, including:

- The hotel, playing in the background of the bar.
- Mary Wareing's house.
- The hospital in Keswick.

If the Investigators study the static, the following clues are available.

1. The phenomenon is inexplicable by all known science.
 - **Physics:** It is theoretically possible that a transmitter, emitting white noise, could be drowning every other radio signal in the local area. But nothing explains the fact that only some people can hear it.
 - **Psychoanalysis:** Hearing voices and tunes in the static is easy to explain. It is the mind's unconscious desire for human

contact, expressing itself by hearing things that are not there. The fact that others hear music is explicable, too, as a form of mass delusion. Yet this resembles no case you have previously encountered. Something is wrong.

Keep Them Here

The Investigators may be tempted to leave the area. For example, they might drive out of the Lake District, to see whether wirelesses still play static. Alternatively, they might want to consult the British Library in London.

The scenario will still work if they do this. However, try to dissuade them: if the Investigators keep rushing back to London, it spoils the sense of isolation. Where possible, encourage them to investigate within the Lake District.

You might also try the direct approach. Tell the players that, if they remain in the area, the scenario works better. For the right players, this is a useful and honest solution.

Castlerigg Stone Circle

Scene Type: Floating

Having dreamed of a ritual in a stone circle, the Investigators may want to find the circle. This is easy: Castlerigg Stone Circle is well-known by locals. It is fifteen minutes drive from Keswick itself.

When they arrive, they recognize the location of the dream.



The surrounding landscape is exactly as the Investigators dreamt it. If the Investigators walk about a mile south-

The Dance in the Blood

west, roughly in the direction of Manesty, they find the ridge that was the location of the dream “The Shovel”.

Apart from that, there is nothing here. If the Investigators dig in the soil, where they dreamed a body was buried, they find nothing.

There is, as yet, nothing to investigate. This scene is hardly a scene, but a moment of strangeness. If the Investigators come here, they should remain only briefly, then proceed to Manesty.

MANESTY

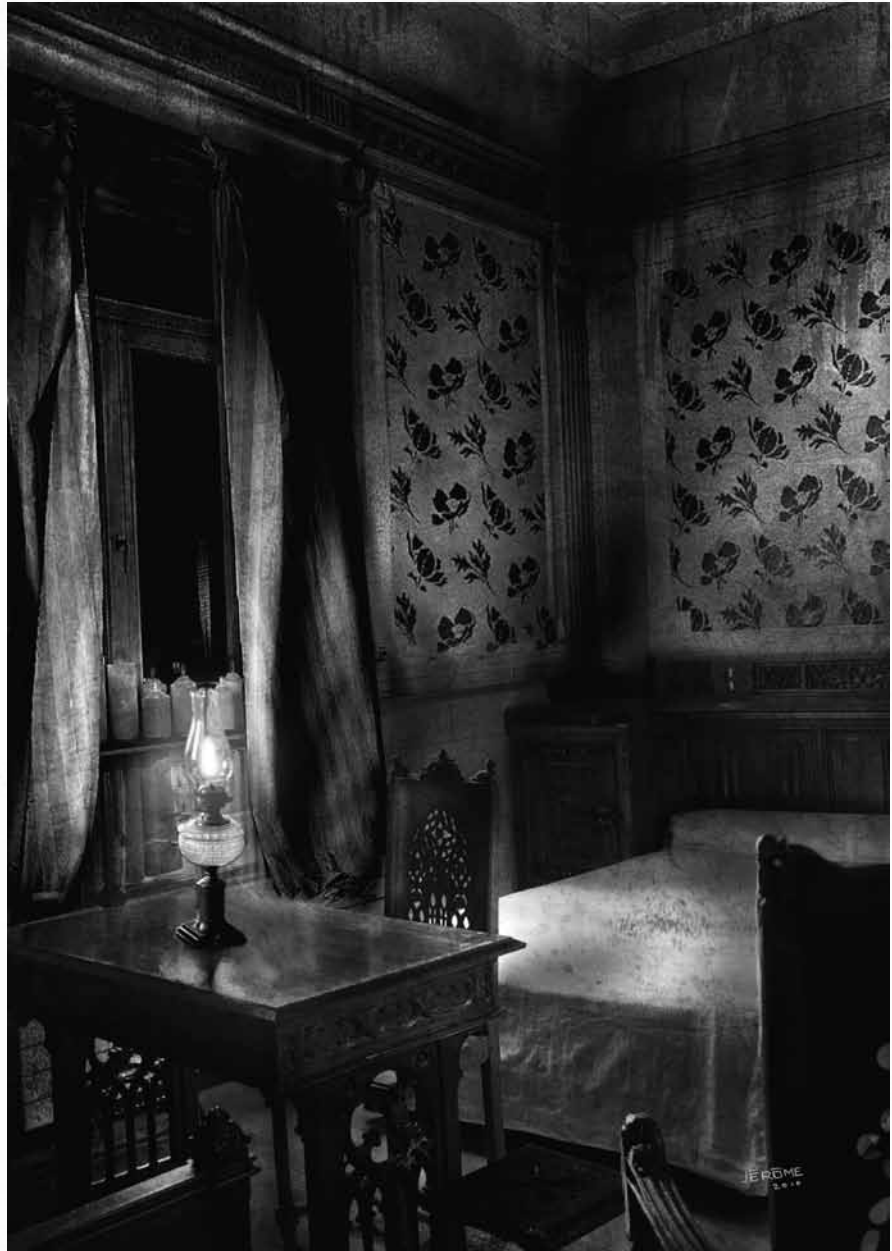
Manesty lies on the other side of Derwent Water, a dark and glittering lake. To get there from Keswick, the Investigators must go around the Water. Perhaps they head south along the main road, then turn west up steep and winding lanes. Alternatively, they may head west, along a high road that looks down on the Water, then descend a hill into Manesty. Finally, they might take the ferry, which crosses Derwent Water, running from Keswick to Brandlehow Wood.

The village, constructed of the local grey slate, appears grim and forbidding. The blocky stone buildings look somehow out of place, hemmed in by the rough countryside around. At the corners of the buildings, the protruding slate forms sharp, jagged edges, as if the village was trying to defend itself.

Above Manesty tower two moors, Cat Bells and Maiden Moor. Both are bleak and deserted: the only signs of human life are abandoned lead mines. If the Investigators follow the hill down from Manesty, they arrive at the swampy south end of Derwent Water.

Within Manesty, three locations will interest the Investigators: The Leeward Inn, Mary Wareing’s house and the Old Schoolhouse. The same clues are available from any of these locations.

First, here are the locations.



The Wareing House

Mary Wareing lives in a small, grey cottage. It lies a short distance, up a dirt driveway, from the road that winds through Manesty. As the Investigators approach, they get a strong sense of familiarity. They have heard the birdsong before and the crunch of the gravel beneath their feet.

When they knock on the door, tell one Investigator that they instinctively know, before the door opens, what

the wallpaper in the house is like. It is yellow, with a design of tulips. When Mary opens the door, their knowledge is confirmed, although the wallpaper is more faded than they thought.



This knowledge, of course, is a memory from childhood. The Investigators were raised in this house. As they move through the house, other memories come to them: the dusty smell within

The Dance in the Blood

the house; the view of the garden; a sense that a room should contain a table (it was removed years ago).

Mary invites the Investigators into the living room and makes them tea. When she realizes who they are, she faints. On recovering, she appears scared and reluctant to talk. She directs the Investigators to the Old Schoolhouse, below, of which Jack was headmaster.

During the conversation, Mary's twin daughters, Lisa and Bethany, peer from behind the doorway. After a while, they grow bored and retire to another room to listen to the wireless. The wireless, of course, plays static.

If an Investigator observes the twins, they notice that Lisa and Bethany sometimes talk to the static. If asked why, the twins look surprised. They always talk to the wireless, because it talks to them. It is their friend. It says hello and asks them how they are. If asked, they also admit to hearing static on the radio. It has always been there.

By talking to Mary or exploring the house, the clues listed under "Clues in Manesty" are available.

The Leeward Inn

Manesty's only inn is advertised by a creaking, faded sign outside. Once inside, the Investigators find a cold, dark bar, where the villagers drink in the evenings. They are met with suspicion by the landlady, Ada.

Nevertheless, since this is an inn, the Investigators may stay here, for a few shillings, if they have any Credit Rating at all. Rooms are spartan and wooden, each with a puritanically narrow single bed and an ancient oil lamp.

At the bar, the Investigators find Geoffrey. Any Investigator related

to him recognizes him instantly. Otherwise, another Investigator realizes he is the other child from the photograph.

He is scared. He felt compelled to come to Manesty but does not know why he is here. He is drinking heavily, but wonders whether this makes him susceptible to whatever is influencing his mind. Strangely, he keeps taking his own pulse (see Clue 1, page 16).

By talking to Geoffrey, Ada and other villagers in the bar, the Investigators may discover any of the clues listed under "Clues in Manesty", below.

The Old Schoolhouse

The Investigators may not immediately notice the Old Schoolhouse. It is an unremarkable, disused building. On closer inspection, it is a tiny Victorian school, with separate entrances marked "Girls" and Boys".

The building is not locked. Inside, everything has remained untouched since Jack left, six years ago. Thick dust covers rows of wooden desks. The blackboard, behind cobwebs, shows a quadratic equation. Weeds and moss push through the flagstones on the floor.

Again, the older Investigators feel a dreadful familiarity: they remember this room from early childhood. To them, the room feels much smaller than it should be. These older Investigators may find their old exercise books, stored in the school office.

One Investigator will feel strongly that a particular desk is their desk. Indeed, if they lift the desk's lid, they find their first name scratched underneath,

in a childish version of their own handwriting.



There is much to investigate within the school. There are exercise books, filled with children's stories. There are essays on local legends. Finally, there are the school records. From any of these sources, the clues below are available.

Clues In Manesty

These clues can be found anywhere in Manesty, particularly within the Leeward Inn, the Wareing House or the Old Schoolhouse.

1. Geoffrey is not, according to normal human biology, alive. (For the **Stability** test, use the higher loss if Geoffrey is a **Source of Stability**)



- **Medicine:** You try to take Geoffrey's pulse. However, you cannot find it: neither in his wrist, nor anywhere else in his body. He feels clammy and complains of loose skin around his fingertips. There is no medical way that this man should be alive.
- **Reassurance:** You notice Geoffrey trying to take his own pulse. Taking his wrist gently from him, you try to find the pulse, but cannot. Geoffrey begins to cry. He does not feel alive. He thinks he is breathing less than normal. He fears he is dying.
- **Credit Rating:** Arriving at Keswick Hospital, you bundle Geoffrey towards the nearest doctor. What the bloody hell is wrong with him, you demand? The

TRAIL OF CTHULHU

The Dance in the Blood

doctor examines him, then pauses, and examines him again. His heart isn't beating. What do you mean, you say, he's alive, isn't he? He seems to be, says the doctor. But his heart isn't beating.

2. Jack Wareing left 6 years ago, with no explanation. This was uncharacteristic of him.

- **Flattery:** You affect a charming smile as Mary pours you tea. But why did Jack leave, you ask? You cannot imagine that any man in his right mind would leave her willingly. She does not smile at this, as you had hoped. Instead, she frowns, explaining that she does not know. After having bad dreams, Jack simply disappeared. He did not pack before he left.

- **Bureaucracy:** After sorting the papers within the school office, you are little wiser. You had hoped for some explanation as to why Jack disappeared. Instead, there is nothing. One day, he simply left. The children must have arrived at school that day. One child has left a note saying "You are not here. We are going home. Come and get us when school starts". Evidently, school never started again.

3. Jack Wareing was frightened of his reflection in the mirror.

- **Evidence Collection:** While Mary tidies away the cups, you ask to use the lavatory, then take the opportunity to poke around the house. On the bathroom mirror, you find curious scratches. They are shaped like a head, as though someone had scratched around their own reflection. Judging from the height of the scratches, it was Jack, but the head is strikingly inhuman. There are horizontal lines running across it, making the face look wormlike, while the eyes

resemble slits.

- **Assess Honesty:** You press Mary for other information about Jack, but she says she knows nothing. Yet she refuses to meet your eye, so you realise she is lying. What is she hiding, you demand? She relents. It sounds silly, she says, but Jack was frightened of a monster in the mirror. It was his own reflection.

4. There are folktales of wormlike monsters, lurking beneath the earth.

- **Oral History:** In the Leeward Inn, you realise that you will only get information from Ada by listening to her stories. First, you endure her autobiography. Then, more interestingly, she turns to local legends. People say, she intones, that wormlike monsters lurk below the earth. Sometimes, a farmer would find a grey, slithery hand in their fields. When touched, it withdrew into the soil.

- **Library Use:** Sitting in the school office, you sort through the exercise books. One of the children's essays catches your attention. It is a story, purportedly fictional, about a girl killed by wormlike creatures. Adjacent is a drawing of a humanoid monster, with ridged skin, climbing out of the ground.

5. A pig has gone missing.

- **Bargain:** Sitting by the fire in the Leeward Inn, you make pleasant conversation with Eugene, a local farmer. In exchange for a steady supply of beer, he gives you information, although little is of interest. One of his pigs has disappeared, he says. He cannot explain it. Surely it can not have been stolen? A pig rustler would not come to Manesty.

- **Biology:** You wander around the local area, but all you find is a deserted sty. The pig is missing, but has not been gone for long: there is fresh dung, which cannot be more than 12 hours old. But this was a young pig: surely it can not have been slaughtered? You ask the farmer. He explains, darkly, that the pig simply disappeared.

6. Before Manesty existed, there was another village, Low Manesty, which was destroyed.

- **Oral History:** With beer inside him, Eugene becomes loquacious. His tales are varied: he describes the Lake Windermere ghost and the legend of the black hands. This strikes you as harmless fiction. Then he tells you about Low Manesty, "the village that was here before". Only its ruins remain. He points in their direction: they are down the hill, towards Derwent Water.

- **Archaeology:** Manesty is relatively new, probably constructed in late Victorian times. Yet, from your room in the Leeward Inn, you see a peculiar line in the landscape, suggestive of a previous settlement. Next morning, you hike out to confirm your suspicion. Indeed, this appears to be a previous village, built in the eighteenth century, then destroyed approximately a century later.

7. There are rumours of sacrifices in Castlerigg Circle.

- **Occult:** The more you see the landscape, the more it reminds you of a book from years ago, on the witch-cults of the Northern Lake District. Castlerigg Stone Circle, not surprisingly, was a focal point for the witches. Peculiarly, there were rumours of human sacrifices.

The Dance in the Blood

The victims were buried alive.

- **Anthropology:** Reading through the school exercise books, you are particularly struck by a child's story, which strikes you as a repetition of a local legend. It talks of rituals, performed at Castlerigg Circle. The end is particularly gruesome: a sacrificial victim was buried alive.

Core Clue: Jack used to go to the Maiden House on Maiden Moor.

- **Library Use:** Despite searching the school meticulously, you feel you are missing something. Then, on the edge of sleep, you remember. In an exercise book was a story about the Mad Man of Maiden Moor. Late at night, the man would creep to the Maiden House, on a desolate ridge of the moor. Perhaps this man was Jack?
- **Credit Rating:** That evening, in the Leeward Inn, you see Mary Wareing. She is avoiding your eye. Assuming your best imperious manner, you demand what is going on. She blushes. After you left, she says, she examined Jack's things. Amongst them was a map, with a location marked: a house on Maiden Moor.
- **Locksmith:** The attic of the Wareing House is locked, but a palette knife, applied at the right angle, opens the trapdoor. Inside, a small box contains what remains of Jack's things. Only one thing is remarkable: a map, with a location marked on Maiden Moor. It is labelled "The Maiden House".

Keswick Hospital Scene Type: Floating

Keswick Hospital is a dark gothic monstrosity, contrasting oddly with the surrounding fields. As they arrive, via a gravel driveway, the Investigators enter the shadow of the building, then pass through a

Remembering Childhood

Most people cannot remember events before their fourth birthday. Hence, the youngest Investigators, being less than two years old when they left Manesty, will not remember the village at all.

Investigators who were two or three on leaving Manesty may remember fragments. For example, the wallpaper in Mary's house may seem oddly familiar.

The oldest Investigators have more memories of Manesty. However, because their adoptions have previously been denied, they have no clear memory of early childhood. As the scenario progresses, they remember more and more.

great arched door.

This hospital is the main medical centre for the Northern Lake District. The staff are friendly, competent and helpful. Additionally, there are all the facilities the Investigators might need, including a place for Geoffrey to stay and be cared for. One of the hospital's main assets is Dr Rochdale, a consultant who is experienced, sprightly and ancient (although not eldritch). Any Investigator with Medicine will recognize that he knows his stuff.

Let's be straight here. The hospital is a device to ensure that, when the Investigators need medical facilities, they don't rush back to London.

Particularly, the hospital is here to ensure that Geoffrey stays nearby. Given that his heart has stopped beating, it's likely the Investigators will want him to get medical attention. If so, Keswick Hospital is the place: it would be foolish, in his condition, to transport him any further. Within the hospital, there is a room, where he will remain under medical observation.

Now, if the Investigators insist on getting Geoffrey away from the Lake District, don't stop them. It makes things less dramatic, but does not break the scenario. Nevertheless, if you can, keep him within travelling distance, ready for the ritual at the end of the scenario. With the right group, you might simply explain that keeping Geoffrey nearby improves the story.

At the hospital, the Investigators might uncover some of the clues above, particularly the one involving Geoffrey. They might also discover the following

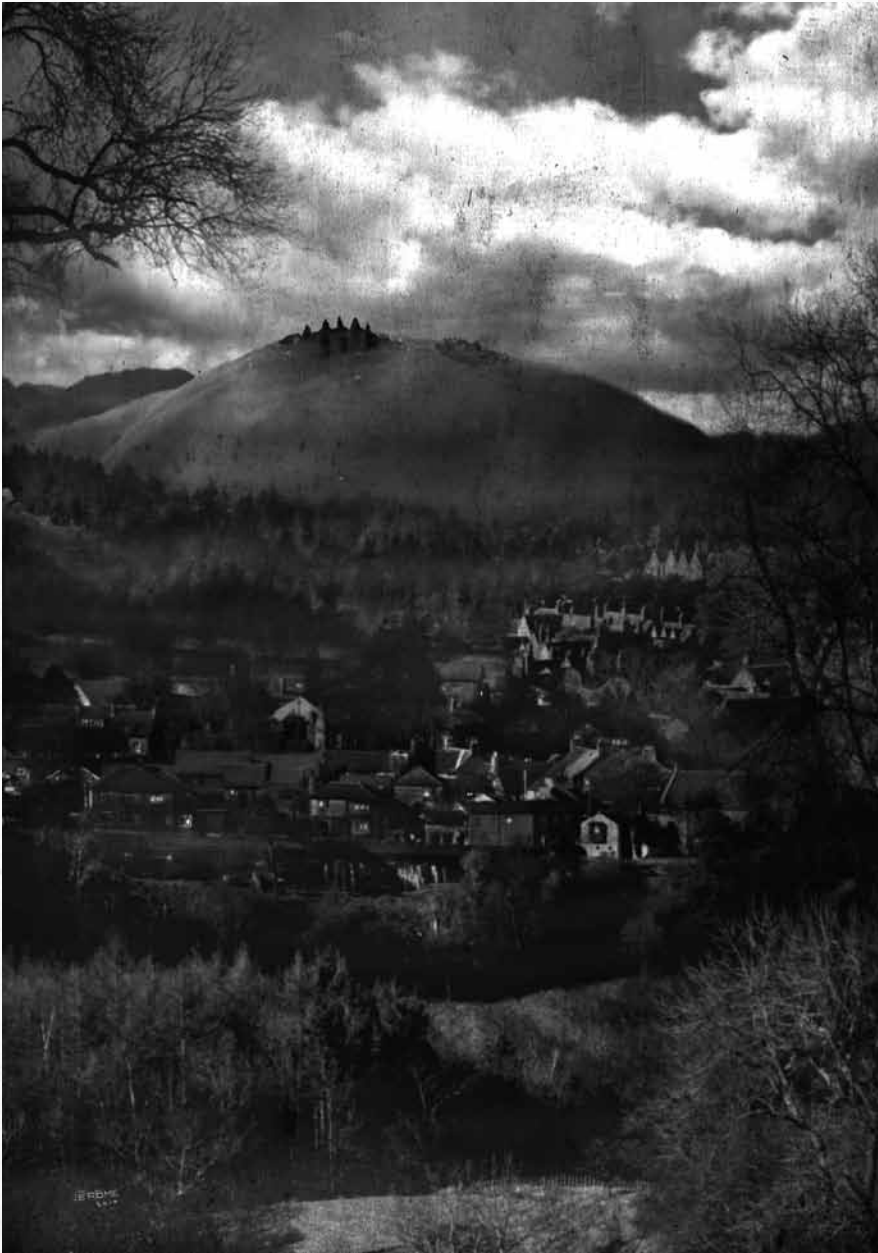
1. There is an obscure case study, from 1816, of Betty Wareing, who had similar symptoms to George. She is, of course, an ancestor of Jack Wareing.

- **Medicine:** Explaining that you are a General Practitioner from London, you ask for a private word with Dr Rochdale. What on earth could be the matter with Geoffrey, you ask? Dr Rochdale expresses animated ignorance. When pressed, however, he recalls a similar case, which he came across while completing a research project. In the archives of the hospital, he finds a Victorian textbook, which details the case. Her name is Betty Wareing.
- **Flattery:** You simper and flutter your eyelashes a little. Surely, a man of Dr Rochdale's experience must understand this? Has he any idea at all? He is not immune to your persuasion. Although it is odd, he says, he remembers a case from Victorian times. He fetches a book from the hospital's basement. Here it is, he says. Betty Wareing.



TRAIL OF CTHULHU

The Dance in the Blood



Low Manesty

Below Manesty, fields and woods slope down towards the swampy Southern end of Derwent Water. As Investigators explore, they walk through a gate and down a wooded path.

Just off the path are the ruins of Low Manesty. Nothing remains but foot-high stumps of walls. On examination, the ruined buildings resemble those of Manesty proper: there are cottages, a church and the obligatory pub. Looking

closer, the Investigators find fragments of human bone and an occasional skull. None are intact.

Further towards the lake are traces of an earlier village, which locals have christened "Lower Manesty". Lower Manesty dates from even earlier, having been destroyed at the turn of the 18th century. Today, only tiny pieces of brick and bone remain, suspended in the swamp.

In Low and Lower Manesty, the following clues are available:

1. Low Manesty was destroyed in 1816.

- **Archaeology:** You judge that Low Manesty was built in the early eighteenth century, but destroyed in early Victorian times. Wanting a more exact date, you check Keswick Library. A volume of local history mentions unexplained deaths around 1816. This, you assume, is when Low Manesty was destroyed.

- **Oral History:** You press Eugene for more information. From his circuitous stories, one useful snippet emerges: a story heard from his grandfather, which he, in turn, heard from his grandfather. After Low Manesty was destroyed, there was no harvest. Eugene attributes this to mystical causes, but you suspect a more prosaic explanation: Low Manesty was destroyed in the notoriously cold summer of 1816.

2. Lower Manesty was destroyed in 1697.

- **Library Use:** Wondering when Lower Manesty was destroyed, you consult parish records. Many parishioners, you note, disappeared around the turn of the 18th Century, particularly in 1697. Perhaps this was when the village was razed.

- **Occult:** Despite a long day in Keswick Library, you find little reference to Lower Manesty. Oddly, however, the local heretic sects appear particularly active around the turn of the 18th century. A sermon dated 1697, captured in a later Victorian history of blasphemous tracts, mentions the destruction of a local village by the Devil. Perhaps this refers to Lower Manesty.

The Dance in the Blood

3. The buildings were torn apart.

- **Architecture:** You're familiar with the ways structures can fail, but this is peculiar: these buildings were scattered. Perhaps there was an earthquake, but why are so many bricks split in half? You suspect something deliberately tore these cottages apart. Indeed, if you did not know it was impossible, you could swear those are teeth marks on the bricks.
- **Library Use:** Much ecclesiastical correspondence describes "blasphemous devils" tearing apart Low Manesty. At first, you think this fanciful. Yet, looking closely at the bricks, you see markings that resemble teeth marks.



4. There are records of wormlike monsters, rising from the soil.

- **Art:** A pattern of scratches, at the bottom of a wall, catches your eye. It is a sketch, split across several bricks, which you piece together to see the full image. It depicts a humanoid figure, with wormlike arms and legs, climbing from the soil. This must be one of the creatures that destroyed Low Manesty.
- **Credit Rating:** Exasperated, you order Eugene down to Low Manesty. Is this it, you demand? Some crumbled bricks? How can that possibly help? A half-crown buys his help. Scurrying over to a crumbled wall, he points out a carving. It shows a wormlike, humanoid monster, climbing from the soil. These, he says, are the things that tore the village apart. Bending to examine it, you toss him the half-crown.

The Dance In The Blood Scene Type: Floating

Late at night, music wakes the Investigators. It is a strange, drifting tune, like the notes in the radio static. It penetrates unnaturally into their minds. It will not let them sleep. It seems to be calling them.

The Investigators trace the noise to the Old Schoolhouse. As they approach, the tune grows more insistent, the rhythm pounding and the pitch writhing. It is like the heartbeat of a dying man, yet seems strangely alien.

From the school gate, the Investigators see Lisa and Bethany dancing in the schoolyard. It is the dance the Investigators dreamed about. With intense focus and skill, they hold their arms outstretched, leaping and whirling in bizarre patterns. They dance around a dark shape on the ground.



It is Eugene's missing pig. The girls have cut it, at the throat, shoulders and calves, using a bread knife. Now, they dance in its blood, which spreads in a large, dark circle. In the darkness, the twins' legs and nightdresses appear black. On closer inspection, the blackness is congealed blood.

Beside the twins is a wireless, which the girls have carried from the Wareing house. It plays static. In the static, the Investigators hear the drifting, alien music that woke them.

Do the Investigators stop the twins dancing? If so, they snap instantly out of their trance, then begin to cry. Why, they ask, is the pig dead? The dance was meant to wake it up! Why did it not sink into the ground, like in their dreams?

If the Investigators return the twins to Mary, she turns ashen and hurries the twins aside. The following clues are available, either from Mary or the girls.

1. The girls have the same dreams as the Investigators.

- **Reassurance:** You sit down, on the schoolyard's gravel surface, next to the girls. The warm blood seeps into your suit trousers. Don't worry, you say. You hear things on the wireless too. Do the girls have funny dreams? Yes, they say. Dreams about dancing and being buried alive. And you are in them.

- **Intimidation:** As Mary takes the twins inside, you put your foot in the door. What the hell is going on here, you demand? Your children are covered in blood! Looking scared, Mary backs into the living room. They have strange dreams, she says, about being buried alive. They say they learned to dance in their dreams.

2. The girls have done this before.

- **Bargain:** All right, you say to the girls. If you tell me what is going on, I won't tell your mother. They look at each other. The dance never works, they say. The thing never comes back to life. They tried it before on a dog, but that didn't sink into the ground either. Why are the dreams wrong, they ask? In the dream, when you dance around someone, they come back to life.
- **Medicine:** Assuming your best bedside manner, you tell Mary she should not worry. Nevertheless, you insist, you must know what is going on. She relents. Two years ago, she says, the girl killed their dog, a family pet, then danced around it. They seemed disappointed when it did not come back to life.

TRAIL OF CTHULHU

The Dance in the Blood

Use this scene to shake the Investigators up. When their investigation is progressing smoothly, throw this at them.

If necessary, change the time or location: the Investigators might hear the strange music at any time. Similarly, the scene might occur anywhere: rather than dancing in the schoolyard, the girls might dance somewhere else. Perhaps, for example, the Investigators hear the music when they explore Mary's house, then see the girls dancing outside.

The Maiden House

On the other side of Maiden Moor, hidden from Manesty, is an abandoned wooden house. It perches on a ridge, with the wind echoing around, chilling visitors to the bone. There is no road to the Maiden House, nor a footpath, and the Investigators must trek across open moorland to find it.

The windows are shuttered, but the door is unlocked. Inside is a smell of dust, wood and something more sinister: a faint odour, alien and barely definable, resembling bile and soil. The floorboards creak, deafeningly loud in the stillness. If the Investigators want to remain silent, give them a Stealth roll, Difficulty 6: there is no-one to hear, but let them roll.

This is where Jack spent his final days, after disappearing from Manesty and before the ritual sent him into the ground. His papers and books are scattered over the ground floor: a mad collection of sketches, scribbling and quasi-scientific diagrams. A portable gas cooker sits idle. A mirror hangs on the wall. It seems the house froze in time when Jack left.

There is a wireless set, switched on. At the moment, it is silent.

On the upper floor are two rooms.

Welcome To The Sandbox

As you may have realised, Manesty is something of a sandbox. Once the Investigators arrive, there is much to do and many places to go.

So pace the scenario carefully. Once you reveal the clue about the Maiden House, the Investigators will leave Manesty and, probably, not come back. Save this clue until they have explored the village. The Investigators need not go everywhere: often, they will miss out Low Manesty or the Old Schoolhouse. But make sure they explore thoroughly before you mention the Maiden House.

Apart from the clues above, there is much for the Investigators to discover within Manesty. Specifically, there is:

- The static on the radio.
- The dreams.
- Geoffrey.
- The twins dancing.

You needn't use all of this. However, before the end, you must mention the radio static and the dream about dance steps. So start early. If possible, describe the static and the dreams when the Investigators are in Keswick.

If you get time, you can escalate some of the elements above, making them creepier than they were before. To do this, describe:

- A voice in the static, which seems to be trying to talk to the Investigators, although they cannot quite hear it.
- More dreams of sacrifices and swimming beneath the earth.
- Geoffrey becoming icy cold and short of breath.

Here is a checklist of the things you should do.

- Describe the static. Do this twice, if you can, with two different wirelasses.
- Describe the dream about the dance steps.
- Describe the dream about the sacrificial knife.
- Describe Geoffrey having no pulse.
- Postpone the Core Clue about Maiden Moor as long as possible.

Everything else is just a toy for you to play with. Put in what fits. Don't worry if something gets missed out.

To the left is a boxroom, containing crates: kitchen utensils, scrap paper, clothes. To the right is a bedroom. On the windowsill is the sacrificial knife from the Investigators' dreams: see the second Core Clue, below.

While the Investigators are exploring, the wireless begins to emit static (even if the Investigators

have switched it off or removed the batteries). As before, the airy, alien tune haunts the static, reaching into the Investigator's minds. Behind the music, a voice seems to bubble away.

Let the Investigators explore a while longer. If they try to silence the wireless, by breaking it, removing the power source or switching it off,

The Dance in the Blood

the static stops. But not for long.

A voice comes from the wireless, calling the Investigators' names. It is Jack. His voice sounds distorted and guttural, although friendly. Sounding delighted, he welcomes the Investigators to his house. He is under the soil, he says, and looks forward to the Investigators joining him. He asks them if they feel the call. Clearly, he expects the Investigators to reply: if they do, they can hold a conversation with Jack.



In the Maiden House, the Investigators may find the following clues. They are available either through reading Jack's papers or by talking to him.

1. The Great Cycle.

- **Intimidation:** Unable to keep the anger out of your voice, you yell at Jack. What the hell does all this mean? It is the Great Cycle, he says. Nobody can stop it. Every century, his brethren beneath the soil rise and reclaim the land. They tear apart the humans and their bricks and their children. Soon, they will rise again and tear apart Manesty, and you will rise with them, as one of them.
- **Occult:** On Jack's desk, there are books whose names you have heard, but which you have never actually seen. One volume of folklore, whose cover is missing, describes a Great Cycle, lasting just over a century. Every time the Cycle comes round, the monsters rise, then tear apart the human towns. They destroyed Low Manesty and the town before it. Soon, they will rise again and destroy Manesty itself.

2. The thing beneath the Earth.

- **Oral History:** Although repelled by Jack, you encourage him to talk. But you have difficulty following his train of thought: perhaps he is crazy; perhaps merely unused to speaking English. He implies there is something greater than the monsters: a mother, a progenitor or a source. It has lain under the earth since ancient times, he says. You cannot understand the words that follow.
- **Art:** Jack has drawn many monsters, which are perhaps himself, or what he believes himself to be. However, you notice a darkness at the bottom of each one. Before, you had thought it was mere shading, but you wonder now whether it is significant. It appears to be a larger creature, which spawns the wormlike monsters.

3. The transmitter.

- **Physics:** One of the sketches in Jack's papers is clearly a circuit diagram. It is extraordinary: although it is clearly a transmitter, the design is unlike any you have seen. There are shapes in the wiring you do not understand. Yet, on closer examination, the wiring is not actually wiring. This is not electrical. It is based on some other principle: perhaps air pressure, running through tiny tunnels in rock? Although implausible, you believe it might work.
- **Reassurance:** Steadying your voice, you ask Jack how he is speaking to you. His excitement grows. Look at the diagram on the desk, he says. It is a transmitter, drilled through the rock, deep underground.

4. **Core Clue:** The Investigators are all monsters. (Note: If the Investigators

have spoken to Jack, you should not force them to make another **Stability** test here. You really shouldn't.)



- **Library Use:** You sort meticulously through Jack's papers. You find a family tree, containing your name; folklore about the monsters beneath the soil; strange drawings of wormlike creatures that look human. Piecing it together, the implication is clear, although impossible. Jack was a monster and so are you.
- **Reassurance:** Speaking calmly into the wireless, you ask Jack to speak slowly. What does he mean, you ask? How can you join him? Containing his excitement, he tells you: he is swimming beneath the earth. He is a monster and you are a monster.

5. **Core Clue:** Tonight, Geoffrey will reveal his true form, as one of the wormlike creatures. If the Investigators cut him with the sacrificial knife and perform the ritual from their dreams, they will send him into the soil.

- **Library Use:** In Jack's papers, you find a reference to the strange knife. It is impossibly ancient, part of an ancient ritual of death and rebirth. It must be the ritual in your dreams. Jack's papers are clear: he expects you to cut Geoffrey with the knife, then use the ritual to release him into the soil.

These are the final clues, but this is not the end of the scenario. Now the Investigators know the full truth, they must choose whether to perform the ritual.

TRAIL OF CTHULHU

The Dance in the Blood

Next In Line

Now, one of the Investigators begins to suffer the same symptoms as Geoffrey. Choose either the oldest Investigator or anyone who still denies being a monster.

That Investigator's heart stops. Their skin feels loose, especially around the fingers. Perhaps, even, their skin splits at the fingertips, revealing a wormlike hand beneath. If the Investigators attempt to tear off the skin, the split enlarges, revealing more of the wormlike hand. They cannot tear all the skin off.

Most disturbingly, when they look in a mirror, they begin to see a monster. If they look more than once, they see themselves becoming more monstrous.

The Ritual

The night after visiting the Maiden House, the Investigators wake in the dead of night. They know, instinctively, that it is time. They must proceed to Castlerigg Circle. It is time for the ritual.

Geoffrey also wakes. If an Investigator is with him, he explains that it is time to go. Unless restrained, he walks directly from wherever he is to Castlerigg Circle. Heedless of rain and mud, he crosses the dark moorland. Finally, he lays down in the Circle's centre, waiting to be sacrificed.

If Geoffrey is restrained, he struggles: make a **Scuffling** roll, using Geoffrey's statistics above. During the struggle, pieces of flesh tear off, exposing the wormlike creature beneath. If the Investigators successfully restrain Geoffrey, he begins to turn entirely monstrous. Since he cannot survive



without the ritual, he begins to die. If kept restrained, he dies completely, and the scenario ends with the Investigators restraining a dying monster.



Use the upper value if Geoffrey is a **Source of Stability**.

If Geoffrey is locked up, the Investigators receive reports that he is struggling to

get out. He begs to be freed. If nobody lets him out, the scenario ends with Geoffrey transforming into a dying monster. Throughout, he yells through the door, his voice becoming guttural and alien.



Note that, even if the Investigators have located themselves far away from Castlerigg Circle, they feel compelled to go there. Geoffrey, similarly, wakes wherever he is

TRAIL OF CTHULHU

The Dance in the Blood

and begins walking. Even if it takes him days, he walks directly to Castlerigg Circle.

Before arriving at the Circle, one Investigator feels compelled to get a shovel, while another feels they must get the sacrificial knife. Ideally, these two Investigators are the ones who dreamed “The Shovel” and “The Sacrifice”, respectively, but it doesn’t really matter. Wherever the Investigators are and wherever the knife is, one Investigator feels compelled to fetch it.

Once at the Circle, the Investigators know what they must do. One must dig a grave, which Geoffrey lies beside. Another then cuts Geoffrey’s throat, shoulders and calves with the knife: without these lacerations, he cannot survive underground. Meanwhile, the other Investigators dance around, performing the steps they learned in the dream.



Once Geoffrey is cut, the Investigator with the knife places him in the grave. That Investigator pushes soil over Geoffrey, who sinks slowly into the earth. All the while, the other Investigators dance.

The Investigators feel what happens next: Geoffrey swims through the earth to join the other monsters below. (Describe this in a happy, upbeat way, as though describing a reunion. The players will hate you for it.)

And then it is over. The Investigators are left on a rainy, windy hill, in the middle of nowhere, knowing that one day they will follow Geoffrey. If the ritual is not completed, Geoffrey begins to transform into a monster, shedding his skin. As he changes, he pleads with the Investigators to cut him. If they do not, he slowly dies before their eyes.



This Is Not A Railroad

Do not railroad the Investigators in the final scene. Simply place the choice in front of the players and leave them to decide. Do they sacrifice Geoffrey, sending him into the Earth as a monster, or leave him to die?

In particular, although the Investigators feel compelled to do things, they can resist the compulsion. They feel compelled to go to Castlerigg Circle and complete the ritual, but they need not. They feel compelled to fetch the knife, but need not. They feel compelled to cut Geoffrey and dance around him, but they need not.

This final scene can end in many ways. The Investigators need never go to Castlerigg Circle: it’s good if they do, because it’s a dramatic location to end the scenario, but they need not. Perhaps the final scene ends in a hospital room, with the Investigators restraining Geoffrey as he turns into a monster.

Perhaps, alternatively, the scene does end in Castlerigg Circle, but the ritual is never completed, because one Investigator shoots another. In the end, the Investigators choose what they do, which is the greatest horror of all.

Indeed, throughout this scene, Geoffrey encourages the ritual. He pleads to be sacrificed; he smiles as he is cut; he asks to be lowered into the ground. When you play Geoffrey, look into the players’ eyes and smile.

Enjoy this final scene. Don’t be surprised if the ritual is never completed. Often, it ends in gunfire.

EPILOGUE

The Investigators leave the Lake District, knowing they are monsters. What do they do? Ask each player, each turn, how their Investigator’s story ends. When it is their time to go, do they go willingly? When it is another Investigator’s time to go, do they take part in the ritual?

Unless they die, the Investigators will descend into the soil, swimming under the Earth with their true family. In time, Lisa and Bethany will join them. One day, they will rise from the Earth and destroy Manesty. Mary Wareing will die. Ada will die. The Leeward Inn, the Old Schoolhouse and the Wareing House will be torn apart, brick by brick. And, 119 years later, the town that comes after Manesty will also be torn apart.

They will swim through the soil, worshipping the creature that created them, and one day they will rise and claim the Earth for her.



TRAIL OF CTHULHU

Handouts

Handout: The Timeline

1867	The town by the lake, Lower Manesty, is destroyed. It is later rebuilt as Low Manesty.
1816	Low Manesty is destroyed. It is later rebuilt as Manesty, the village that now stands.
1870	Jack is born.
1900 to 1904	The Investigators are born.
1905	The Investigators are photographed as children. Also in the photograph are their parents, Jack and Victoria, and another child, Geoffrey.
1905	Victoria has the children adopted.
1905	Victoria commits suicide.
1925	Jack, now aged 55, marries Mary.
1929	Jack and Mary conceive twins. Jack disappears.
1930	The twins, Lisa and Bethany, are born.
1935	The present day.

Handout: An Entry in Sotheby's Catalogue

SOTHEBY'S
A fine and exceptionally rare curved knife of uncertain origin
Of a grey-green metal that is perhaps an alloy of copper, the blade of gently curving shape, inscribed with symbols (language unknown, perhaps Aramaic), the hilt similarly engraved
Quantity: 1
9 inches

TRAIL OF CTHULHU

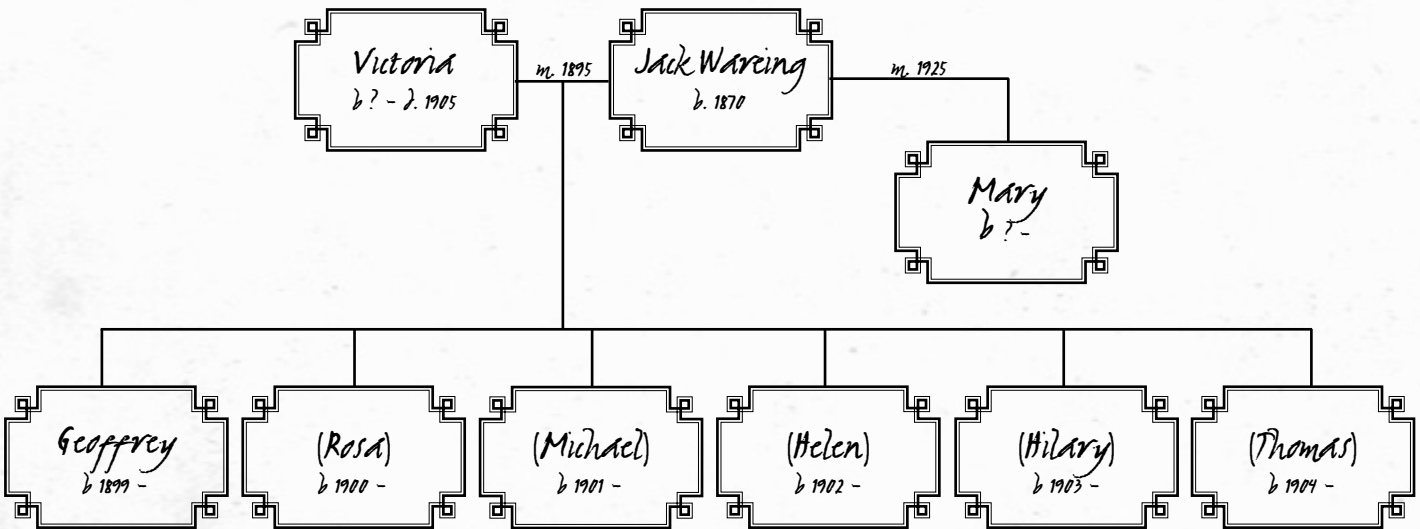
The Dance in the Blood

Handout: Family Tree

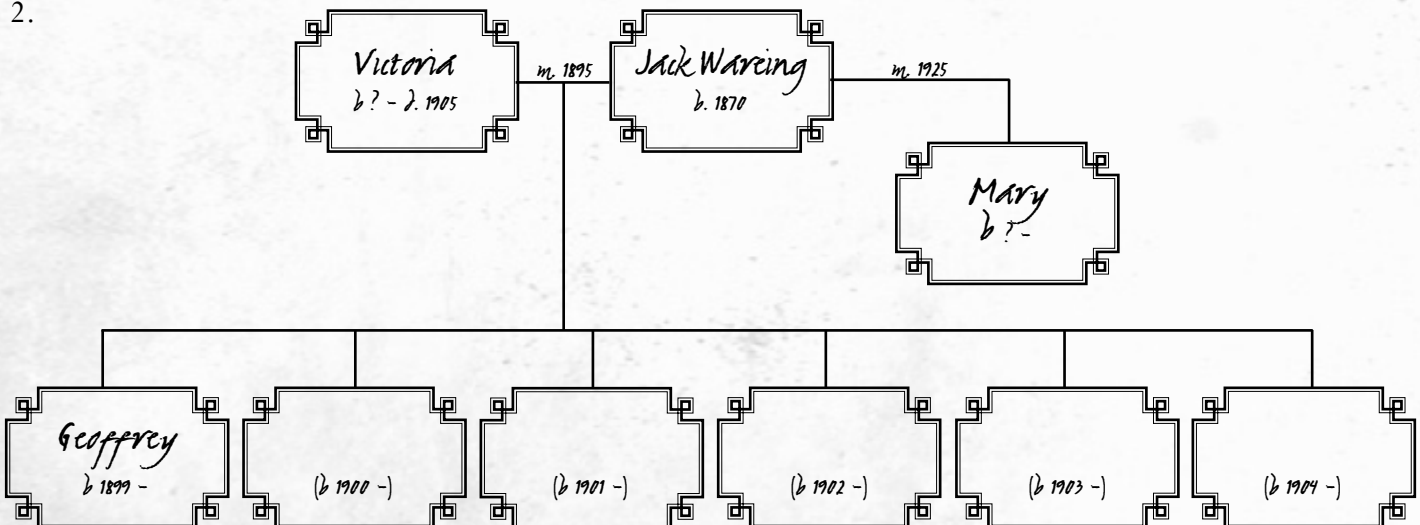
Use the following handout to keep track of the family tree. There are two versions. If you are using the sample Investigators, use the first one. If the players are creating their own Investigators, use the second, and fill in the Investigator's first names.

In both versions, the Investigators are shown in brackets.

1.



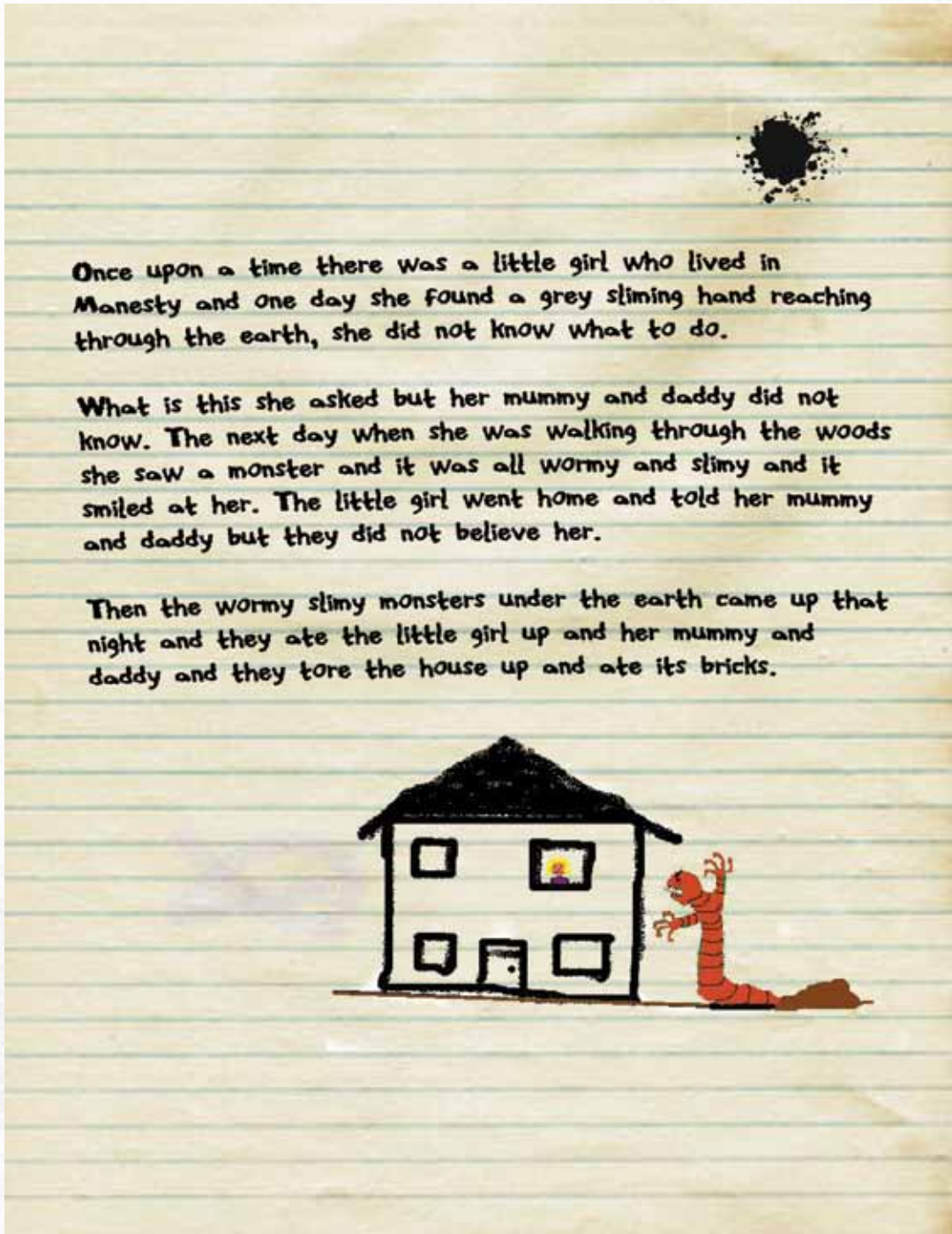
2.



TRAIL OF CTHULHU

The Dance in the Blood

Handout: A Child's Story in an Exercise Book



Once upon a time there was a little girl who lived in Manesty and one day she found a grey slimy hand reaching through the earth, she did not know what to do.

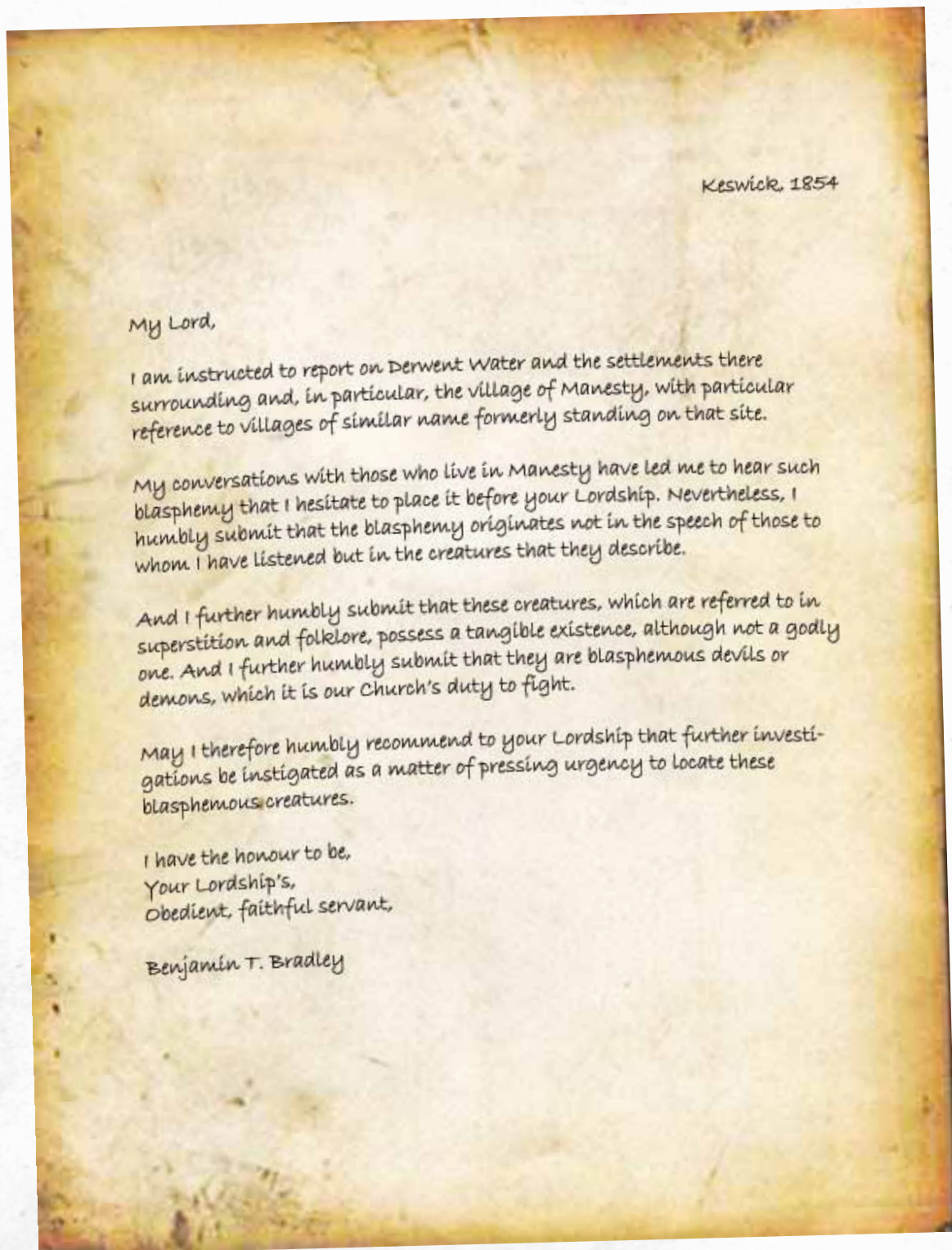
What is this she asked but her mummy and daddy did not know. The next day when she was walking through the woods she saw a monster and it was all wormy and slimy and it smiled at her. The little girl went home and told her mummy and daddy but they did not believe her.

Then the wormy slimy monsters under the earth came up that night and they ate the little girl up and her mummy and daddy and they tore the house up and ate its bricks.

TRAIL OF CTHULHU

Handouts

Handout: A Letter to the Bishop of Carlisle



TRAIL OF CTHULHU

Handouts

Handout: A Map of Manesty

