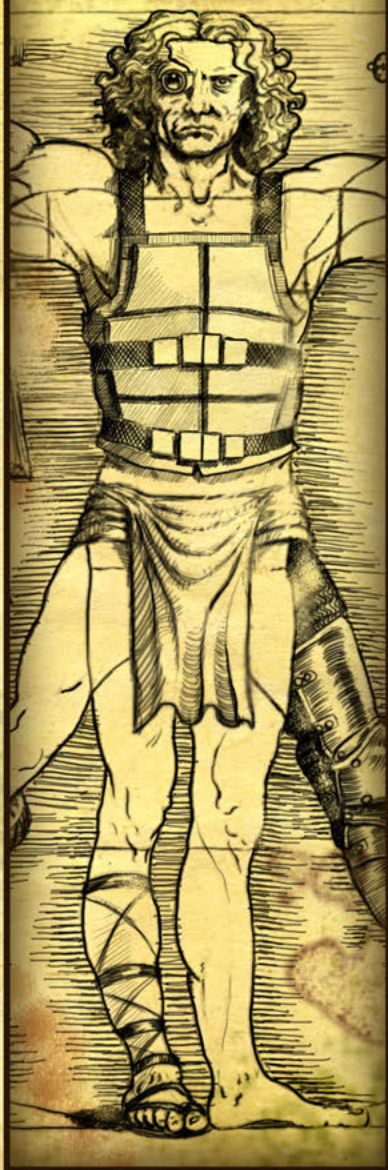


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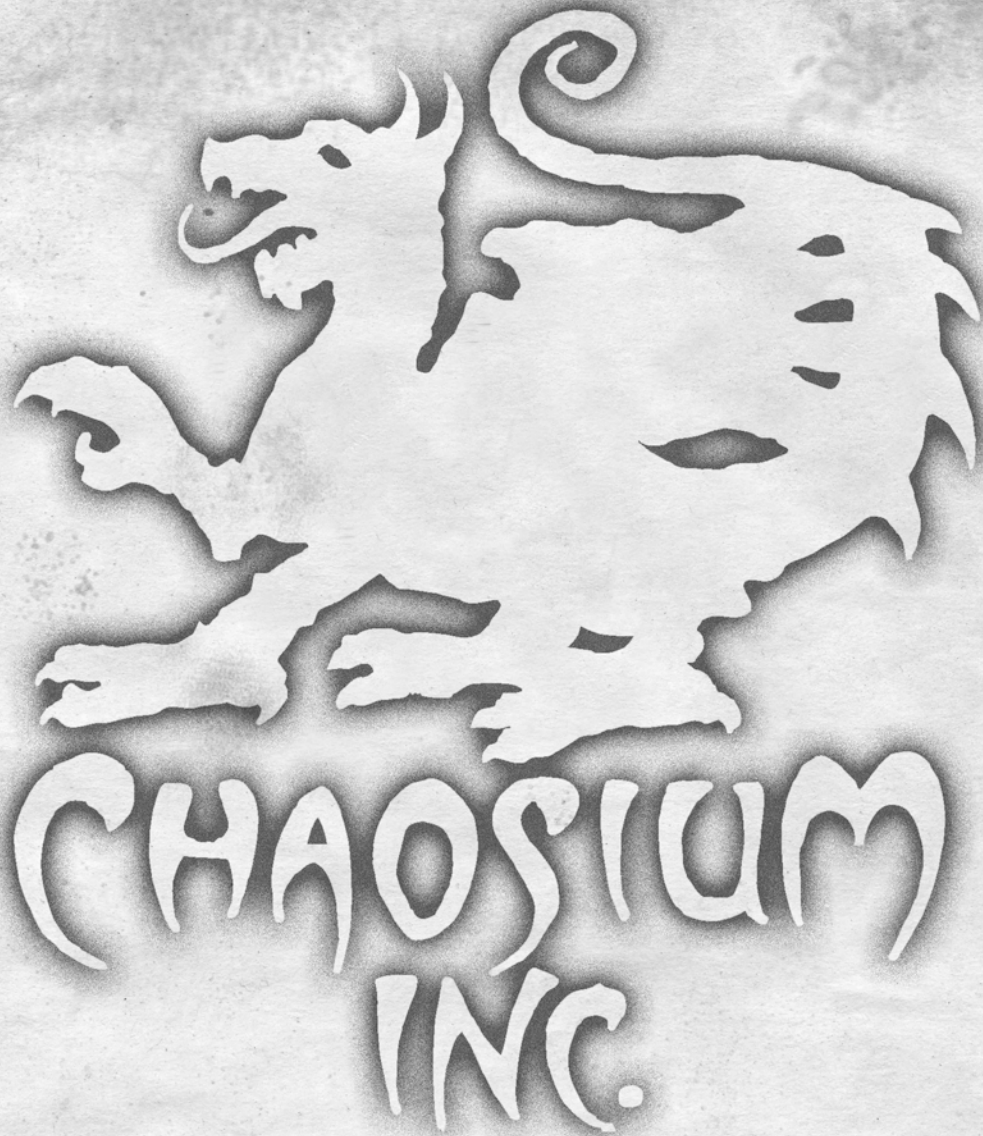
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A NATION RANSOMED

AND OTHER BRP ADVENTURES BY

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ENDLESS SUMMER

BY KEVIN SCRIVNER

OVERVIEW

The player-characters stumble upon one of those quaint, mysterious little towns that aren't on any map. In this case, it's Surfside, California, a Norman Rockwell community that hasn't aged a day since 1966 where every pop music and teen exploitation movie cliché is true. Will the heroes stay to enjoy an apparently endless beach party or escape the perils inherent in eternal youth? Cue Rod Serling.

SURF CITY, HERE WE COME

Since *Endless Summer* confronts the player-characters' with the inexplicable, their professions and backgrounds matter less than in other scenarios. They can come from any milieu or time period after the 1960s. However, skills they'd find useful include Drive (Automobile, Motorcycle), Piloting (Surfboard), Perform (Sing, Dance or Play Instrument), and Repair (Mechanical). Also, the heroes' specific reasons for traveling along the California coast don't matter, unless the Game Master has given them a deadline of some kind in another story arc. *Endless Summer* can easily be a strange interlude among other adventures. .

Surfside, California, is a picturesque beach community of less than 1,000 people off the main highway. There's a brick four-block downtown crammed with colorful small businesses oriented toward tourists; a City Hall that also serves as a jail/office for its two-man police force and a station for its volunteer fire department; a tiny public library; three or four

white-steepled churches; and one or two professional offices. There are rental beach cottages scattered along the water's edge as well as a rickety two-story hotel built in the 1930s. Townspeople, many of whom are farmers and ranchers, live inland. Also inland at the edges of town are a few additional businesses and the high school. The Game Master should feel free to add locations other than the ones detailed below. One of the peculiarities of Surfside is that places (and their proprietors) tend to pop up only when the PCs are specifically looking for them then vanish. That beachfront hotdog stand or run-down rural gas station may not be there the next time the heroes pass that way.

When the player-characters arrive, it is a sunny weekend afternoon. Many of the non-entertainment businesses and offices are closed, and downtown is plastered with hand-lettered posters and fliers announcing the big Beach Party at 7 p.m. The street and sidewalks are swarming with teenagers and college kids, most of whom are in beach wear, and adults are decidedly in the minority. Chief Rickert and Deputy Piper are frantically trying to keep chatty pedestrians from blocking the road and youthful motorists from running them over. The wide golden postcard-perfect beach that can be seen beyond the storefronts is already filling up with groups of surfers and bathers, clusters of shining vehicles, tents, and barbecue pits. With a successful Know or Spot roll, adventurers may gradually realize that there seem to be two girls for every boy (a good thing, unless one happens to be a lonely surfer girl).

I (DON'T) GET AROUND

When the player-characters attempt to continue on their journey, they'll be turned back by a polite but firm state trooper. The highway south has been closed by a rockslide which will take some time to clear. He's telling the truth; huge boulders, crumbling from the Passion Point cliff, have indeed made the way impassable. The highway in the opposite direction is also closed, this time by a severe wreck involving local teenagers. If the adventurers attempt to go around the wreck anyway, they'll be pursued both by state police and by the Purple People Eater, who caused the accident by attempting to snatch underage snacks from a passing convertible. If the PCs attempt to leave via the eastward rural roads, they'll wind around interminably only to find themselves once more on the outskirts of Surfside. Stopping to ask farmers and ranchers for directions won't be any help. Cell phone reception is terrible on this part of the coast, regardless of the PCs' carrier, and the only radio signal they can pick up is from an AM Top 40 oldies station.

LOCATIONS IN SURFSIDE

Milt's Malt Shop

Fortunately for the kids of Surfside, Milt Mason never heard of cholesterol, calories, or cilantro. He serves wonderfully greasy patty melts and onion rings as well as malts so thick you can turn them upside down without spilling. The plump, balding Mason enjoys serving his adolescent customers but won't put up with any nonsense from them. He is assisted by his daughter, Rhonda. The malt shop is clean and cozy, with comfortable leather stools and booths, lots of chrome and neon decoration, and a massive jukebox that plays 45-rpm records for only a nickel apiece. A successful Know roll will help PCs realize that it plays no hit single produced after 1966. Also, Milt's cash register is a big, ornate electric affair, no digital display or credit card reader.

Handling Brothers, Auto Repair

Owned by Frank and Jim Handling (who also teaches auto shop at Surfside High), the shop is the town's primary supplier of auto parts and gasoline. It is also the hangout for local hot rod enthusiasts, who are forever tinkering with their vehicles in the adjacent lot. Jim will confidently explain to player-characters that auto mechanics instills responsibility and life skills in his students. Frank is impatient with the youngsters, especially since the sudden influx of out-of-town motorists has wiped out his entire fuel supply. He's expecting an emergency shipment "sometime tomorrow." The PCs are also out of luck if they need parts for a foreign-made car. The shop stocks parts only for vintage American-made vehicles such as are seen around town. Confronted with foreign or 21st century electronic auto components, Frank will scratch his head and mutter, "Maybe we can order something in."

Doc Ingram's Office

Dr. Earnst Ingram maintains a well-stocked and equipped infirmary at his home/office. It's a good thing, since the nearest hospital is 50 miles away. Ingram is a grizzled, avuncular old country physician who has overseen the births of most of Surfside's teens and, lately, has had to write the death certificates of far too many of them. He treated the boy who was supposedly attacked by a "surf monster" and determined that the cuts weren't made by animal claws. Doc Ingram has heard tales of the Grunch and the Little Old Lady from Pasadena from his youthful patients. He doesn't believe in them but is concerned about the upswing in traffic injuries and deaths. He's asked Jim Handling to discourage his students from building hot rods, a discussion that ended in a sharp argument.

Java and Jive

A coffeehouse and art gallery, Java and Jive is where the town's beatnik population hangs out, writes, paints, reads, recites poetry, defines and practices being hip, and samples exotic music and philosophies. Since it is a Norman Rock-

well community, the drug culture hasn't really reached Surfside. However, J&J sells incense, love beads, and the sorts of exotic items that made (or in Surfside's case, will make) Pier 1 Imports a multimillion dollar business. Ruth Goldstein, owner and artist in residence, is a sexy young divorcee who favors long hair, leotards, and tight sweaters that show her figure to advantage. Her neighboring shopkeepers think she's weird but Surfside's teenagers, especially the boys, think she's cool.

Rocket Drive-In Theater

This venerable twin-screen facility offers RCA in-car speakers, a well-maintained playground in front of each screen, and busy concession stands that serve a variety of snacks that are plentiful, if not as tasty as the ones found at Milt's. It's a popular nighttime hangout for the town's youth that shows anything from classic films, to avant-garde art movies, to the latest exploitation shockers. Randall Jenkins, the acerbic owner, has brushed off pastoral and parental complaints about some of the movies he screens, but he also has a couple of burly "ushers" on hand to ensure that his theater doesn't become one of the "passion pits" derided in national newspapers and magazines.

Sun and Surf Hotel

The small two-story wooden hotel once catered to the Hollywood crowd, but that was a long time ago. The hotel's conference room/dance floor, The Kahuna Room, is still the largest meeting place in Surfside. It is decorated with ancient photos of a much younger Freeny couple posing with celebrities. "Hot-Platter" Hensley has installed himself there in preparation for the night's talent contest. Old Man Freeny and his wife have run the place as long as anyone can remember and keep the hotel in a reasonable state of repair and cleanliness. There is "just one more" room if the player-characters need accommodations. Ma Freeny is a bustling grandmotherly type who will constantly pop up as if by magic to inquire about the adventurers' needs. Old Man Freeny is something of a

grouch, but he's a fast and efficient handyman. He'll rapidly solve any hotel-related problems for the PCs, grumbling under his breath the whole while.

Sun and Surf is located near the wave-sculpted boulders and grottos that ultimately rise up to Passion Point. Old Man Freeny insists that the adjacent beach belongs to the hotel and its guests; he will attempt to shoo away beach users who aren't his customers. It's quite a sore point with him. Ma Freeny will shake her head and sympathetically nod to "interlopers."

Surfside High School

A Works Progress Administration era brick building, the high school has been buttoned up for the summer. However, athletic teams are starting to work out on the football field and track, and Jim Handling occasionally goes to the auto shop for tools and manuals. The mostly deserted campus is a sometime location for fights or romantic trysts. The school's equipment-laden shops, laboratories, and storage closets might provide supplies necessary to defeat the town's various monsters, if someone can persuade an adult with the keys to unlock the doors.

LOCATIONS NEAR SURFSIDE

Five-Mile Road

Five-Mile Road is a lonely rural access road that follows the cliff's edge when the state highway veers inland. It re-joins the main road past Dead Man's Curve. Flat and fairly straight until the final sharp curve, it is the preferred place for young motorists to show off their racing skills.

Dead Man's Curve

The access road's entry ramp to the state highway is a sharp, 45-degree curve intended for slow-moving construction and farm vehicles, not fast-moving hot rods. One shoulder slopes sharply into rough ground and trees; the other is a sheer drop-off with a guard rail (frequently mended). Chief Rickert patrols the road peri-

odically to discourage reckless behavior, but he can,t be there all the time.

Graveyard

The road up to Passion Point winds through tree-clad slopes that open up into an old, semi-kept graveyard surrounded by rusted wrought iron fencing. If adventurers think about it, the place seems awfully large for such a small community, but then Surfside may have shrunk since its 1930s resort heyday. The sometime caretaker, Monty, will inevitably show up to harass the heroes if they attempt to sneak into the graveyard at night. Equally inevitably, he'll be nowhere around if they need his help against the Grunch, who tends to hang out there when it is not stalking lovers at nearby Passion Point.

Passion Point

Passion Point is a cliff top pasture surrounded by forest overlooking Surfside and providing a dramatic ocean view. It's a favorite spot for lovers to park. It's also the home of the Grunch, a local satyr-like cryptid that resents visitors. There is no barrier along the cliff's edge, and the drop is as dramatic as the view. A spur or finger of rock sticks out from the cliff. Brave boyfriends "prove" their love by making the difficult Climb to carve their girl's name in its flat surface.

Non-Player Characters

Despite its festive air, all is not placid in Surfside. Middle-aged and elderly townspeople sniff at the antics of the youthful tourists their businesses depend upon. The teens sneer that the "old folks" are "squares" who've forgotten how to have fun. Local kids butt heads with visiting youths. Surfers, bikers, hot rodders, jocks, and townspeople all compete to "own the beach," although what that means isn't exactly clear. The town also has its share of urban legends that might turn out to be all too true.

Frankie Adair, age: 18, profession: student

Frankie is a handsome, charismatic boy whose winning manner and athleticism have made him default leader of the surfers. Although basically a decent guy, he's become a bit too used to being able to talk his way into getting whatever he wants. Adair has aspirations of being a rock and roll singer. His voice isn't bad. With good breaks and some vocal training, he might be able to make a career of music. Unknown to his friends, Frankie's most popular songs were actually written by Edwin Wodenhouse III, who was encouraged to share his compositions by Rhonda Mason. Adair doesn't intend to steal credit for Edwin's creativity, not really. But he'd rather it not be widely known that his best material was written by the school nerd. Frankie also has a roving eye. His sometime girlfriend, Dee Dee DiMarco, is becoming tired of his glib excuses each time she catches him with a pretty admirer.

Frankie Adair, age: 18, profession: student

STR 10 CON 14 SIZ 10 INT 13

POW 11 DEX 14 APP 16

Move 10

Hit Points: 12

Damage Bonus: +0

Armor: None

Attacks: Brawl 25%, 1D4;

Grapple 50%, 1D4

Skills: Insight 17%; Knowledge (Surfing) 25%; Language (English) 65%; Language (Hawaiian) 30%; Martial Arts (Judo) 40%; Pilot (Surfboard) 70%; Perform (Dancing) 25%; Research 35%; Swim 45%

Louann "Honolulu Lulu" Bronson, age: 18, profession: student

A Navy brat, Louann's parents met while her Dad was stationed in Hawaii. She's a statuesque brunette with Pacific Islander features who transferred in about a year ago when her Dad was reassigned. Unlike other girls at Surfside High, who fawn over their athletic or hot

rod heroes, Bronson despises any boy who can't match her expertise at her favorite pastime, surfing. Raised in a military household with a bunch of older brothers, she's also pretty good at judo. Despite her aloof stance, she'll fall head over heels for the first male (including one of the PCs) who can best her. Louann is obviously a leading contender in the scheduled surfing competition, although some of the boys who organized the event would like to exclude her.

Louann "Honolulu Lulu" Bronson, age: 18, profession: student

STR 10 CON 11 SIZ 13 INT 13
POW 13 DEX 16 APP 15

Move: 10

Hit Points: 12

Damage Bonus: +0

Armor: None

Attacks: Brawl 25%, 1D4;

Grapple 50%, 1D4

Skills: Insight 17%; Knowledge (Surfing) 25%; Language (English) 65%; Language (Hawaiian) 30%; Martial Arts (Judo) 40%; Pilot (Surfboard) 70%; Perform (Dancing) 25%; Research 35%; Swim 45%

Kim Carnes, age: 14, profession: student

Johnny Defiant's tomboy little sister, Kim, is a would-be motorcycle moll. She's always looked up to him and followed his lead when he took on his new persona. Physically mature for her 14 years, Kim dresses to make herself look older and sexier than she really is. But she's an innocent rather than a tramp, secure in the knowledge that her big brother would pound anyone who tried to touch her. She just wants to be cool like Johnny. She's an excellent (if illegal) cyclist and in some ways is more level-headed than her brother because she's not worried about impressing The Pack. While Johnny is often irritated by her hero worship, her restraining presence has kept him out of real trouble and prevented him from becoming a genuine delin-

quent. Unlike her brother and his various high school rivals, she's not intimidated by Chief Rickert and won't be intimidated by the PCs. She'd even be willing to face down the Grunch, the Monster from the Surf, or the People Eater if she thought it would help Johnny.

Kim Carnes, age: 14, profession: student

STR 9 CON 10 SIZ 6 INT 15
POW 9 DEX 11 APP 10

Move: 10

Hit Points: 8

Damage Bonus: +0

Armor: None

Attacks: Grapple 25%, 1D4

Skills: Climb 45%; Dodge 42%; Drive (Motorcycle) 35%; Fast Talk 25%; Jump 45%; Knowledge (Surfside Legends) 35%; Language (English) 60%; Listen 45%; Perform (Look Better Than She Should in Biker Clothes) 45%; Research 35%

Johnny Defiant, age: 18, profession: student

John Carnes was a quiet kid nobody noticed until he saw Marlon Brando in "The Wild One" at the Rocket Drive-In Theater. Taking a new surname, Carnes re-styled himself as the local delinquent, used his summer chore money to purchase a motorcycle, and founded The Pack motorcycle gang. Neither Surfside nor Johnny have been quiet since. Although he can be loud and obnoxious, Johnny Defiant's behavior has been more mischievous than criminal, which explains why Chief Rickert exhibits a measure of tolerance when dealing with The Pack. The gang occasionally surrounds and taunts slower moving motorists, and members once created a giant display of stolen lawn ornaments on the City Hall green (Rickert made them return all the items to their proper yards). Although he tries to act tough, Johnny finds it hard to do so convincingly with his adoring little sister along. Defiant's rivalry with Moose Mulligan and his group of hot rodders, however, is heartfelt and real. Milt Mason and Jim Handling have

each broken up potential fights. And the long-promised race to Dead Man's Curve between the car and motorcycle enthusiasts could easily turn lethal. So far, Chief Rickert and Deputy Piper have prevented it from happening.

Johnny Defiant, age: 18, profession: student

STR 10 CON 11 SIZ 13 INT 11
POW 11 DEX 16 APP 8

Move: 10

Hit Points: 12

Damage Bonus: +0

Armor: 2 points (black leather jacket)

Attacks: Brawl 35%, 1D4; Knife 25%, 1D6

Skills: Drive (Motorcycle) 50%; Insight 35%; Knowledge (Brando Movies) 45%; Knowledge (Local Roads) 45%; Language (English) 55%; Repair (Motorcycle) 35%; Research 35%; Perform (Act Cool) 45%; Persuade 45%

Dee Dee DiMarco, age: 18, profession: student

DiMarco is spunky head cheerleader at Surfside High and Frankie Adair's on-again, off-again girlfriend. "Bubbly" describes both her personality and the way she fills out a swimsuit. Frankie's equal in every way, she can ride the wild surf with aplomb and sing and dance like a pro. Coming from a traditional Italian home, Dee Dee until recently had no ambition other than to marry Frankie when they got out of high school. Now she's not so sure. Maybe she should go to college instead. After all, her favorite magazines, and songs featured on "Music Mania," keep saying a brand new day has dawned and that a girl can do just about anything she wants to. Meanwhile, both Johnny Defiant and Moose Mulligan are vying to replace Frankie.

Dee Dee DiMarco, age: 18, profession: student

STR 11 CON 12 SIZ 12 INT 14
POW 12 DEX 14 APP 17

Move: 10

Hit Points: 12

Damage Bonus: +0

Armor: None (itsy-bitsy, teeny-weenie, yellow polka dot bikini; Whoa!)

Attacks: Grapple 35%, 1D4

Skills: Dodge 38%; Insight 35%; Knowledge (Cheerleading) 36%; Language (English) 70%; Perform (Dancing) 45%; Perform (Singing) 45%; Persuade 50%; Pilot (Surfboard) 40%; Research 25%; Swim 30%

The Grunch, age: unknown, profession: monster

The Grunch is a squat, dark, goat-footed humanoid with staring eyes and sharp yellow teeth that haunts Passion Point and the nearby graveyard. It delights in spooking parked couples by whispering their names while it flits from shadow to shadow. Once it reveals itself, it will snatch at victims' clothing and hair with its blunt talons but won't actually touch them unless they attack it. Lovers' cars are another matter. It will jump on their vehicles, stamp dents in their hoods with its hooves and pound on the roofs and doors with its fists or a tree branch. It will chase frightened teens to the far end of the graveyard but no further. If they glance in their rearview mirrors, they'll see it jumping up and down in the middle of the road and screeching.

The Grunch, age: unknown, profession: monster

STR 17 CON 14 SIZ 13 INT 13
POW 14 DEX 16 APP 7

Move: 10

Hit Points: 14

Damage Bonus: +1D4

Armor: 2 points (leathery skin)

Attacks: Head Butt 45%, 1D6+1D4;

Club 35%, 1D6+1D4

Skills: Climb 40%; Dodge 50%; Hide 50%; Jump 45%; Knowledge (Area: Graveyard and Passion Point) 60%; Perform (Mimicry) 40%; Perform (Ventriloquism) 55%; Persuade (Intimidate) 35%; Stealth 55%

Mick “Hot-Platter” Hensley, age: 31, profession: entertainer

Disc jockey and host of “Music Mania” (a popular rock CEn roll television program), Mick Hensley is in Surfside to judge the dance contest and talent show at the Beach Party. Winners will accompany him to Los Angeles to record their winning song. Hensley is a well-groomed man in his early thirties who prides himself on his ability to keep up with the ephemeral trends and slang of youth culture. He talks hip and can keep up an incessant stream of snappy patter. He wears a rather conservative suit and tie even when performing the most strenuous of dance steps. Despite his sunny, nice-guy demeanor he’ll make sure that his new stars sign contracts favorable to his employers’ interests.

Mick “Hot-Platter” Hensley, age: 31, profession: entertainer

STR 15 CON 11 SIZ 10 INT 12
POW 12 DEX 13 APP 11

Move: 10

Hit Points: 11

Damage Bonus: +1D4

Armor: None

Attacks: Brawl 25%, 1D4+1D4

Skills: Art (Wordplay) 25%; Disguise 06% (he thinks it is 35%); Fast Talk 45%; Fine Manipulation 45%; Insight 40%; Language (English) 60%; Language (Teen Slang) 35%; Listen 30%; Perform (Snappy Patter) 50%; Persuade 40%

Rhonda Mason, age: 18, profession: student

Nubile school flirt, Rhonda is Dee Dee’s rival at almost everything, including attracting Frankie’s interest. A pert, pony-tailed blonde, Rhonda’s not a bad kid when she isn’t sparring with DiMarco. She was one of the few students to be kind to John Carnes before his radical self-transformation (now she considers him a jerk). She works hard at her Dad’s malt shop after school, giving fast service and a blinding smile to each customer. She’s been best friends

with Edwin Wodenhouse since first grade and shares all her hopes and disappointments with him, oblivious to the fact that Edwin is crazy about her but too shy to say so.

Rhonda Mason, age: 18, profession: student

STR 9 CON 11 SIZ 14 INT 13
POW 12 DEX 15 APP 17

Move: 10

Hit Points: 14

Damage Bonus: +0

Armor: None

Attacks: Grapple 25%, 1D4

Skills: Art (Cooking) 36%; Bargain 45%; Fine Manipulation 45%; Knowledge (Business) 35%; Knowledge (Group: Surfside High School Teens) 45%; Language (English) 65%; Pilot (Surfboard) 25%; Research 45%; Sense (Woman’s Intuition) 45%; Swim 45%

The Monster from the Surf (Yeah, yeah, yeah)

Around beach bonfires or clustered safely around the tables at Milt’s, Surfside teens only half-jokingly tell tales of a marine monster that makes lone swimmers and snuggling beachside couples vanish. Descriptions of the supposed “Monster from the Surf” vary. Verifiable victims are few, although a boy did come running from the beach a few weeks ago with minor cuts on his arms and shoulders which he said were inflicted by the creature.

There are actually two monsters. Old Man Freeny, tired of unsuccessfully trying to shoo smart-aleck kids away from “his” beach, has used the skills he acquired as a Hollywood costume designer to construct a leather and rubber monster suit in order to scare them away. The outfit looks pretty silly by daylight but lit by only the moon or a bonfire it is effective. The heavy materials give the old man some protection against boys valiant enough to defend their girlfriends, although they also make his own movements slow and clumsy. The knife-like claws are sharper and more dangerous than

Freeny intended. He hasn't seriously injured or killed anyone (yet) but he might if he loses his temper.

Old Man Freeny, age: 66, profession: craftsman (Monster #1)

STR 12 CON 14 SIZ 11 INT 11
POW 9 DEX 8 APP 9

Move: 8

Hit Points: 13

Damage Bonus: +0

Armor: 3 points (rubber and leather costume)

Attacks: Claws 25%, 1D6;

Grapple 30%, 1D4

Skills: Appraise (Wardrobe) 40%; Art (Costume Design) 50%; Craft (Leatherworking) 40%; Craft (Theatrical Makeup) 40%; Language (English) 55%; Repair (Electrical) 55%; Repair (Mechanical) 55%; Research 35%; Status 20%; Spot 35%

Meanwhile, a real sea creature has been released from hibernation in an undersea cavern by the same rockslide that blocked the highway. This is a 9-foot long carnivorous marine worm with sharp pincer-like mandibles and bulging bug-like eyes. Although it eats fish, it is capable of waddling on shore to catch unwary teenagers.

Giant Marine Worm, age: prehistoric, profession: monster (Monster #2)

STR 35 CON 24 SIZ 31 INT 2
POW 8 DEX 12

Move: 5/10 swimming

Hit Points: 23

Damage Bonus: +3D6

Armor: None

Attacks: Bite 45%, 1D6+3D6

Skills: Climb 40%; Swim 65%; Track 35%

Powers: Water-Breathing

Cosgrove "Moose" Mulligan, age: 18, profession: student

Popular varsity athlete and Jim Handling's most ardent auto shop student, Moose Mulligan is the leader of Surfside High's hot rod faction. He's also the school bully, tormenting students who lack athletic prowess or an interest in cars. Mulligan's twin obsessions have fueled conflict with Frankie Adair (who rejects his definition of an athlete) and Johnny Defiant (who rejects his vehicular preference). Vain and arrogant, Moose considers himself God's gift to Surfside's co-eds. He's vainly pursued pretty Rhonda Mason but has recently begun trying to talk to Dee Dee DiMarco, mainly to get on Adair's nerves. He's avoided Louann Bronson since she humiliated him with a judo throw in the lunchroom shortly after her arrival. Cosgrove ignores Edwin Wodenhouse when he isn't actually punching him and is unaware what a vehement enemy he has created for himself. Despite all his macho bluster, Mulligan tries to stay out of sight when Chief Rickert is around because he has received a fistful of tickets and spent a night in jail for drag racing.

Cosgrove "Moose" Mulligan, age: 18, profession: student

STR 16 CON 13 SIZ 14 INT 9
POW 11 DEX 14 APP 10

Move: 10

Hit Points: 14

Damage Bonus: +1D4

Armor: 1 point (letterman's jacket)

Attacks: Brawl 60%, 1D4+1D4

Skills: Dodge 43%; Drive 60%; Knowledge (Football) 55%; Language (English) 45%; Persuade (Intimidate) 45%; Repair (Automobile) 55%; Research 25%; Throw 55%

The Little Old Lady from Pasadena, age: 82, profession: librarian, former race car driver

The prim, white-haired guardian of Surfside's small, cramped library seems as much a fixture as its bulky card catalog. She'll imperiously shush noisy PCs or expertly help them look up information. She routinely walks the three blocks from her house to the library. However, Agnes Perriweather leads a double life. Unknown to her patrons, she's a former Hollywood stunt driver, a veteran of Daytona Beach, and an experienced transcontinental racer. At night, after work, she can't resist trying to relive her glory days by challenging Surfside's arrogant teen hot rodders. She cruises the highway and rural roads in a cherry-red 1964 Dodge Polara so bright it practically glows in the dark. Unrecognizable in her helmet, goggles, and racing suit, she's become a local urban legend, defeating every driver who has attempted to race her. Some of these contests have ended in tragedy, causing Perriweather to be even more circumspect about her hobby. She maintains the Polara in the barn of a small farm she owns at the edge of town and attempts to keep apprised of Chief Rickert's patrol schedule. So far, few adults have seen her, although Deputy Piper vainly tried to chase her once. No one believed him, either.

The Little Old Lady from Pasadena, age: 82, profession: librarian, former race car driver

STR 8 CON 9 SIZ 7 INT 13
POW 12 DEX 17 APP 11

Move: 10

Hit Points: 8

Damage Bonus: -1D4

Armor: 4 points (racing helmet, racing costume)

Attacks: Brawl 25%, 1D4-1D4;

Tire Iron 25%, 1D8-1D4

Skills: Appraise (Other Drivers) 35%; Art (Acting) 45%; Drive (Automobile) 75%; Insight 35%; Knowledge (Local Roads) 45%; Language

(English) 65%; Navigate 30%; Repair (Automobile Maintenance) 35%; Research 55%; Spot 30%

Deputy Piper, age: 43, profession: lawman

James Piper dreamt of being a hero but was born to be a sidekick. Fussy and officious, he's good at handling all the paperwork and dull police routine so that Chief Rickert can be Surfside's visible symbol of law and order. Piper doesn't think the citizenry pays him enough respect, particularly the kids. But Rickert would be crippled without him. Piper doesn't lack courage. After several frightened couples reported appearances by the Grunch, it was he who thrashed around in the dark woods, inadvertently chasing the creature back to its lair. Piper wrongly suspects that Johnny Defiant and his friends were behind the incidents.

Deputy Piper, age: 43, profession: lawman

STR 12 CON 14 SIZ 13 INT 15
POW 10 DEX 15 APP 12

Move: 10

Hit Points: 14

Damage Bonus: +1D4

Armor: None

Attacks: Brawl 40%, 1D4+1D4

Shotgun 50%, 4D6/2D6/1D6

Skills: Dodge 31%; Drive 30%; Fast Talk 35%; Insight 35%; Knowledge (Law) 40%; Knowledge (Surfside Residents) 35%; Language (English) 75%; Listen 35%; Science (Criminology) 30%; Spot 35%; Track 40%

Purple People Eater, age: 463 (Acturan), profession: scholar

It has one long horn, one big eye, flies via vast insectile wings, and craves human flesh. A musicologist from Arcturus IV, the People Eater got wind of "Hot-Platter" Hensley's contest while monitoring Earth broadcast transmissions and decided to investigate the phenomenon called rock 'n roll. It hadn't intended to snack on its

research specimens but the planet's dominant species is just so darn tasty. The "horn" is actually a razor-tipped proboscis for injecting digestive juices into its prey, a process which turns human tissues purple. Prehensile talons enable the People Eater to perch on trees and boulders like a bird. And, yes, given the opportunity it can sing, though its high-pitched voice is one human ears may find unpleasant.

**Purple People Eater, age: 463 (Acturan),
profession: scholar**

STR 12 CON 11 SIZ 22 INT 26
POW 15 DEX 11 APP 3

Move: 6/12 flying

Hit Points: 17

Damage Bonus: +1D6

Armor: 5 points (exoskeleton)

Attacks: Bite 35%, 1D6+1D6;

Grapple 25%, 1D4+1D6

Skills: Appraise (Music) 30%; Climb 40%; Dodge 22%; Drive (Chariot of the Gods) 20%; Fly 44%; Hide 10%; Jump 25%; Knowledge (Intergalactic Musical Styles) 45%; Language (Acturan) 130%; Language (English) 40%; Listen 50%; Navigate 30%; Perform (Singing) 37%; Persuade 25%; Research 55%; Science (Musicology) 55%; Science (Xeno-anthropology) 35%; Spot 25%; Stealth 25%; Teach 10%; Track 10%

Powers: Armor (Kinetic) 5; Drain (Hit Points, 1D6) 10; Extra Energy 13 (+130 power points); Flight 8 (uses 7 just to lift off); Super Hearing (60 meter range) 6; Wall Walking 10

Chief Rickert, age 54, profession: lawman

A veteran of both World War II and the Korean conflict, Stan Rickert can be a trifle stern because he represents Authority, but that's a good thing. In a world beset by unsettling political and social changes, he can be depended upon to provide stability, enforce traditional values, and protect the citizenry from the forces of evil.

Chief Rickert is the first person folks turn to when they encounter the inexplicable. His coercive power is tempered by his compassion for and understanding of the people of Surfside. He knows the names of all the kids and who their parents are, when the business owners tend to open and close their shops, and whose dogs, cattle or children are prone to run loose. He won't put up with any nonsense from the player-characters, but he'll also be there to pull their vehicle out of a ditch or provide first aid if they've been injured. And he'll insist on leading the way when they want to investigate those bizarre tracks leading down into the hollow.

Chief Rickert, age 54, profession: lawman

STR 13 CON 16 SIZ 16 INT 14
POW 13 DEX 12 APP 11

Move: 10

Hit Points: 16

Damage Bonus: +1D4

Armor: None

Attacks: Brawl 55%, 1D4+1D4;

Pistol 60%, 1D8

Skills: Dodge 44%; Drive 40%; Fast Talk 20%; First Aid 40%; Knowledge (Law) 35%; Knowledge (Surfside Residents) 45%; Language (English) 70%; Listen 40%; Spot 55%

**Edwin Wodenhouse III, age: 18, profession:
student**

Edwin is Surfside High's official brainy weirdo and host of the weekly beat poetry sessions at Java and Jive. He's loved Rhonda Mason since first grade but has recently been distracted by the curvaceous Ms. Goldstein. Wodenhouse is an imaginative introvert who loves reading science fiction and comic books, composing poetry and pop tunes, and discussing the social and political events he hears about on the nightly news. (His books, comics, and writings are carefully hidden from his parents.) Edwin dived into the beatnik scene in an attempt to

come out of his shell and become hip. Part of his attraction to Ruth Goldstein is that she's the first person other than Rhonda to take him seriously. The coffee shop meetings give him an outlet for his writing and political ideas, and he'll eagerly recruit anyone who will listen to him. Wodenhouse passionately hates Moose Mulligan, who has hit on Rhonda (romantically) and himself (literally) throughout high school. He'll transfer that rage to any PC who seems to be paying Rhonda undue attention.

Edwin Wodenhouse III, age: 18, profession: student

STR 9 CON 12 SIZ 12 INT 17

POW 12 DEX 10 APP 10

Move: 10

Hit Points: 12

Damage Bonus: +0

Armor: None

Attacks: Grapple 25%, 1D4

Skills: Art (Poetry, Lyrics) 50%; Hide 45%; Knowledge (Surfside Legends) 40%; Knowledge (Beat Culture) 20%; Language (English) 85%; Listen 45%; Perform (Vocal Recitation) 35%; Persuade 35%; Research 50%; Stealth 45%

ENCOUNTERS

She's So Fine, My 409

Teenagers are a notoriously touchy lot, and the heroes will have plenty of opportunities to run afoul of one or more of the male NPCs. He will, in time-honored Surfside High tradition, challenge the adventurers to a duel of skill. If the PCs' car is in operable condition and one or more of them has a good Drive skill level, it will be an evening drag race on Five-Mile Road to Dead Man's Curve. If the heroes have been stranded in Surfside by car problems (or their vehicle has been damaged by a jealous NPC) or if no PC has a sufficient skill level, the duel will be a sunset surfing contest or a Kahuna Room dance-off during the Beach Party. The PCs

may balk at taking up a challenge from callow youths, but the offended teen and his friends will taunt them incessantly as cowards (when Chief Rickert or Deputy Piper aren't around) until they agree.

Of course, adolescents' (or player-characters') lives are never so simple. If the contest is a drag race, the Little Old Lady from Pasadena may hear of it and come roaring into the middle of the course, swerving ahead of and cutting off the lead car. She won't hesitate to attempt to run the other drivers off the road, a potentially fatal maneuver if racers have reached Dead Man's Curve. If the PCs are involved in a surfing competition, the Monster from the Surf (one or both of them) may choose that moment to drive teenagers from the beach. The heroes will have to team up with their erstwhile rivals to beat the monster off and prevent it from seizing a lovely co-ed. If the contest is a dance-off, see "Sure Looks Strange to Me."

You Don't Own Me

After yet another fight with Frankie, Dee Dee DiMarco has determined to flirt with other males to make him jealous. Unfortunately, she picks one of the PCs as her target and will lavish him with loving attention whether he welcomes it or not. This could rouse the ire not only of Adair but of Johnny Defiant, Moose Mulligan as well as adult citizens concerned about the adventurers "seducing" one of their kids. Should the player-character attempt respond to Dee Dee's undeniable charms beyond chaste hand-holding, he'll receive a stinging slap and she will flee back to Frankie in tears. On the other hand, if Frankie responds by paying Rhonda Mason more notice, DiMarco will become even more obviously fond of the PC and will give him occasional public pecks on the cheek, although she'll conveniently Dodge out of the way on some pretext if he attempts to kiss her back.

Rock Around the Clock Tonight

As the adventurers pass by or through the Kahuna Room at the Sun and Surf Hotel, Mick

Hensley asks for their assistance in setting up for the night's activities. If they agree, he'll have them do microphone sound checks and perform some footwork to make sure there is plenty of open space for dancing, in addition to moving heavy stuff. Hensley is impressed by the PCs' voices and/or smooth moves. He will invite them to participate in the singing and/or dancing contests. If the heroes don't help out Hensley but have become entangled with Dee Dee DiMarco, Rhonda Mason or Louann Bronson, she will insist on their accompanying her to the contest to witness her performance. Midway through, she'll invite them to join her on stage. If the adventurers have become inadvertent rivals of one or more of the male NPCs, this will only increase the tension.

Leader of the Pack

Johnny Defiant and his band of motorcyclists surround the player-characters' vehicle, revving their engines and shouting taunts. They'll follow the adventurers for several blocks (or miles if the PCs are outside of town) but will quickly disappear if Chief Rickert or Deputy Piper drive by. The Pack members are cocky and smart-aleck, but they are just a bunch of show-offs. They'll run like deer if the PCs actually stop to fight them. And the adventurers could get arrested if they allow the youths to goad them into throwing the first punch. Johnny Defiant will hold a grudge if the PCs humiliate him in front of his friends and will seek some means of revenge.

Love Potion #9

Among the exotic sales counter items at Java and Jive is a cologne labeled simply "Number Nine." It is an effective aphrodisiac (POT 18 poison) capable of causing all sorts of romantic mayhem should the PCs purchase and use it. The wearer will attract the increasingly amorous attentions of any NPC member of the opposite sex within 6 to 10 feet; the results are less effective in the open and more effective in an enclosed space and are cumulative. The co-

logne doesn't wash off with water but wears off in about four to six hours.

Sure Looks Strange to Me

The People Eater decides to eavesdrop on Mick Hensley's dancing and singing contests. It is smart, stealthy and not currently interested in a meal, but with that many kids milling about the Sun and Surf Hotel, someone is bound to Spot it latched to the building's side or peering through a window of the Kahuna Room. Or it may become so entranced by Frankie Adair's (or the player-characters') performance that it can't resist singing along. Either way, chaos ensues. Alternately, it may decide to "collect" one or more of the contestants and take him back home for further study. Inevitably, Dee Dee DiMarco or Rhonda Mason will be among the "specimens" it grabs. The PCs will have to mount a rescue attempt if they want to see their friends again.

Teen Angel(s)

Player-characters traveling the road to Passion Point may Spot a feminine figure flitting among the graveyard monuments and headstones. If they investigate, it is Agnes Perriweather putting flowers on the graves of men who (if the PCs check the dates) all died in their late teens or early twenties. Miss Perriweather will flee if she detects the heroes, and she's got the Driving skill to ensure her escape. Research, if the PCs can talk their way into accessing City Hall records or the bi-weekly newspaper's morgue, will reveal that all the young men whose graves Perriweather was honoring died in traffic accidents.

That Crazy Buck Rogers Stuff

If PCs flash around 21st century electronics (cell phones, portable media devices, electronic watches, pocket calculators, laptop or tablet computers, etc.) Edwin Wodenhouse III will notice and become convinced that the adventurers are space aliens out to either conquer Surfside or steal its women. Star Trek hasn't yet aired in town (it debuted in September

1966) but Wodenhouse has grown up watching creature features at the drive-in movie theater. Chief Rickert won't believe him, but some of his fellow teens might. The kids will attempt to discreetly follow the player-characters wherever they go to find out what they are up to. Encounters with the People Eater or discovery of its flying saucer will only cement the teenagers' conviction that the heroes are an outer space Fifth Column.

Save Your Heart for Me

If a female non-player character is flirting with the heroes, or if one of the PCs has used "Number Nine" cologne, his "love interest" will inevitably invite him up to Passion Point "to enjoy the view." Alternately, angry PCs may learn that the jealous teen that sabotaged their car and stranded them in Surfside has gone up to the Point with his girl. Either way, they'll arrive as shadows darken the woods and a gorgeous moon shines above. Will a furious boyfriend or a dutiful Deputy Piper interrupt any hanky-panky? Will the Grunch make its appearance? Are Milt Mason's nachos covered with jalapeno slices?

GETTING AWAY

If the heroes elect to leave Surfside, ways to escape include:

Win the surfing competition

If one of the PCs wins the surfing competition, excited contestants will insist on their lining up with their boards in the surf for a group photograph. The group will be overwhelmed by an especially big wave. When the heroes come up for air, they'll find themselves on an empty time-altered beach with their unlocked vehicle parked conveniently nearby. Surfside is nowhere to be seen. On the front passenger's seat of their vehicle is an aged photograph of the grinning group, with Honolulu Lulu hugging the winner adoringly. A seashell necklace identical to the one she wears in the photo hangs from their rearview mirror. Later, a curi-

ous friend or co-worker will point out a reproduction of the same photo in a book of surfing history, with the adventurers' names in the caption. The book, written by a Louann Sorensen, Ph.D., lists the contest winner as one of the pioneers of the sport.

Win the dancing and/or singing competitions

"Hot-Platter" Hensley has a limousine waiting to whisk talented contest winners to his recording studio. The chauffeur will dutifully drive the triumphant adventurers and their companions to Hensley's Los Angeles business address, then disappear into traffic. Unfortunately, the sponsoring radio and television stations are a forgotten chapter in music history. "Music Mania" went off the air more than 40 years ago, and the site currently houses a series of junky Hispanic shops. However, if they didn't leave it on the limo seat, the PCs will still have Hensley's collection of now-priceless 45-rpm records, original recordings of classic rock 'n roll singles.

Defeat the Little Old Lady from Pasadena in a drag race

Heroes who can out-drive the Little Old Lady from Pasadena and survive Dead Man's Curve will find themselves suddenly back on the main state highway headed in the direction they were originally traveling. They have enough gasoline to make it to the next decent-sized town. See "Aftermath" if they attempt to turn back. About a week later, the adventurers will receive an envelope from an attorney's office which contains a pink slip, keys, and instructions on where to pick up a fully restored 1964 Dodge Polara, "only driven on Sundays," willed to them by an anonymous former owner.

Steal the Purple People Eater's flying saucer

If the PCs defeat or elude the People Eater, they'll discover its flying saucer parked beside the highway nearby, which they can use to fly away. Despite the creature's disgusting culinary preferences, it has a sense of style. The saucer is an Ed Roth fantasy, featuring a transparent

bubble top, voluptuously curved engine pods, gracefully arcing tail fins, and chrome that just won't quit. It has enough room in its finely crafted leather interior to accommodate the heroes and any companions they've acquired. The saucer operates with conventional Drive skill; it is possibly the only spacecraft in existence with a stick shift, hanging fuzzy dice, and a shiny barefoot gas pedal. Despite its utility, the saucer will also bring the heroes unwanted attention from organizations such as the Federal Aviation Administration and the U.S. Air Force and will act as a general B-movie weirdness magnet as long as it remains in their possession.

AFTERMATH

If the player-characters succeed in escaping Surfside, they'll find it gone if they attempt to return. The dramatic promontory of Passion Point has been replaced by a more gradual slope to the sea and the highway has been re-routed. Most other landmarks have been erased by a series of huge shopping centers. Casual inquiries will misdirect investigators to Seal Beach, CA. Extensive research of the newspaper archives of nearby towns or of state land records will eventually reveal that there was once a small seaside community at that location. It was swept into the Pacific by a mudslide on the last day of summer, 1966.

Any youthful companions the PCs bring with them from Surfside won't suddenly age 40 years or anything icky like that. They will, however, begin to age normally and will find themselves hopelessly out of date on current events and teen culture. Attempts to contact their relatives or friends who lived outside of Surfside could be traumatic. Older relations will likely be deceased. Former peers and younger relatives will probably be grandparents and may be unwilling to acknowledge the return of their un-aged "dead" loved ones.

THE SKULL OF THE SLEEPER

BY STEVE DEVANEY

The Skull of the Sleepers is a short fantasy adventure designed for four to six competent characters of heroic campaign level. A spellcaster with healing spells would greatly improve the party's chances of survival. Melee Weapon and Missile Weapon skills as well as Knowledge (Jungle Survival), Knowledge (Region), Martial Arts (Melee Weapon), First Aid and Medicine will come in handy.

The drama is set on the northern coast of the tropical island of Ahjarum, one of a series of islands in an archipelago known as the Crescent Moon. However, with a minimal amount of adjustment this adventure can easily be placed in any fantasy campaign setting of the GM's choosing. All attack percentages for creatures and NPCs are given with the total skill value first, followed by the percentage chance of special and critical successes respectively (i.e. Bite 70%-14%-04%). Though the Islands of the Crescent Moon will be described with more detail in the forthcoming Chaosium monograph *The Merchant's Scale*, enough information on the islands is given within this text to thoroughly play the adventure.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

The Islands of the Crescent Moon compose a ring-shaped archipelago that was originally the product of a massive underwater volcanic eruption; an eruption that is hypothesized to be infernal in origin.

The islands themselves rest upon the upper crests of the rim of a gargantuan volcanic cone, and the water sheltered within the ring of these

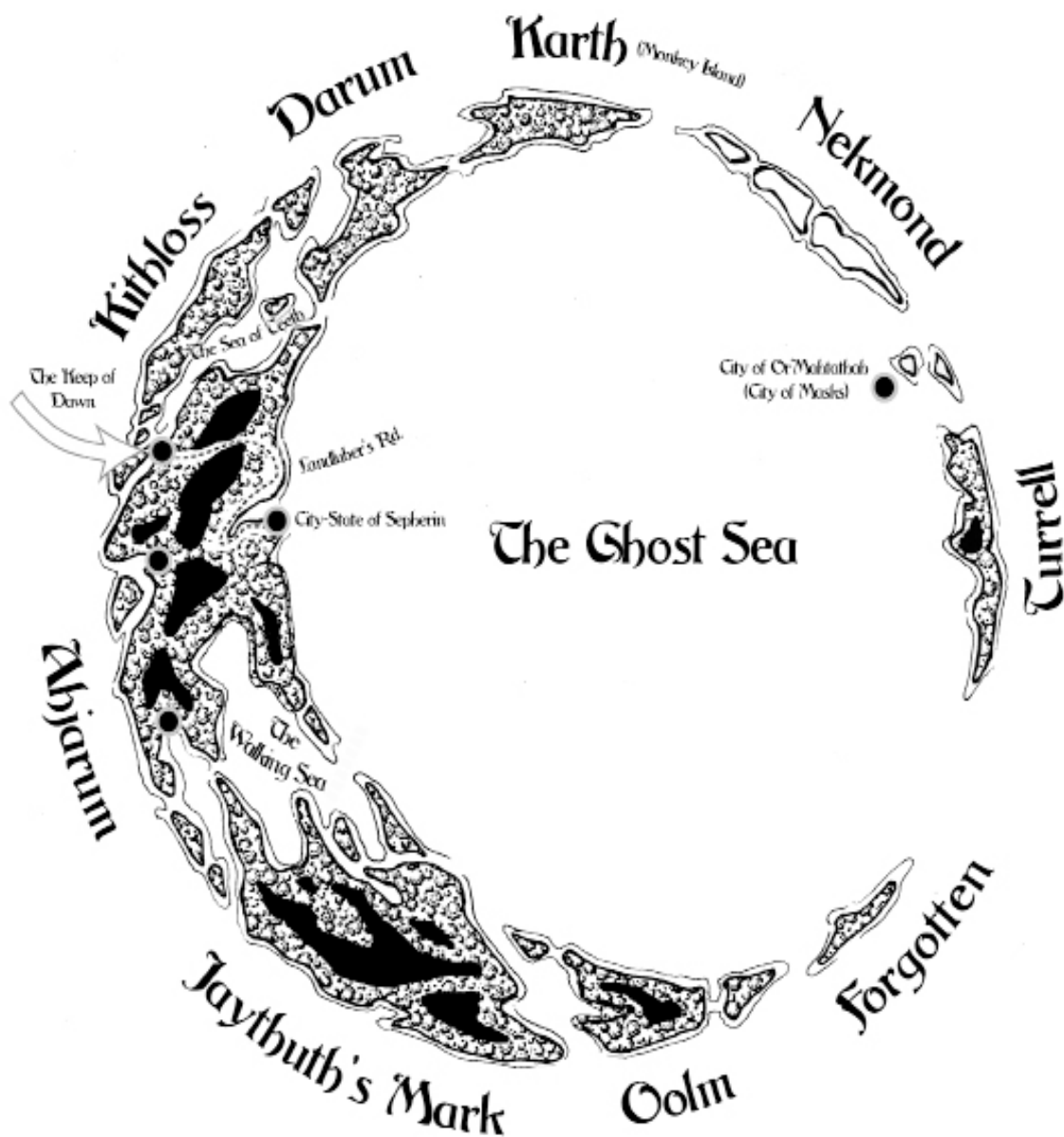
islands covers a vast, abyssal crater of unknown depths. A great amount of superstition and fear has sprung up regarding these central waters, known as the Ghost Sea. It is a common belief among sailors that the ocean here has no bottom and that ships sinking here do not stop their descent until they have reached Hell itself. Even to this day sailors treat the Ghost Sea with a great amount of fear and superstition, preferring to sail as close to shore whenever possible.

Shrouded by vines in the jungles of the surrounding islands stands serpentine statuary of green stone, the remnants of a fallen civilization long gone even before the archipelago was discovered. The Minokoon (savages who live in the jungles and ritualistically hunt each others' heads) tell a legend of an ancient and powerful race of reptilian beings called the Chothlahsah, creatures believed to have made pacts with devils and once ruled a maritime empire from these islands.

The exotic City-State of Sepherin is a merchant metropolis located on the island of Ahjarum. Presently governed by an oligarchy composed of the city's richest merchant houses, Sepherin is renowned for its decadence. Its architecture sprawls along the southern coast of a bay that is famously rich with pearls. Travelers say that anything can be found here for a price, any desire satisfied, no matter how bizarre or extreme.

When this city was first founded a few hundred years ago, few ship captains were willing to brave the eldritch waters of the Ghost Sea. In response to this fear, a keep was constructed on Ahjarum's northwestern coast and the Land-

The Islands of the Crescent Moon



100 MILES

lubber's Road was cut through the jungle and paved with flagstones. The fortress, known as the Keep of Dawn, served as the starting point for travelers and merchant caravans intent upon making the journey through the jungle to the Bay of Pearls, and reaping the treasures therein.

Unfortunately this jungle trek had its own perils as the region is home to herds of prehistoric beasts. Because of these dangers, the administrators of the Keep of Dawn were able to charge high prices to escort travelers through the shadows of the jungles to the city. The wealth they accumulated did not go unnoticed and eventually the keep was attacked by pirates and left as a haunted ruin. With the Keep of Dawn abandoned and the road un-maintained, more and more ship captains began to brave the waters of the Ghost Sea and sail directly to Sepherin's harbors, albeit still keeping close proximity to Ahjarum's shore. Presently, the Keep of Dawn has been deserted for nearly one hundred years and the encroaching jungle has grown over much of it. The road still twines its way through the jungle and mountains of Ahjarum to the island's eastern coast and the City of Sepherin, but it too is mostly lost beneath the overgrowth.

Unknown to but a few Minokoon shamans, hidden within the keep is a magical artifact of great evil. It is known as the Skull of the Sleepers, a powerful artifact imbued with the powers of necromancy that draws calamity like rotten meat draws flies. Not only does this artifact have the ability to animate the dead, but also murder and violence tend to happen wherever it is near. Indeed the keep may still be occupied if it weren't for the Skull's vile presence.

STARTING THE ADVENTURE

Last night the PCs were on board Learon's Key, a black-sailed, black-hulled galleon en route to Sepherin from the nearest coastal City-State of Aganon. The crew of Learon's Key primarily deals in the sale of slaves though they also transport livestock and, on occasion, passen-

gers. The PCs could be returning to Sepherin or traveling there for the first time. Alternatively they could be slaves themselves (though this may require some work on the GM's part, in order to make sure they are properly equipped once the adventure begins). Perhaps the PCs are traveling to Sepherin to study magic at the University, to find employment as bodyguards or in the service of the Redplumes (the city guard), or maybe they are just looking to purchase an exotic, hard-to-find item. Regardless of their intentions and their travel plans, Fate has had other ideas for the PCs, as a storm is destined to dash Learon's Key upon the rocky shore of the island of Ahjarum, near the abandoned Keep of Dawn and the accursed skull hidden within.

Environmental Conditions

The weather here is balmy and warm most year round with blue skies, enormous white cloudscapes and intermittent showers. Monsoons are not uncommon in the summer months. Only fools take traveling in the jungles of the Crescent Moon lightly. They are rainy and humid with heavy layers of tangled, impenetrable vegetation. And as if demon-haunted ruins and headhunting savages weren't enough, the islands' wildlife includes prehistoric beasts, tigers, monkeys, apes, parrots, lizards, snakes, alligators, and all manner of buzzing, biting insects, some of which carry diseases. Movement in the jungles is reduced to 1/3. Getting lost in these jungles is a serious danger. Any character that moves away from a trail, stream or other obvious feature must make Knowledge (Jungle Survival) or Track roll or become lost. Role a d8 to determine the actual direction the party is traveling. Note that the party could still be traveling the direction they intended, but in this case they are unsure of the path they've chosen.

THE BEACH

Play begins as the PCs awaken with the warm sun on their faces and the sound of crashing waves in their ears. After a groggy moment they realize that they are lying on the sand of a white beach, edged by the deep green foliage of a tropical jungle. The water and the sky are a brilliant blue, and the beach is littered here and there with the occasional crate or keg washed up upon the shore from the now sunken Learon's Key. The GM is encouraged to be merciful regarding PCs' belongings--warriors were somehow able to gather armor and backpacks before the ship sank (managing to stay afloat upon the wreckage of the ship if need be), while those PCs who use magic or sorcery had the foresight to keep their grimoires in oiled, waterproof, traveling containers. If the PC was a slave, perhaps they discover the body of a well-equipped sailor to pilfer.

Aside from the occasional piece of shipwreck detritus the sand has been smoothed by the previous night's storming wind and rain. From where the PCs are now, the beach stretches north, ending at a vine-draped cliff that juts like a wall into the sea. To the south the beach continues 100 yards before thinning and giving way to another less steep, jungle-edged cliff that rises steadily along the coast.

Allow each of the PCs to make two Easy Spot rolls. The first determines if they notice the small trail of child-sized footprints emerging from the forest, cutting through the smooth sand and approaching one of the PCs (choose whichever PC would be likely attract the most attention). These footprints were left by one of the Minokoon children from the Village of the Red Hands (see below), who happened to notice the washed up PCs and hazarded a close look at one of them while they were unconscious. At the GM's discretion, this child man-

aged to pilfer a minor belonging of said PC before fleeing. Her footprints lead back into the jungle, to a thin well-worn path that curves southeast, passing the eastern edge of the dell containing the Summoning Circle (see below), before it continues underneath the treetop Minokoon village and ends at the outer gates of the Keep of Dawn.

The second Spot roll determines if the PCs notice the keep itself, a pale, jungle-shrouded structure, perched over the water upon the cliff about 200 yards to the south. With the vegetation growing to the cliff's edge, the only way of approaching the keep by foot is through the jungle. Noticing the keep affords each character either a Knowledge (Region) roll, or in lieu of a Knowledge skill, a Know roll:

Beach & Jungle



SUCCESS Knowledge (Region): The presence of the ruin signifies to the PC that he or she is presently stranded on the northwestern shore of the island of Ahjarum. The abandoned fortress, known as the Keep of Dawn, was once used as a stopping point for travelers and merchants before traveling by caravan through the jungle to Sepherin along the Landlubber's Road. The keep was abandoned after a terrible tragedy occurred here. The surrounding jungle is rumored to be rife with dangerous reptiles and prehistoric beasts.

SPECIAL SUCCESS Knowledge (Region): The PC recalls the above information as well as a specific rumor regarding a merchant named Hassahm, who was staying at the keep with a valuable cargo. Hassahm never had a chance to lead his caravan from the keep. Murderous pirates attacked the fortress before he could set out on the Landlubber's Road. Most of these pirates are believed to have been devoured by dinosaurs after capturing the keep, for they inadvertently destroyed the magical charms used to protect the keep from the region's prehistoric denizens. Hassahm's treasure is believed to still be within the keep.

CRITICAL SUCCESS Knowledge (Region): The PC is aware of the above information as well as a rumor that a valuable cache of black pearls is still hidden in the keep's well, where Hassahm tossed it right before expiring on the sharp point of a pirate's scimitar.

SUCCESS Know Roll: The PC is aware that her or she is stranded on the northwestern coast of Ahjarum, an area populated by pre-historic creatures and that the abandoned fortress, known as the Keep of Dawn, was once used as a stopping point for merchants before traveling by caravan through the jungle to Sepherin.

A DEAD WATCHER IN THE FOREST

The footprints in the sand lead to a path heading into the shadows of the jungle. Hiding behind a tree along the side of the path, about ten

yards into the jungle, are three Minokoon children who have been observing the PCs since they discovered them washed ashore. Allow the PCs to make Listen rolls. Those who succeed hear the sounds of children trying to stifle their laughter while hiding and watching the PCs approach.

PCs who approach the tree and the children behind it may be in for a shocking surprise. Obscured by the ferns and vines near the base of the tree, is a rotting head on a stake, a dead watcher placed next to the path here by the nearby village's shaman (see the sidebar). The children are completely unfazed by its presence. With horror, the PCs realize that the severed head's eyes are rolling about in their sockets, and its mouth is moving, as if speaking quietly to itself. As the PCs approach, the children run giggling from their hiding place, along the path back to their village.

If the dead watcher notices the PCs it lets out a bloodcurdling shriek. Shortly thereafter its screaming is joined by the distant howling of other dead watchers positioned to the south near the keep. The screams from these distant dead watchers have no sorcerous effect upon the PCs. Moments later, drums begin to beat from through the trees to the south, the direction the children ran. They beat for about thirty seconds and then stop. Unknown to the PCs, 6 Minokoon warriors have just left their village and are moving quietly through the jungle, with the intent of flanking the PCs from the east and west. Use the statistics from the Minokoon Warrior description delineated below. The Minokoon warriors will attempt to subdue them back to their village, where their shaman and chief Oontook intends to turn them into dead watchers.

Regardless of whether the PCs are noticed by the dead watcher, the children will warn their village of the PCs presence, unless they are stopped.

THE SUMMONING CIRCLE

One thing that hampered the architects of the keep during its construction was the large presence of prehistoric beasts and reptiles in the area. Before the keep's completion, wizards and sorcerers were already being called in to lay down charms of protection intended to repel these cold-blooded creatures. One such spell-caster was Alanathin, a magician from Sepherin (indeed his spell book remains hidden within the keep).

The reason why this area has always been so heavily populated by reptilian life is the presence of an eldritch artifact left over from the Chothlahsah that once ruled these islands. This artifact is a Summoning Circle, a configuration of jade-green statues raised and enchanted by

the Chothlahsah to summon dinosaurs in order to use them as pack animals or steeds. There are five statues, each 12 yards tall, positioned on a flat circular base 1 yard tall and 5 yards in diameter. The base is ornately engraved with a stylized pentagram. Each statue is an individually crafted depiction of a robed or armored humanoid with a serpentine head, arms, and faces raised to the heavens. A Spot role is needed to notice the tall green statues standing among the trees and vines about ten yards west of the path.

The statues stand vine-shrouded in a fern-filled dell, walled in on nearly all sides by the twisted roots and thick trunks of trees. Though the statues are infused with a faint dweomer of sorcery that draws all manner of reptiles, it is suggested that the GM only alludes to the presence of dinosaurs, pushing their ways through

Dead Watcher

A dead watcher is a necromantic artifact sometimes used by Minokoon shamans to protect their villages and ward off attacks from neighboring tribes. The face of a living victim is tattooed with the spiral glyphs of eternal necromantic imprisonment and then the head is severed from the victim's body, put on a stake approximately one yard tall, and subjected to powerful incantations. When completed the dead watcher retains a sleepy state of semi-lucid consciousness. Though it can no longer communicate, anyone who approaches within ten yards risks being noticed by its rolling eyes. The dead watcher then lets out a scream so horrid as to risk the insanity of those nearby.

Anyone whose blood is sprinkled upon a dead watcher's brow can thereafter approach it without triggering or succumbing to its baneful scream.

Characteristic	Roll	Average
SIZ	1	1
INT	1D6+3	6
POW	3D6	10-11

Move: 0

Hit Points: 1

Damage Bonus: 0

Armor: 3-point bone skull

SAN Loss: 0/1D4

Skills: Listen 50%, Spot 50%.

Powers: The scream of a dead watcher fills those who hear it with cold dread. Everyone within 10 yards of a shrieking dead watcher must make a SAN roll and/or defend themselves in POW vs. POW contest on the Resistance Table or flee in fear (GM's discretion). These baneful effects last 1D6 minutes.

D20	Hit Location	AP/HP
1-20	Head	3/1

Create Dead Watcher (1)

Range: Touch

Before casting this spell, the sorcerer must first prepare the victim's head by tattooing it with necromantic glyphs, an endeavor that can take 1D4 hours and requires the sacrifice of one point of permanent POW. Once the victim is ready, the head is severed. The sorcerer places the head on a stake and incants for one round. If the victim was unwilling the sorcerer must also succeed in a POW vs. POW contest on the Resistance Table. Failure means the victim's spirit escapes while success means the victim's spirit is permanently imprisoned within its own severed head. Some shamans of the Islands of the Crescent moon use this spell to punish their enemies.

the jungle and trumpeting in the distance. The PCs will have enough dangers to contend with without forcing them to confront the raging maw of a tyrannosaurus rex! For example, the group of Minokoon warriors that is most likely presently hunting them...

An immediate concern to PCs entering this area is the swarm of poisonous snakes living among the grass and ferns growing around the statues' base. Allow any PC looking into the area a Spot roll to notice the squirming mesh of lime green serpents beneath the leaves. These thin, two-foot long snakes are known as 'red time' for all bear a red hourglass on their brows.

Red Time (Venomous Snake)

STR 5 CON 7 SIZ 5 INT 3

POW 4 DEX 10

Move: 6 (4 swimming)

Hit Points: 6

Damage Bonus: -1d6

Armor: None

Attack: Bite 70%-14%-04%, 1D2+1/2db (impaling) +Poison

Poison: POT 10, Speed of Effect: 1D3 combat rounds, Effect: 10 points of damage to defender's total hit points if POT overcomes defender's CON, 5 points of damage to defender's total hit points if POT does not overcome defender's CON.

Skills: Climb 50%, Dodge 50%, Hide 80%, Sense 65%, Stealth 90%, Swim 50%.

D20	Hit Location	AP/HP
1-6	Tail	0/2
7-14	Body	0/2
15-20	Head	0/2

The Village of the Red Hands

The trunks of the trees here are painted with red handprints, the symbol of the small tribe

of Minokoon that dwell in this area. As with most deep jungle-dwelling Minokoon their village is built high in the tree boughs, about 15 to 20 yards above, composed of large, reed-woven pod-shaped shelters, interconnected by vine-woven ladders. The path from the beach splits here. One branch continues to the keep's walls while the other ends at the flagstones of the Landlubber's Road. The air is alive with a chorus of fat buzzing flies, and the sick sweet scent of rotting flesh, for hanging like large fruit from the lower branches of the trees is a copious collection of severed heads. The ground here is rich with fecal matter dropped from the dwellings above.

These Minokoon dye their hands and fore-arms deep burgundy to symbolize the blood they've shed. Their warriors cover their hide shields with red handprints. Presently there are 20 women, 7 children, 5 elderly and 10 warriors in the tribe, not including Oontook, their leader. The GM should feel free to adjust these numbers in accordance to the power level of the party.

Oontook is a young shaman with sorcerous power. He and his tribe are aware of the Skull of the Sleepers hidden within the keep, indeed they believe the calamitous artifact was created by their demon-god Sherkorakwill in order to test their strength.

Minokoon Warrior

STR 16 CON 14 SIZ 12 INT 11

POW 12 DEX 16 APP 10 EDU 9

Move 10

Hit Points: 13

Damage Bonus: +1D4

Armor: 2-point hide and bone over chest and abdomen

Attacks	Damage	AP/HP
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Blowgun 75%-15%-04% 1D3(impaling)+Poison 0/4

Fist 60%-12%-03% 1d3+db (crushing)

Stone Dagger 60%-12%-03% 1d3+1+db(impaling) 0/15

Short spear 65%-13%-03% 1D6+1+db(impaling) 0/15
(1D6+1+1/2db if thrown)

Hide Shield 65%-13%-03% 1D2+db (knockback) 10/10

Poison: POT 12, Speed of Effect: 1D3 combat rounds, Effect: muscular paralysis for 10+1d4 minutes.

Skills: Brawl 60%, Climb 60%, Dodge 50%, Grapple 60%, Hide 60%, Insight 60%, Jump 60%, Listen 60%, Sense 60%, Spot 60%, Stealth 60%, Swim 60%, Throw 60%, Track 60%.

D20 Hit Location AP/HP

1-4 Right Leg 0/5

5-8 Left Leg 0/5

9-11 Abdomen 2/5

12 Chest 2/6

13-15 Right Arm 0/4

16-18 Left Arm 0/4

19-20 Head 0/5

Oontook, Minokoon Shaman

Oontook is a thin man with Caucasoid features and long, blonde dreadlocks. He wears a tightly sewn hide body suit decorated with the red handprints of his tribe. Numerous bone totems hang from his waist and neck, many of which are the skeletal hands of infants. His head is adorned with a bony pale headdress crafted from the skull of a velociraptor. He is often armed with a light club carved with a grinning human skull at its end, a blowgun, and a bamboo canister of poison darts. In his pod hut he keeps his 'grimoire', a stone tablet 3 feet tall and one foot wide, covered with Chothlahsah glyphs. The rest of the tribe is afraid to come near this tablet.

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

Move: 10

Hit Points: 12

Damage Bonus: none

Armor: 2-point hide and bone over chest and abdomen, arms and legs. 3-point Skull Helmet -5% Perception skills (already factored in).

Attack Damage AP/HP

Blowgun 75%-15%-04% 1D3 (impaling) +Poison 0/4

Club 65%-13%-03% 1D6+db (crushing) 0/15

Stone dagger 60%-12%-03% 1d3+1+db (impaling) 0/15

Fist 60%-12%-03% 1d3+db (crushing)

Poison: POT 12, Speed of Effect: 1D3 combat rounds, Effect: muscular paralysis for 10+1d4 minutes.

Skills: Brawl 60%, Climb 60%, Command 70%, Dodge 50%, Grapple 55%, Hide 70%, Insight 70%, Jump 50%, Listen 60%, Literacy (Chothlahsah) 75%, Sense 60%, Spot 60%, Stealth 60%, Swim 60%, Throw 60%, Track 60%.

Spells: Create Dead Watcher (1), Curse of Sorcery (4), Muddle (1), Pox (1), Summon Demon (10), Sorcerer's Sharp Flame (2) and Ubreakable Bonds (3).

D20 Hit Location AP/HP

1-4 Right Leg 2/4

5-8 Left Leg 2/4

9-11 Abdomen 2/5

12 Chest 2/5

13-15 Right Arm 2/3

16-18 Left Arm 2/3

19-20 Head 3/4

THE KEEP OF DAWN

Perched upon the cliffs, 25 yards above the straight between Ahjarum and the smaller islands south of Kithloss, this fortress received its name from the spectacular sunrises to the west, visible from the parapets of the keep. It is constructed of smoothly fitted pale stone blocks. The keep proper is roughly shaped like a cube with 24-yard tall walls. A 21-yard tall crenu-

lated wall with a walkway surrounds it. This wall is fitted with guard towers. Much of these towers' wooden floors and ceilings have rotted and collapsed. The outer wall's smooth surface is impossible to climb without special tools or magic. However the areas that are overgrown by the jungle (as designated on the map below) have a difficulty modifier of Easy.

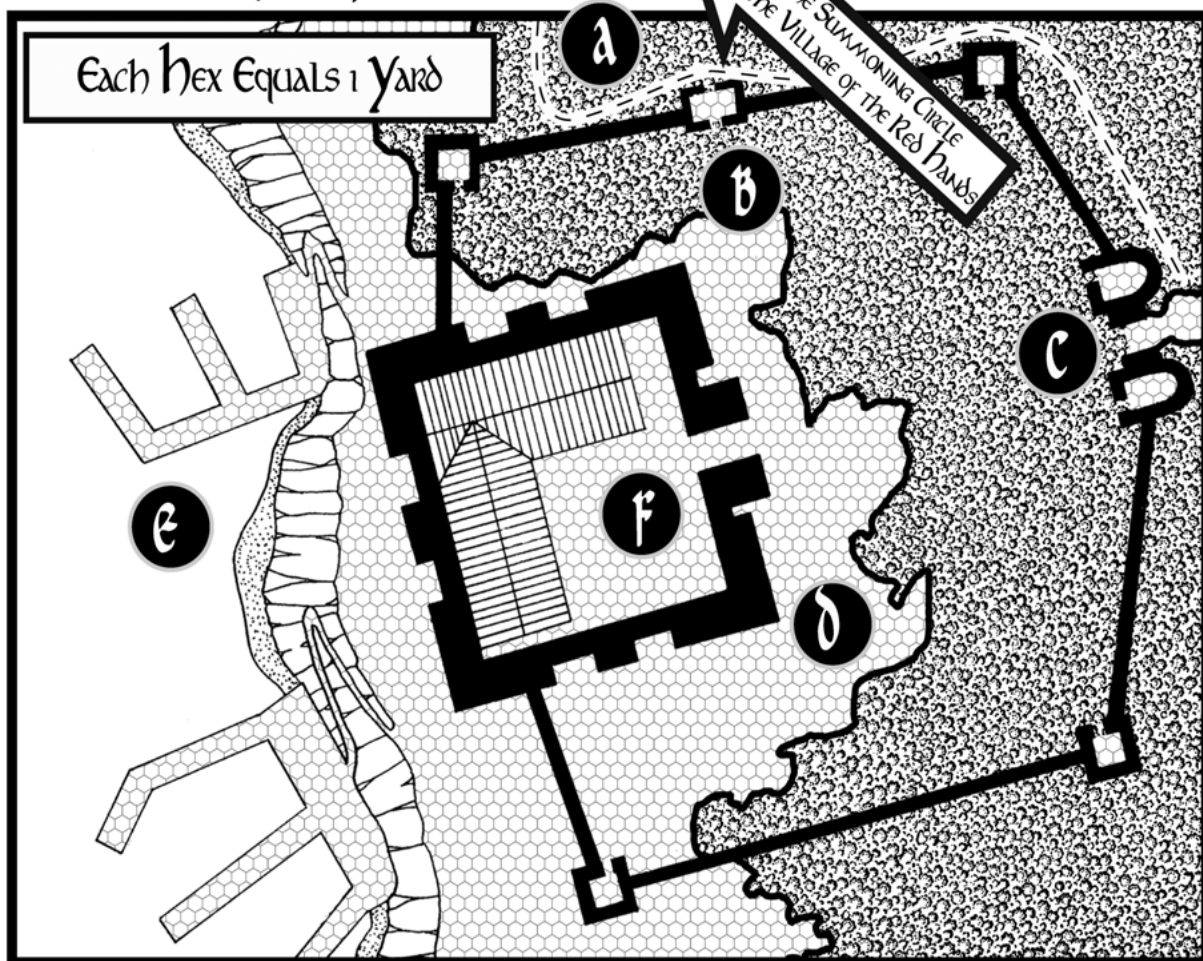
A. Dead Watcher: The path leads from the beach, past the Circle of Statues and the Village of the Red Hands, eventually arriving here. Planted on a stake at about waist-level among the vines at the bend in the path is a dead watcher (see above), an infant's little head. When it screams the notes are piercing.

B. Northern Gatehouse: Like the rest of the guard towers in the outer wall, this structure is

21 yards tall. The tight interior of the structure is overgrown with tall grass, ferns, and a tall tree. The roof and upper floors of the gatehouse have collapsed in and dappled light filters down through a canopy of leaves in the daytime. The upper door of this gatehouse (from the walkway) is rotten and falling in, its iron fittings rusted in the jungle dampness. A stone staircase built into the wall of the ruin ascends to the walkway.

A southern door to the keep's outer courtyard is still firmly in place and requires a Difficult Effort Roll to budge open (as a network of vines on the other side have grown over it, holding it shut). If the PCs choose to break the door down, it has 6 Armor Points with 10 hit points.

The Keep of Dawn



Reclining on an overhanging bough of the tree growing within the interior of the gatehouse, obfuscated among the branches, is a hungry python. As the PCs enter the ruined gatehouse allow each of them to make an opposed Spot roll against the python's Hide. Those who succeed are not surprised when the snake drops from the branches and attacks.

Python (Constrictor Snake)

STR 22 CON 13 SIZ 17 INT 3
POW 10 DEX 13

Move: 6 (4 swimming)

Hit Points: 15

Damage Bonus: +1D6

Armor: 2-point skin

Attack	Damage	AP/HP
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Bite	65%-13%-03%	1D4+1/2db (impaling)
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Constrict	40%-08%-02%	1D6+db (crushing)
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Swallow	100%-20%-05%	(suffocation)
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Skills: Climb 85%, Dodge 60%, Hide 75%, Sense 75%, Stealth 90%, Swim 50%.

D20	Hit Location	AP/HP
-----	--------------	-------

1-6	Tail	2/5
-----	------	-----

7-14	Body	2/6
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15-20	Head	2/5
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Regarding Constrictor Snakes (excerpt from page 338 of Basic Roleplaying)

A constrictor can attack twice in a combat round, first biting and then attempting constriction five DEX ranks later. If the constriction attack hits, the target is wrapped in the constrictor's coils. The target can gasp but cannot yell or shout. Each round of constriction does damage to the victim's total HP. Only rigid armor or chest armor (if armor by hit location is being used) reduces this damage. If a limb is free, the character can make Difficult attacks against the constrictor. If no limb is free, the

character cannot attack unless he or she has another means of attack (GM's discretion).

To attempt to become completely free from constriction, the targeted character must make a successful resistance roll of his or her STR against the constrictor's STR, instead of attacking in a round. For partial freedom a Difficult Agility roll will free a single arm or other limb. The GM may require the constricted target to succeed in a Stamina roll or fall unconscious.

Once a character is either unconscious or dead, the constrictor will swallow him or her whole. Unless wearing breathing apparatus that survived being crushed, the character will suffocate using the rules provided on page 219 of Basic Roleplaying.

C. Barbican: The path leading from the beach eventually ends here, in front of the main gatehouse, among the weed-grown, cracked gray-blue flagstones of Landlubber's Road. The remains of this road run into the jungle to the east. The gatehouse's portcullis is still raised and rusted in place, as it has been since it was forced open by invading pirates. A skeleton in a rusted chain hauberk and pot helm sits in the weeds, its back to the arched frame of the gate, an arrow protruding from its chest.

Hidden among the vines next to the skeleton is another dead watcher, so decomposed there is more bone than flesh, which immediately starts screaming as soon as it notices the PCs.

D. Outer Courtyard: Approximately half of the courtyard is enveloped by tall ferns and leafy twisted trees. MOV through this foliage is halved. The rest of the courtyard is filled with neck-tall green grass and ferns.

Though much of the courtyard is obscured by lush ferns, tall grass and trees, a successful Spot roll reveals the occasional rust-garbed skeleton, or other signs of a battle. Scattered among the foliage are skeletons armed with various kinds of corroding weapons and armor. A special success Spot roll uncovers a jeweled, open-faced helmet with five rubies in it. The helmet itself is dented and useless but the rubies are each worth 50 Sepherin Flowers each (see sidebar).

A critical success yields a pristine finely crafted scimitar hidden in a rotten sheath beneath a tall rusted shield. The hilt of this weapon is in the shape of a mermaid and the blade has a permanent Sorcerer's Razor 1 cast upon it. The weapon's name is Mercy Giver and once belonged to a minor Ahvarian noble stationed at the keep.

E. Docks: These wooden docks have long since rotted beyond use. Anyone with a Size of 8 or more who walks upon them incurs the collapse of the wooden crossbeams and plunges into the water. The water here is 5 yards deep.

F. Inner Courtyard: The outer double doors to the keep proper have been bashed off their hinges and the portcullis raised and frozen by rust. The keep's walls are 24 yards tall and varying between two to three yards thick. More skeletons in rusted armor are obscured by lush foliage of the inner courtyard. The housing of the inner keep was once two stories but the upper level has mostly collapsed in upon itself. Two stone stairways access the walkway on the keep's walls.

The door to room L, near the eastern staircase (see the Keep of Dawn: Interior Map below) bears a metal plaque depicting a circular symbol of a two-headed serpent (one head on each end) biting itself in the necks. A successful Knowledge: Occult roll indicates that this is the symbol of the Guild of Midyell, a group of magicians located in the City State of Sepherin. The door is locked with a complex bar mechanism that is too corroded to pick. The door re-

Sepherin Flower

The City-State of Sepherin mints its own coins, the most standard of these being the Sepherin Flower. A Sepherin Flower is silver, roughly the size of a quarter, pentacle in shape, embossed with a five-petal flower that looks reminiscent of a pentagram on one side, the face of a beautiful woman on the other. For reference's sake a single coin is worth approximately \$1 USD.

quires a Difficult Effort Roll to break open. Alternatively the door has 6 Armor Points with 10 Hit Points.

Nesting, hidden against the northern wall among the rotten timbers of the keep's second floor, is a family of pteranodons (see location M below). When the PCs enter the inner keep's courtyard the adult pteranodon pokes her head out of the ruins above and screams down at them a warning for one round. If the PCs don't leave the creature does three flybys and attacks until the PCs retreat.

G. Gate Mechanism: A chain and pulley mechanism is built high in the keep's parapet, above the portcullis, its levers long since corroded in the 'up' position.

H. Well of Black Pearls: Curled around the stone edge of this well is a skeleton in the wispy remnants of rotted robes. The well is 10 yards deep and contains about two yards of water. An old rusted coffer lies beneath the murk, thrown here by Hassahm before he died. The coffer is locked and corroded shut. It contains 55 black pearls worth 100 Sepherin Flowers each.

I. Armory: The double doors that once opened into this room have long since been torn off of their hinges. Racks along the walls still hold the few rotten remains of spears, bows and arrows. Moldering skeletons are strewn about the stone floor.

J. Barracks: The rotten remains of old bunks lay strewn about this chamber. In the daytime, light streams in from tall, thin windows to the west. Among the detritus is one locked chest containing a well-preserved chain shirt, a shortsword, and a finely wrought silver drinking horn worth 70 Sepherin Flowers.

K. Mess Hall: Rotten wooden tables and chairs litter this large chamber. A fireplace is built into the northern wall. Living among the wreckage are 4 giant, glistening, black and red centipedes, each a yard long. As the PCs enter the room, they scurry forth from the wreckage and attack.

A successful Medicine or Knowledge: Jungle Survival roll informs the PC in question that

making a small incision over the bite and sucking the poison out is the best way to avoid the maximum damage from one of these centipede's bites (note the victim still takes 3 points of damage in this case).

Large Centipede

STR 5 CON 7 SIZ 5 INT 3 POW 1 DEX 10

Move: 10

Hit Points: 6

Damage Bonus: -1d6

Armor: None

Attack	Damage	AP/HP
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Bite 70%-14%-04% 1D2+1/2db (impaling) + poison

Poison: POT 6, Speed of Effect: 1D3 combat rounds, Effect: 16 points of damage to defender's total hit points if POT overcomes defender's CON, 3 points of damage to defender's total hit points if POT does not overcome defender's CON.

Skills: Climb 95%, Dodge 50%, Hide 80%, Sense 65%, Stealth 50%

D20	Hit Location	AP/HP
-----	--------------	-------

1-6	Tail	0/2
-----	------	-----

7-14	Body	0/2
------	------	-----

15-20	Head	0/2
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The door in the east wall is locked and barred from the inside of area L. The wood, however is rotten and requires an Average Effort Roll to break open. Alternatively the door has 3 Armor Points with 6 Hit Points. This door, like its counterpart in the courtyard, bears a metal plaque depicting a circular symbol of a two-headed serpent. The locking mechanism holding the door's bar in place can be bypassed with a set of lock picks and a successful Fine Manipulation roll.

A successful Spot roll exposes a brown trail of blood leading from the entrance of the mess hall, and disappearing under the door to area L.

L. Alanathin's Workshop: This is the best-preserved room in the keep. Both the east and west doors are barred from within the room.

Moldering tapestries still cover the walls of this chamber with images displaying all manner of non-reptilian and floral jungle life. An ornate green and gold-threaded rug covers the floor. The three tapestries are in excellent condition (radiating minor preservational magic to those who are capable of detecting such things). They are worth 100 Sepherin Flowers apiece, but have an ENC of 20 each. The rug would have been valuable but is stained with blood.

There is a fireplace in the north wall and a stone staircase against the south wall leading up to a trapdoor in the ceiling. A table bearing all manner of glass beakers, scales, and alchemical paraphernalia is against south wall abutting the staircase. In total this equipment is worth 700 Sepherin Flowers but weighs 150 pounds and is extremely fragile. Leaning against the desk is a straight, smooth, ebony staff two yards in length--Alanathin's wizard staff. The staff has 16 power points but is still attuned to Alanathin. A PC wishing to use the staff must first overcome it in a Power point vs. Power point contest on the Resistance Table. Such a contest can only be attempted once. Failure indicates that the staff has rejected its potential new owner, while success indicates acceptance.

Resting among the items on the table is Alanathin's grimoire, a heavy book bound in deep burgundy leather. The grimoire contains the following magic spells: Blast, Conjure Elemental (Air), Control, Dispel, Fire, Frost, Lightning, Seal, Wall, Ward, and Wounding.

Alanathin's skeleton lies on the floor in the center of the room, an arrow protruding from its back. Hidden within the folds of his moldering green paisley robe is a jeweled dagger of excellent craftsmanship worth 80 Sepherin Flowers. He still clutches an unopened silver coffer in his bony fingers. The coffer is locked and contains twelve glass vials of healing potions. Each potion cures 1D12 HP of damage. Three keys hang from a chain around his bony neck-

-one key for the coffer containing the healing potions, one key for the lead chest (see below) and one key for the doors to his workshop.

Hidden beneath one of the floor's flagstones near the fireplace is a lead chest, weighing 80 pounds and sealed with a padlock. As mentioned above, the key can be found on a chain around Alanathin's neck. Contained within is the skull of a Minokoon shaman, wearing an ornamented headdress of ivory and deep blue lapis lazuli. Imbedded in the skull's eye sockets are two diamonds worth 5,000 Sepherin Flowers each but carry a terrible curse to whoever owns them, no matter what the distance or containment. This powerful Minokoon artifact is known as the Skull of the Sleepers (see sidebar). Also included in the lead chest is a small sealed glass jar containing the desiccated husk

The Skull of the Sleepers

A Chothlahsah sorcerer created this necromantic artifact in the days when that reptilian race ruled these islands. No one knows what its original purpose was, but it brings only terror and strife to those who come in contact with it. Any corpse within 100 yards of the Skull has a chance to be animated and imbued with vile intent (the actual chance of animation is up to the GM's discretion).

On top of its necromantic qualities, most animals will become agitated in its presence. Food tends to rot quicker and milk curdles. Furthermore, prolonged exposure to the Skull (even if it is contained within its lead box) eventually tends to draw unfortunate accidents and circumstances to those nearby. Chair legs break, people cut themselves shaving, fall down stairs, etc. These unfortunate accidents only worsen over time to murderous and horrific proportions. All Luck rolls are halved or worse (GM's discretion). Removing the diamonds from the Skull's eye sockets will only worsen these baneful effects.

of a smashed dragonfly and a leather-bound notebook.

The notebook is of particular interest. It contains sketches and notes of the islands various flora and fauna. An illustration of the summoning statues to the north is also included. The last pages of the notebook describe the skull with the headdress and include an illustration of it from the front and side. Multiple entries are noted in chronological order. The last three are included below, to be photocopied and handed to the players upon discovery.

Upon reading the last sentence in the notebook, the smashed insect husk begins to jitter and scamper within the glass jar as the distant screaming of dead watchers suddenly pierces the jungle, and the skull's eyes alight with a nasty green glow. Moments later Alanathin's corpse begins to stir. Outside the skeletons tangled among the grass and ferns begin to rise. Whispering shadows inhabit the liminal edges of vision and voices quietly murmur. Putting the skull back into the lead box does not stop the rising dead but it does prevent additional corpses from animating. Alanathin's skeleton is armed only with a dagger (unless the PCs have already taken it) and has no armor. It is up to the GM to decide how many of the skeletons scattered about the keep awaken to attack the PCs, but at least one per player character is advised. Additionally the GM must decide how they are armed. The skeletons listed here are assumed to be either without armor or garbed in corroded ringmail and/or a large shield.

Skeleton

STR 10 SIZ 13 INT 10

POW 1 DEX 10

Move: 10

Hit Points: 13 (see below)

Damage Bonus: None

Armor: None or corroded 4-point corroded ringmail

Attack	Damage	AP/HP
Broadsword	55%-11%-03% 1D8+1 (bleeding)	20
Large shield	55%-11%-03% 1D4 (knockback)	20
Dagger	55%-11%-03% 1D4+db (impaling)	15

Skills: Dodge 40%

D20	Hit Location	AP/HP
1-4	Right Leg	4/5
5-8	Left Leg	4/5
9-11	Abdomen	4/5
12	Chest	4/6
13-15	Right Arm	4/4
16-18	Left Arm	4/4
19-20	Head	4/5

Regarding Skeletons (excerpt from page 346 of Basic Roleplaying)

Skeletons are immune to the special effects from bleeding and impaling attacks. They take no damage from thrusting attacks, unless the attack is a special or critical success in which case damage is determined normally, while secondary effects are ignored. Any attack striking a skeleton has a percentage chance of destroying it equal to or less than the damage done multiplied by 4.

M. Pteranodons: The trapdoor in area L leads to what was once the keep's second floor. The layout to the second floor is very similar to that of the first floor, only much of the roof has collapsed, criss-crossed with rotten timbers. The area directly above Alanathin's workshop was once Alanathin's private chamber. Nesting in the northeastern corner is a family of pteranodons consisting of 1 adult female and 4 young. The hatchlings are too young to be any threat to the party but the adult pteranodon attacks anyone who approaches her nest. If sorcerous power of the Skull of the Sleepers is evoked they instinctually sense the unnatural events unfolding and quietly huddle in their nest as the undead rise from the grass.

Pteranodon

STR 20 CON 14 SIZ 26 INT 3
POW 10 DEX 17

Move: 5 (15 when flying)

Hit Points: 15

Damage Bonus: +2D6

Armor: 2-point thick hide

Attack	Damage	AP/HP
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Bite 55%-11%-03% 1D8+db (bleeding)

Claw 40%-08%-02% 1D4+db (bleeding)

Skills: Dodge 50%, Listen 65%, Sense 65%, Spot 65%, Stealth 40%.

D20	Hit Location	AP/HP
1-3	Right leg	2/3
4-6	Left leg	2/3
7-12	Body	2/6
13-15	Right wing	2/3
16-18	Left wing	2/3
19-20	Head	2/4

CONCLUDING THE ADVENTURE

Assuming the PCs were capable of returning the Skull of the Sleepers to its lead box and defending themselves from the undead they have inadvertently awakened, they still face a few challenges. First of all, depending upon the outcome of their interactions with the Village of the Red Hands, they may still have to contend with bloodthirsty savages who do not want the Skull to be taken from the keep.

Even after the Minokoon have been dealt with, the fact remains that the PCs are still shipwrecked and miles away from civilization. The next obvious step is for them to try to travel to the City of Sepherin using what remains of the Landlubber's Road. Such a journey will not be without difficulties though, as the road is mostly overgrown and the jungles are home to all manner of hostile creatures. And if the PCs decide to bring the Skull with them they may find

themselves subject to its insidious baneful effects (see the Skull of the Sleepers sidebar).

Third to last entry:

An interesting curio, if not a wee bit on the morbid side! A troupe of Minokoon hunters came to the keep three days ago to trade furs for various sundry items (it is amazing how much these savages love our ales and spirits!). One of them, an older gentleman with fewer teeth than a Foul Wind crone presented this skull to me. I confess my Minokoon is less than fluent, and it was difficult to understand him, but what I gathered is that this bony treasure is called the Skull of the Sleepers. He did not ask anything in return, saying that it was a gift from one shaman to another. Though normally I would find reason for insult at being labeled thus, it is important to understand that these savages are not unlike children, and should be treated as such. Regardless, he told me that it came from an enemy of his who once dwelled in a valley to the south, in a village called Jia le xue shoo, literally translated, Home of the Bloody Stone. Such wonderful names these savages have!

Second to last entry:

How uncanny! As I sat here in my laboratory studying this skull, the most interesting occurrence has just graced my eyes. One those nasty stinging dragonflies so prevalent upon these coastlands (admittedly gorgeous in color scheme, but a complete nuisance to daily life) just flew into my window and landed on my hand whilst sketching with this very quill! I dare say he bit me posthaste, upon which I gave him a right smacking with my free hand, and then brushed him from my table. It began to crawl and flap its broken wings, even though its thorax was damaged, so, as one normally does in such situations, I gave it a stomp with my boot. As a scholar of science, magic and the natural forces I must confess my utter surprise when even after grinding it into the cobbles with my heel its legs still attempted to carry its ruined body away! I have placed it in a jar for later research.

Final entry:

Oh most calamitous of calamities! I have made a terrible discovery! Captain Burtill was found north of the keep, his body mauled by one of the numerous reptilian beasts that plague these abominable coastlands. Before he passed he was able to warn us of a migrating herd of bipedal reptiles that hunt in packs like wild dogs. The keep was placed on full alert and I went out to maintain and renew the wards around the parameter. But this is not the worst of it! Upon returning from my duties I found that Captain Burtill's body (which we had left in the barracks with the intent upon shipping back to Sepherin on the morrow) had literally awoken from death and attacked three men. He was subdued, not an easy task, but I fear to report that dismemberment was necessitated. Upon returning to my study I found that the eyes of this skull were aglow! I fear this object is imbued with terrible power and is capable of animating the dead positioned within close proximity. Apparently this macabre ability can be nullified whilst the skull is encased in lead. I look forward to returning to Grand Master Thephorus at the University for further study.

A NATION RANSOMED

A MODERN MILITARY ADVENTURE FOR BASIC ROLEPLAYING

BY R.J. CHRISTENSEN

“In the name of the Glorious People’s Revolution, I demand that the rebellious masters of Formosa, along with the decadent nations of Japan and Korea surrender to me by the end of this day...or face utter atomic annihilation!?”

BACKGROUND

Recently, with the military and economical power of mainland China has created frustration in the Chinese military, with a growing number of officers looking to use that power to dominate East Asia and the Pacific Rim, recoup the lost territory of Taiwan, and settle old scores with its ancient rival of Japan. Only calmer head in the government and a booming economy have prevented any military adventures, but one day a renegade Navy officer took matters into his own hands.

Four days out of port, the Chinese nuclear ballistic missile submarine “Xia”, bearing a dozen missiles each with a single 2-megaton nuclear warhead, reported to its base of a major pneumatic malfunction. The report, picked up by Western Intelligence, indicated that the sub was returning to port under minimal power. However, her commander Captain Li Han, a frustrated career naval officer who had long desired power, had more devious plans and instead set course for a land that had long held his attention, Japan. After having set sail, Han told his crew of his plans to conquer the great economic powers of the western Pacific Rim. With the possibility of becoming rich beyond imagination, the “Xia’s” officers and crew went along with their deranged commander and his plans.

With American, British, and Japanese Naval intelligence waiting for the “Xia” to return to Shanghai, Han slipped his boat into Tokyo Bay behind an supertanker, right past the Japanese destroyers “Shirane” and “Hatakaze”. At 1200hr local time, the “Xia” surfaced, and Han broadcasted to the world that if Japan, Taiwan, and South Korea do not surrender to the Peoples Republic of China to be absorbed into the nation by midnight, he would destroy a random city in those countries each hour thereafter. He also demands that the United States remove all military presence in Asia within a week.

Civil panic has ensued and virtually overwhelmed the government’s attempt at dealing with this terrorist threat. Han also stipulated that if his lookouts or radar operator so much as spotted one aircraft or guided weapon approach the “Xia”, he would launch a missile and if attacked outright, would launch

as many missile as possible and then destroy itself along with Tokyo; thus treating the Japanese people to a far worse repeat of 1945.

ENTERING THE FRAY

The sudden appearance of the “Xia” in Tokyo Bay caught both Japanese and Western powers by total surprise. The Japanese suddenly found themselves without any sort of elite anti-terrorist unit aside from a few police SWAT-type units; now trying to deal with the civilian panic. With it’s military for the most part useless, Japanese leaders have been forced to ask for outside help; namely, the PC Merc team.

Assuming the PC team is qualified for the job (SEAL and UDT experience necessary), they will be asked to either sink the sub or seize it in a boarding action. Payment will be the equivalent of 5 million US dollars; a high price, but far less than what would happen otherwise. But if something goes wrong and the missiles are launched, payment will be canceled and the team's renown drops to zero if they survive.

OPTION 1: ANY TIME, ANY PLACE?

If the players prefer to be associated with the United States Government, they can play either a Delta Force or SEAL team sent from San Diego aboard a supersonic B-1 bomber modified as a transport (now classified as the MC-1). Once in Japan, the team will make it's way to the coast by helicopter, then they're on their own until the conclusion of the mission. If the sub can be captured, that's fine and well, but the main intention will be to sink the "Xia" and salvage it later. Total travel time will be 7 hours, not leaving much time to rectify the situation.

OPTION 2: REPO MEN?

Thanks to their wayward submarine captain, China is in a serious predicament. The government is desperately to get the "Xia" back with its deadly cargo intact, but needs good diplomatic and economic relations with Japan and the United States even more. Unable to field any commando force capable of retaking the

"Xia", Chinese diplomats locates (or recruits) a Mercenary unit consisting of the PCs, offering them \$350,000 (US equivalent) each to take the job. A detailed layout of the "Xia" will be provided, which. The payment is high for China, but taking such action will bring higher returns stature in Asia. The Chinese diplomats are not all concerned if any of their disloyal sailors or officers are brought back alive, but if Captain Han can be captured, it will mean another \$5,000 each for the PC. It will take 5.5 hours to get to Tokyo, leaving just over 2 hours to take action.

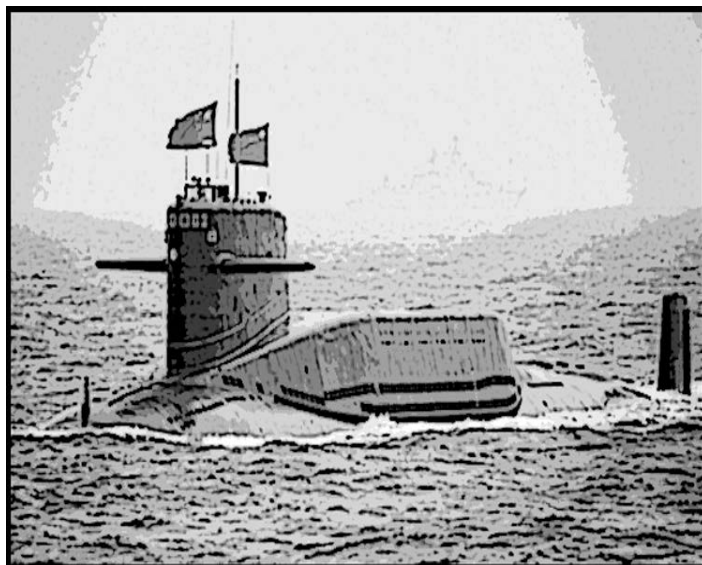
OPTION 3: SUPERHERO SERIAL?

Instead of a team of military commandos, the PC are technological Superheroes in the vein of Batman, Spiderman, the Rocketeer, or Captain America. Using their own high tech transport (or just being in country, on assignment, or on vacation), they must get to Tokyo, get out to the submarine, take out its firing capability, and bring the nuclear-armed pirates to justice!

THE ADVERSARY

The Type 092 Xia-class, submarine was the first ballistic missile-carrying, nuclear-powered submarine class (SSBN) deployed by the People's Liberation Army Navy, and the first SSBN designed and built in Asia. She was derived from the Han-Class SSNs. The first ship of her class, the "Xia" was laid down in 1978 at Huludao 120 miles North-East of Beijing and was completed in 1981. She then spent 6 years being fitted out and testing its 12 JL-1 Submarine launched ballistic missiles (SLBM), becoming active in 1987.

Displacing 8000 metric tons, the Xia is 120 meters long by 10 meters wide and 8 meters deep. Aside from the missiles tubes placed high on the sub's back, the Xia is armed with 6 21" torpedo tubes in the bow. Access openings on the submarine include two crew hatches fore and aft, the two escape hatches, the forward



torpedo loading hatch, the reactor and engine room hatch, and the sides and top of the sail. And like most modern submarines, the Xia is doubled hulled, requiring at least two STR: 30 explosions to be breached.

The Xia class submarines have undergone several refits, currently featuring a new black paint, possible quieting technologies, French-designed sonar, and the improved longer ranged JL-1A SLBM. It is reported that the 092 has not sailed beyond Chinese regional waters. One of the two Xias built was reported lost during an accident. The Xia is aging however and a new Ballistic Missile Submarine design is in the works for the People's Liberation Army Navy. The "Xia" class boats are home-ported in Jianggezhuang near Qingdao.

Even with the rather mediocre living and working conditions in the navy, the crew of the "Xia" is the cream of the People's Liberation Army Navy's (PLAN) submarine force. Numbering 72 sailors and 20 officers, the crew is disciplined and well trained, but inexperienced. None of sub crew, apart from street brawls and bar fights, has ever seen any sort of combat; a quick and sudden attack by the PCs will render the crew dazed, confused, and able only to yield meager resistance. However, there are 16 Naval Infantrymen on board for security, armed with the Chinese QZB-95 Assault Rifle, a Bullpup version of the AK-74 that fires a 5.8mm round.

The little information that Western Intelligence has on Captain Han only states he is a 1981 graduate of the PLA Dalian Naval Academy, has a bachelor's degree in Navigational Engineering and a Masters in Ship Command. He is married with one grown son who is a mechanical engineer. Chinese authorities may add that while a capable officer, he has petitioned seven times for the position of "Admiral of Submarine Forces" and due to hard line political views has made numerous adversaries in the Chinese military and political hi-

erarchy. Only his skill commanding the flagship of the submarine force has kept him from being sacked. Any contacts in the Chinese military reveal that Han has a dream of bringing all of East Asia and the western Pacific rim under Chinese domination. His actions indicate he is attempting to fulfill those dreams.

APPROACHING THE TARGET

From the shore, it is evident that there are at least 7 Chinese personnel on the sub, most huddled on the flying bridge. The sub's two exterior floodlights are on, covering the deck with light from the bow to halfway to the stern. Four missile tube hatches are in the open position. The weather is moderate, no wind, and a water temp of 52 degrees. Later in the evening, a waxing moon amidst a slightly overcast sky should provide suitable darkness for the attack.

Captain Han has already indicated that if any type of flying object comes within a kilometer of the Xia, he will launch a missile. If an aerial attack presents itself, he will launch 4 missiles at once and then prepare to launch the remaining eight missiles. A High-Altitude/Low Opening (HALO) parachute might succeed if the drip is done high enough and the parachutes make a difficult Parachute skill (1/2) roll. If the aerial assault comes from a non-conventional form (stealth glider, flying superhero), the sub



crew could be taken by surprise due to the show of witnesses the flight (Roll Chinese Combat SAN).

An American Patriot missile battery is available in Tokyo at the time of the assault, but it only has 6 shots versus the Xia's twelve. The Patriot will hit and disable a target missile 45% of the time; under 20%, the target is completely destroyed, but radioactive debris will fall in the area. This provides some backup in case the PCs fail in their mission.

The water in Tokyo Bay is rather choppy, requiring a Swim skill roll every 30 minutes to swim to the submarine unassisted. Failing this roll reduces the swimmers' speed by 5 and requiring a CON check to avoid exhaustion. Failing the CON check, the swimmer must roll against the Drowning rules.

If using some sport of swimming assist (sea scooter or mini-sub), Swim check rolls are increased by 30%. However, the Chinese sub crew has a 40% chance to detect the sound of the device motors. But due to the fixation of being fired on by conventional or missile launched torpedoes, the crew might ignore such an approaching sound (roll INTx 2)

GETTING INTO THE SUB

The Xia's "deck" area consists of a steep, sloped one-meter wide walkway from the bow up to and around the sail, and then widening out to seven meters on the flat expanse of the missile section, then narrows again to one meter back to the tail fin. When the sub is surfaced, the last four meters of the walkway is underwater, used only when the sub is in dry dock. The walkway area is covered with a non-skid finish to provide traction for the crew.

The forward deck area is location to the torpedo loading hatch, a crew access door, and the forward escape hatch. There is a hatch door on each side of the sail, providing access to the conning tower and interior of the sub. Along with the twelve missile hatches (four of which are already open) the rear deck contains the double

doors of the reactor and engine room hatches, another crew access door, and the rear escape hatch. The Crew access hatches are sealed from within, but long range Observation indicated that the sub guards bang on the entryways 3 times to be allowed in.

The six guards, armed with QZB-95 assault rifles nervously roam the dry area of the deck from bow to stern, constantly looking for aircraft and approaching vessels. However, most of their concern is avoiding falling overboard, so their Observation skills are reduced to 30%. If the PCs attack at night, roll an Observation skill to avoid tripping over the variously placed handgrips, handles, and latches.

To blast open a hatch or outside door requires an explosive charge and a successful Demolition skill roll. The STR of the explosive charge is rolled against the STR of the target on the Resistance table:

Torpedo Hatch: 40 STR

Escape Hatch: 30 STR

Access Hatch: 25 STR

An explosive entry will, however, alert the sub's crew, possibly resulting in a missile launch. Sailors in the immediate interior compartment will be stunned by the blast for 1D4+1 rounds and be unable to fight back.

ABOARD THE "XIA"

SAIL: Most of the submarines' sail area is taken up by the retractable periscopes, radars, and communication masts. In the front is an open conning tower area (the "flying bridge") occupied by five crewmen, all nervously scanning the sky and sea for whatever military response they imagine that the Japan will throw at them. On the flying bridge are one officer and four enlisted ratings, the latter armed with QZB-95 assault rifles. Their aggregate Observation skill is 45%. The sail provides 20 points of armor to the crew up top, protecting legs, torsos, and chests from small arms fire. If the five crewmen up in the flying bridge can be neutralized, access to the bridge is simply a 30 foot climb

down the conning tower hatchway to the Control Room.

CONTROL ROOM: This area contains the operational controls of the sub; steering, submerging, navigation, radar, sonar, and engineering consoles. The radar and sonar are being double-manned to ensure that the enemy above does not get the upper hand. The rest of the crew here are also waiting nervous for whatever political and military response is forthcoming.

At all times, the Control Room is manned by five officers armed with 9mm pistols and 2 magazines, fourteen unarmed crewmen, and two guards armed with QZB-95s and two magazines of ammunition. The Ship's Operation Officer (3rd in command) is here, nervously awaiting a radio message from the Japanese government.

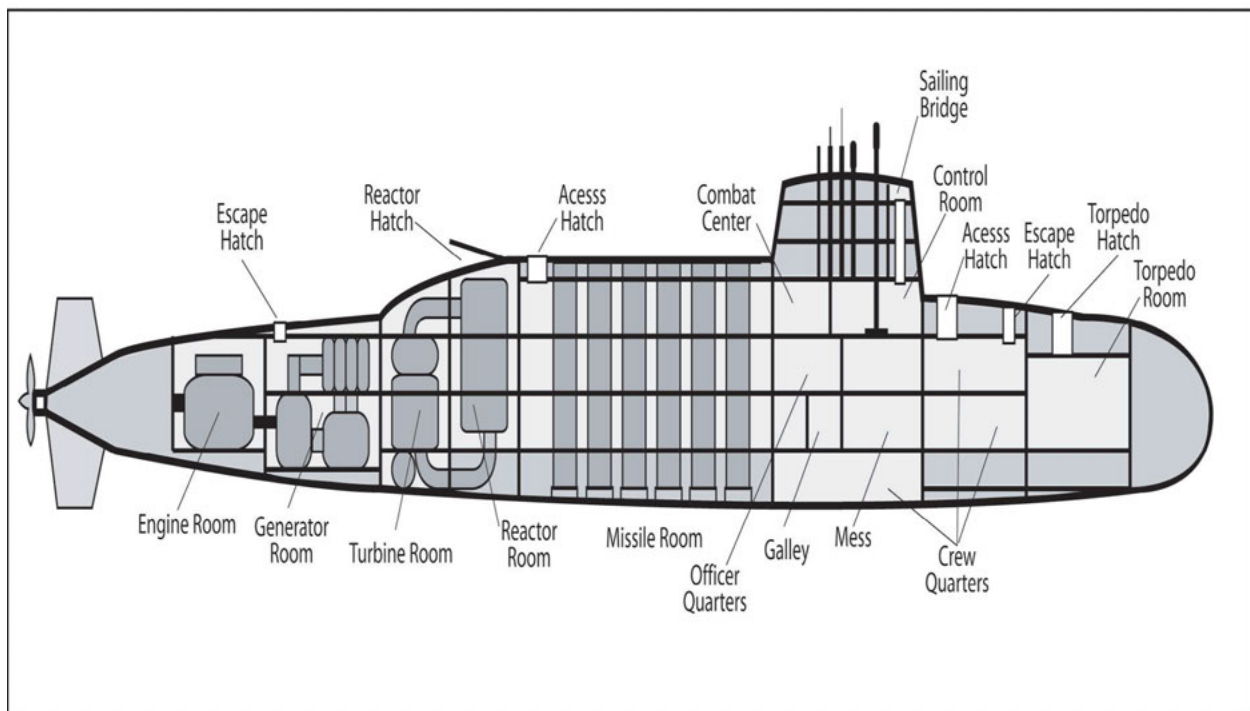
COMMUNICATIONS ROOM: The crew are listening in on both the military channel awaiting word of the Japanese, Korean, and Taiwanese governments' decision, along with any response by the United States and the civilian radio bands broadcasting news of their arrival in Tokyo Bay and the ensuing panic in the streets. The Communications officer, 7 unarmed crewmen, and one QZB-95 armed guard

are stationed here, even more nervous as they awaiting a radio message from the Japanese government.

MISSILE CONTROL ROOM: Han, dreaming of the riches that await him, is found here with the ships Executive Officer, the Missile officer, five crewmen, and three guards. The missile launch keys are in the panel, needing only a reason to be turned. If electrical power from the engine room can be interrupted, the missile launch panel will not function

Captain Han and his officers are armed with a 9mm pistol with one 12rd magazine and the three Naval Infantry Guards are armed with QZB-95 assault rifle with 3 magazines. The crew members are unarmed and only under desperate situations will they use work tools as makeshift clubs.

TORPEDO ROOM: The six 21" torpedo tubes all face forward and are allotted three torpedoes each for a total of 18 torpedoes, each with a conventional, 200kg warhead. A walkway provides access to the torpedo racks and the topmost crew deck, To open the torpedo doors, the torpedo loading hatch requires a combined human 60 STR an and an average Demolition skill roll. The torpedoes are not armed, but can



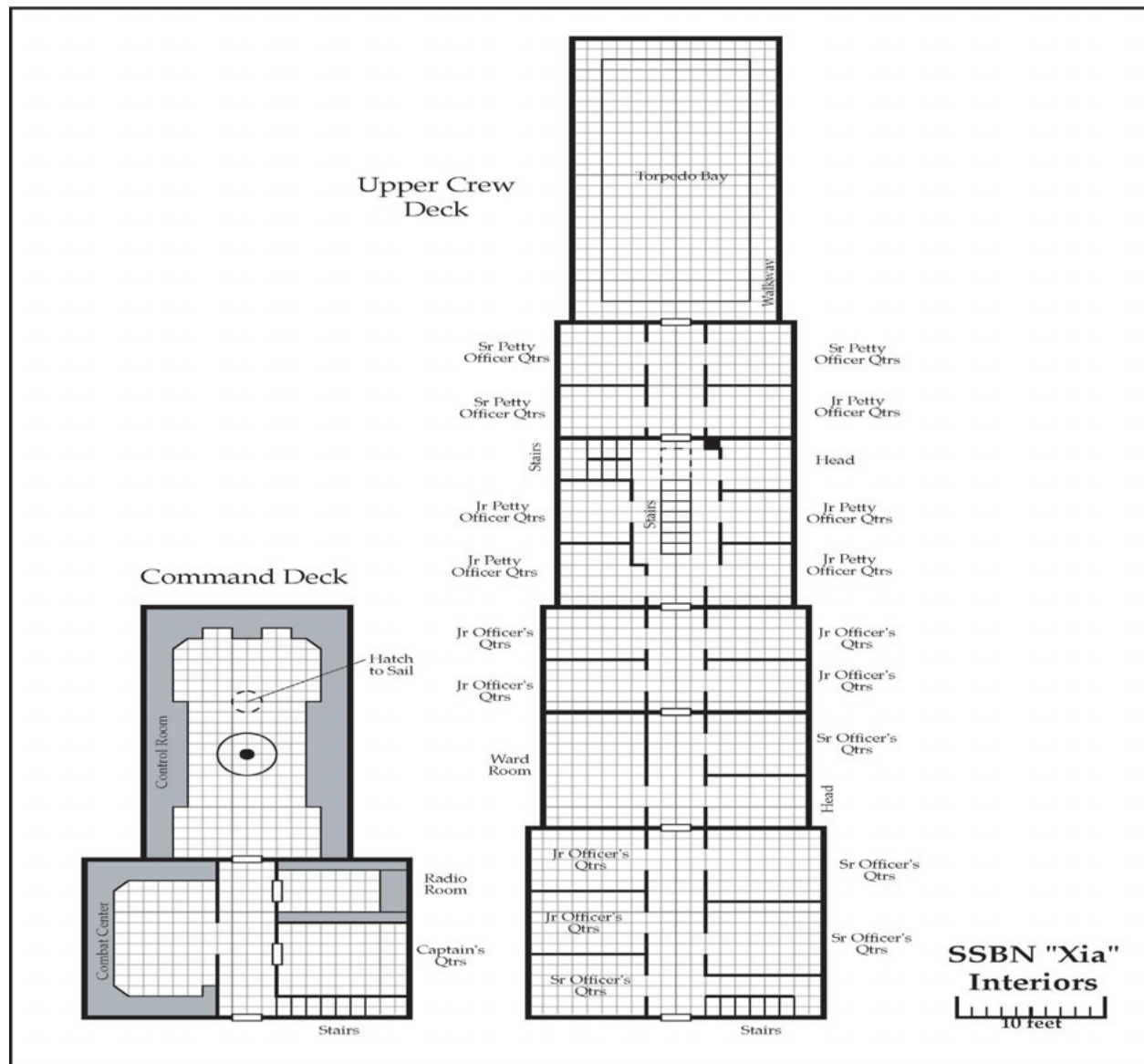
explode if hit by an impaling weapon round (35% chance to do so). Such an explosion will detonate the other torpedos, effectively blowing the front of the submarine off.

The five crewmen and one officer on station here are not anticipating any action and are somewhat lax and unarmed except for any heavy tools to use as clubs. Any stray rounds or explosives may set off the torpedoes (25% chance to do so), resulting in a 12D6 Damage explosion.

CREW COMPARTMENT DECK: The cramped crew quarters, including berths, baths, galley, mess hall, and officers wardroom are scattered around the sub, wherever the designers could

find room. Only a few of the crew is off duty; most of these are in inconspicuous cavities that provide excellent cover. Due to the heightened atmosphere on the "Xia", the Crew Compartments are currently empty, but during combat will fill up with D110+2 terrified crewmen. These men will only fight back out of desperation.

MECHANICAL DECK: The lowest section of the forward compartments, here is located two massive pumps for taking on and expelling seawater for submerging & surfacing, along with the boat's gyroscope which provides stability. An additional crew compartment is located



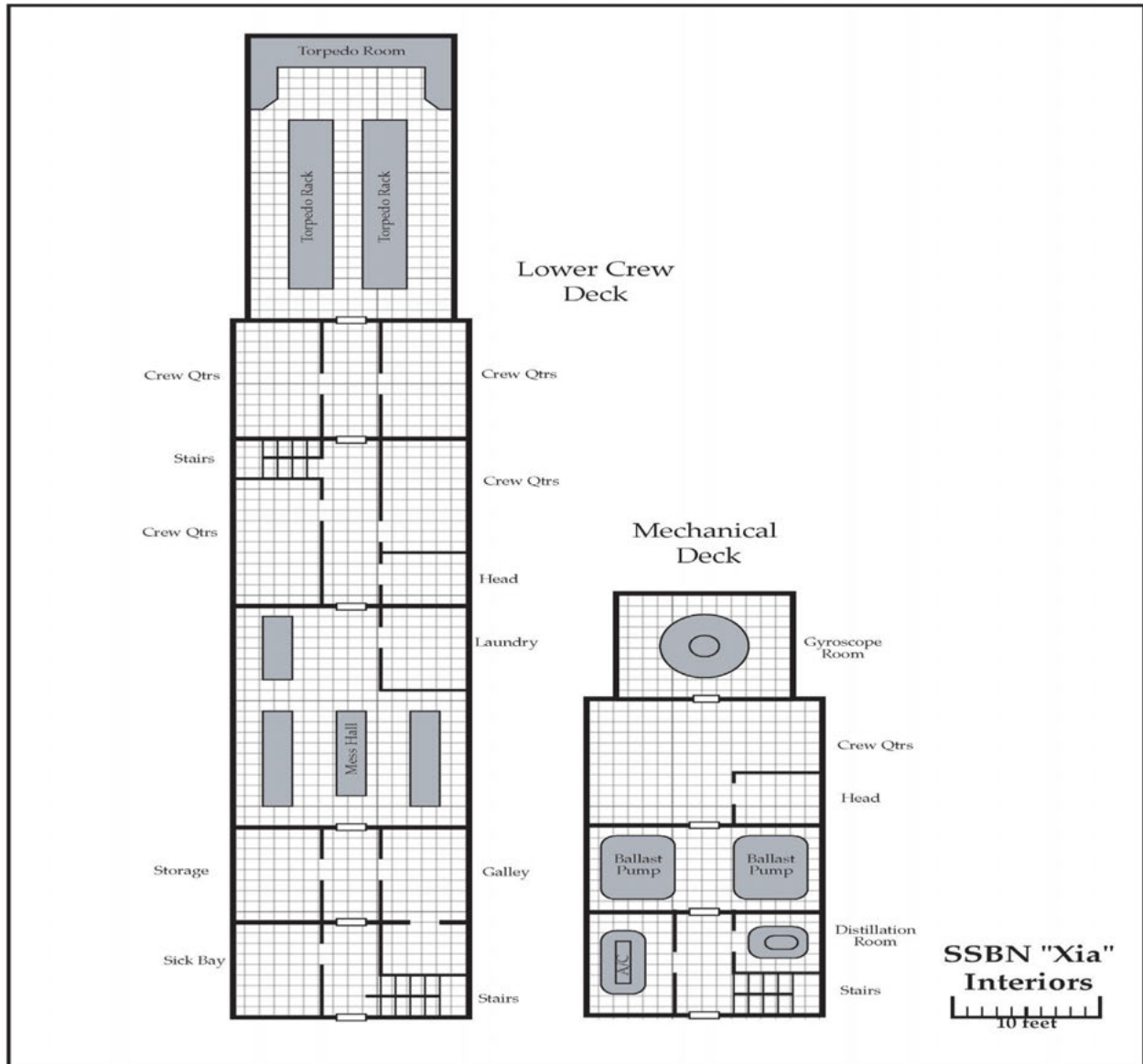
between the pumps and the gyroscope rooms. This crew area is the hiding place of last resort.

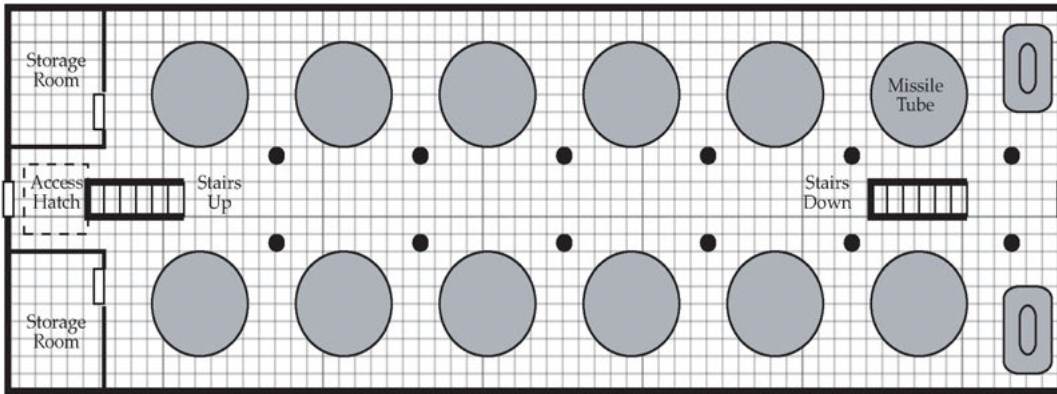
MISSILE ROOM: Spanning dozens of meters, the Missile Deck is divided into three main areas; the Main Missile Deck, The Upper Deck, and the lower deck. The Main and upper Decks are where most of the maintenance work is done, while the lower deck provides for storage, some maintenance, and crew quarters crammed into every possible nook. Here is found one Officer (pistol/2 magazines), 2 guards (QZB-95 /2 magazines), and 6 unarmed crewmen who must make due with brawling or makeshift weapons. The missile tubes are so thick that no

small arms fire will penetrate. (Treat as 26 Armor Points).

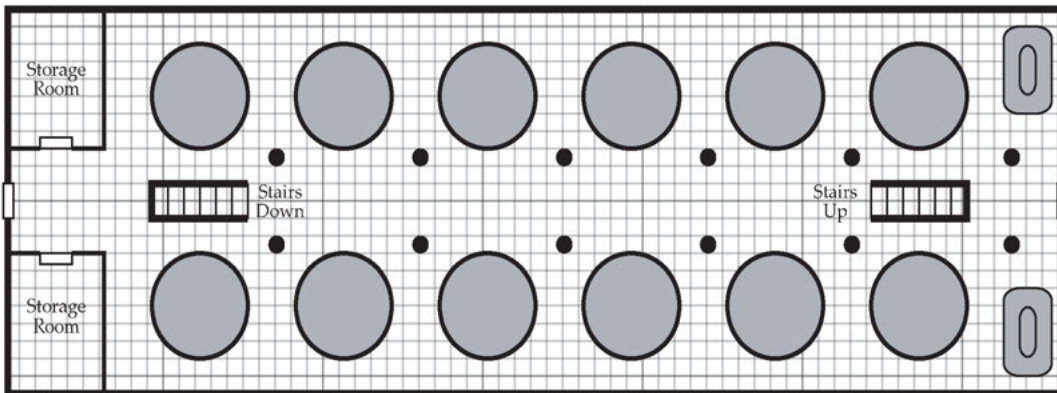
REACTOR ROOM: Connected to the Missile Room via a 1.25 meter wide access compartment, this is where the crew controls the heart of the sub, its nuclear reactor. The reactor itself is heavily shielded, but any stray bullets or explosives could severely damage the controls and disrupt the reactors safe operation. The small room in the corner contains five NBC suits in case of a serious accident.

The Reactor Room always has two officer and six crewmen on duty. The Officers are each armed with a 9mm pistol and 3 magazines

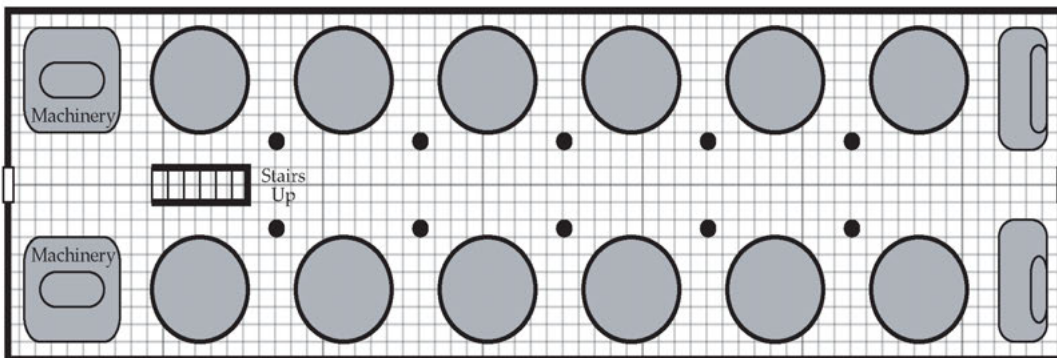




Upper Missile Deck

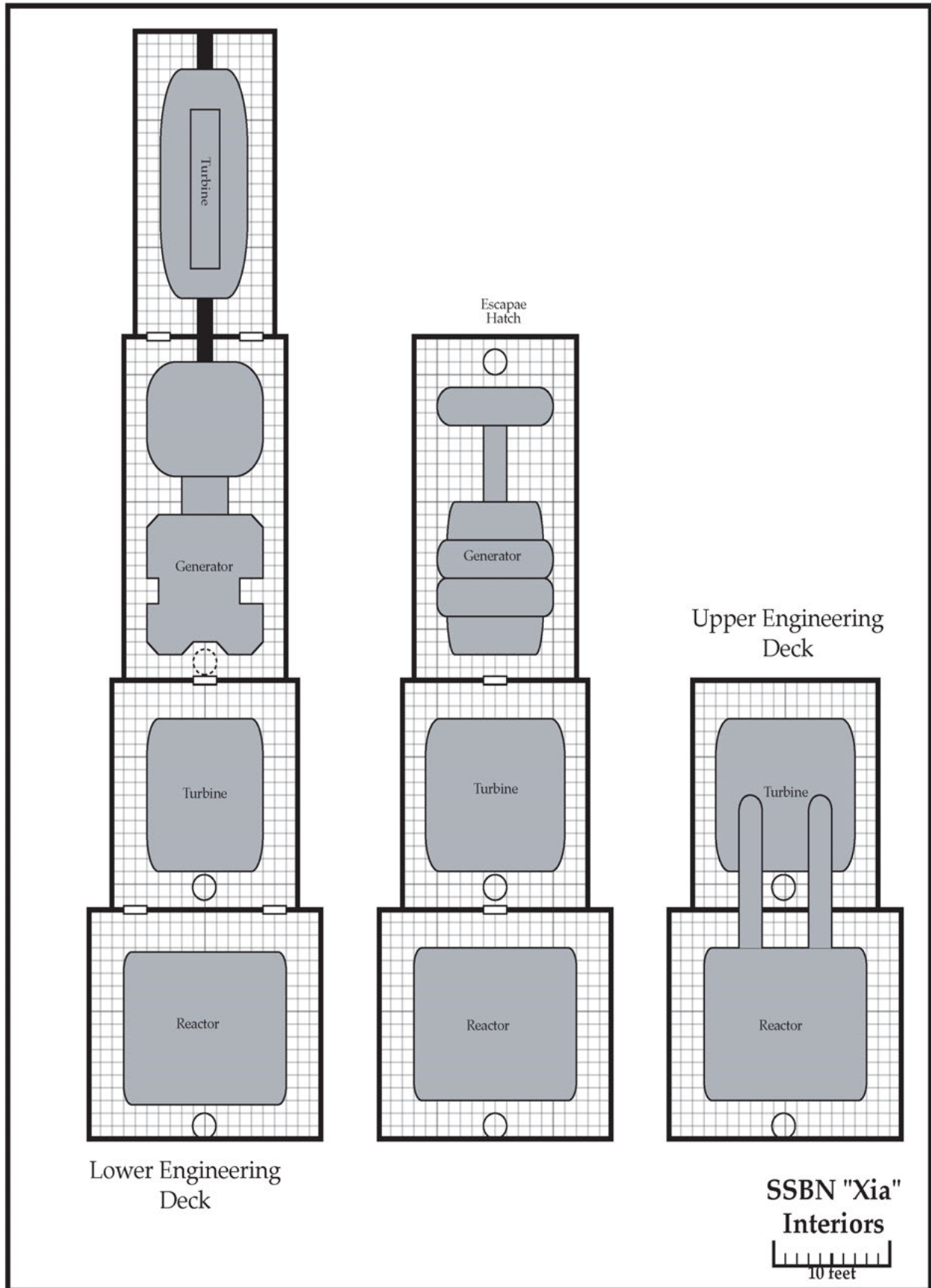


Center Missile Deck



Lower Missile Deck

SSBN "Xia"
Interiors
10 feet



of ammunition, while the unarmed crewmen will make due to large, metal tools stored there. (Club: 30%, Damage = 1D8+db).

TURBINE ROOM: Here, the heat from the atomic heart of the sub is converted into steam, and then into mechanical power. One Engineering officer and 5 crew men are on station here, all unarmed save for various tools to use as clubs.

ENGINE ROOM: A tangled jungle of metal and plastic piping, gages, and machinery, the engine room housed the power generator and electric engine that propels the boat. The generation room also provides access to the outer deck via the escape compartment (EAS: Demolition). The machinery and piping also provides 3/4's cover to any sub crewman. Those who decide to fight can use whatever tools are available. (Small Club: 35%, Damage = 1D6+db or Large Club: 30%, Damage = 1D8+db)

If a firefight takes in the engine room, all machinery has the equivalent of 6pt Armor and 20 HPs before system failure.

If the main Generator is hit and disabled, emergency lights bath the sub's interior with a eerie red light. An Electronics skill roll can be used to disable the emergency lights, turning the entire sub into a pitch black cave, illuminated only by hand-held flashlights. If electrical power is interrupted, the Xia's missiles and torpedoes cannot be fired, and inter-sub communications will be lost.

The Engine Room is continually manned by at least 2 Officers and 14 crewmen, with a random 1D4-1 officers and 1D6-1 crewmen also on duty.

COMBAT IN THE SUB

The Missiles:

During any attack on the sub, roll for Initial surprise. If the PCs fail to achieve Surprise, the crew will be able to launch missile on a percentile roll of 0-70. If the PCs get the drop on the sub crew, the chance to launch drops to 20%.

The entire firing sequence will take 35 seconds for the open missile tubes and an additional 95 seconds for the other missiles.

Simply tossing a HE grenade in an open missile tube is not a smart idea, as the resulting explosion would release radioactive debris into the environment, not mention blowing the Player to pieces. A couple of fragmentation grenades, however, would possible effective cripple the missile without igniting the solid rocket fuel. (45% Chance to do so). Igniting a damaged missile in an open tube causes the missile to spiral skyward for 500 meters before exploding.

Explosive charges set on the missile tube covers can be used, provided that the exact amount is used (AVE:Demolition). Too little, the hatch is only slightly damaged and still usable 35% of the time. If too much is used, the nuclear warhead underneath could prematurely go off (25% to do so), seriously ruining the PCs' day. If the warhead does not go off, it still releases a cloud of radioactive material into the atmosphere (giving the PCs' possibly fatal radiation sickness and eliminating any chances for getting paid).

THE SUBMARINE INTERIOR

If the sub interior is plunged into darkness, red emergency lighting reduce all combat skill rolls by 10 for all characters not equipped with Light Intensifying or Infrared vision gear. If all lighting is extinguished, combat skills are reduced by 40, and all skills are reduced by 5D10, except by IR vision-equipped characters.

Smoke, in conjunction with personal night-vision gear, would also be highly effective against the Chinese crew, as fire is a submariner's worst nightmare. Smoke or chemical agents such as tear gas or pepper spray inside the sub would instinctively cause the crew to evacuate a compartment.

If a player or NPC miss their human target inside the submarine, there is a 55% chance of hitting a critical shipboard system. Roll Percentile dice for a location:

Hydraulics: 01-25 Water Leak: 26-50

Air Line: 51-70 Electrical: 71-85

Steam Line: 86-100

If weapons fire takes place in the Engine Room, use these results:

Engine: 01-40 Hydraulics: 41-50

Water Leak: 51-71 Electrical: 72-80

Steam Line: 81-100

Results of such damage to unlucky nearby characters are as follows:

Hydraulic Damage: Oil spews from a pipe or machine, forcing Characters to make a halved DEX check when passing by.

Water Leak: Water blasts from a pipe with the force of a fire hose, causing 1D6+1 Damage to characters within 3 meters. In addition, sub crew members must take a Combat Sanity check or evacuate the area and sealing the hatch behind them.

Air Line: An ear-shattering blast of compressed air explodes into the compartment for 1D3 minutes. All characters in the compartment roll CON check to avoid being stunned for 1D6 minutes.

Electrical: A shower of sparks rain down and any loose wiring electrocutes any nearby character with 4D6 damage.

Steam Line: A searing blast of super hot steam shoots into the compartment, dropping visibility to one meter and reducing range combat rolls by 40%. Roll DEX check to avoid being scalded for 3D6+2 damage.

Sub Crew:

If things go serious wrong for the crew, they might surrender if ordered to (Roll Persuade and Mandarin). Convincing officers and the Naval Infantrymen will be more difficult. Due to his delusions of grander, Captain Han will not surrender at any time and will have to be either killed or knocked unconscious.

Stats: QZB-95 Assault Rifle, shorten version

Weight: 10lb (4.2kg), Length: 31?, Round : 5.8mm (Chinese). Shot/Round: 2 or Burst. Damage = 2D6+1, Range: 70yds, Ammo: 30, Malfunction: 95-00%

COMBAT MORALE

As opposed to the movie bad guys who seemingly fight to the death, most real people will cease to fight under the right circumstances. Any combatant who loses 10 points of their sanity with a ten round span will freeze up or simply flee the scene in panic. The loss of 10% of Sanity will result will in surrendering to the opposing side.

Typical Combat SAN Losses:

Character is wounded: 2 SAN

Character is severely wounded: 5 SAN

Group is surrounded: 4 SAN

Group is surrounded and has little chance of escape: 7 SAN

50% of One's Group is incapacitated: 3 SAN

75% of One's Group is incapacitated: 7 SAN

Sole Survivor: 10 SAN

Typical Combat SAN Gains

No Casualties taken: 5 SAN

Opponents wiped out: 2 SAN

Opponents Surrender: 3 SAN

Opponents Surrender without a taking a shot: 5 SAN

Opponents Flee: 4 SAN

OUTCOME

The PCs must simply prevent a launch or accidental detonation of the Xia's nuclear missiles, whether by an attack on the submarine itself or defeating the Chinese on board. While the Chinese government will renounce any loss of life of their sailors, the political embarrassment of losing one of their most important ships in their Navy will quickly quiet any protests.

Military Units will receive innumerable decorations and adoration by the people of Japan, Korea, and Taiwan, as well as receiving \$100,000 reward from a much appreciative Japanese government. Mercenary units will receive at least \$350,000 for a successful mission and possible world-wide renown. Superheroes... they eat danger for breakfast and may or may not request any kind of reward, but will receive incredible world-wide fame.

Turning over the insane Captain Han to Chinese authorities alive will result in a \$50,000 reward to any surviving PC team.

However, if the PCs fail and nuclear missiles are launched, the deaths of millions will weigh heavy on their souls, and the world will be thrust into a decade-plus-long economic depression. In other words...don't fail.

NPCs

CAPTAIN HAN, Power-Mad Submarine Commander, Age 50

STR: 13 CON: 15 SIZ: 13 DEX: 12 INT: 17
APP: 12 HP: 14 SAN: 85

Damage Bonus: +1D4

Attacks:

Brawl: 30%, damage 1d3+db

9mm Pistol: 50%, Damage 1D10

Assault Rifle: 20%, Damage 2D8, # of Shots: 30/
magazine

Skills: Bargain: 35%, Climb: 40%, Command: 55%, Dodge: 24%, Hide: 20%, Knowledge (Naval Science): 66%, Knowledge: Submarine Operations: 86%, Language (English): 31%, Language (Mandarin): 90%, Listen: 35%, Navigation: 50%, Sense: 30%, Stealth: 15%, Swim: 65%, Strategy: 45%

Despite his nation's acceptance of government-sponsored capitalism, Han is still a die hard communist and devotee of Mao Tse-Tung. He is even more ardently nationalistic and has a dream of bring all of East Asia and the western-

Pacific rim coming under Chinese domination with the once Mighty United States becoming nothing more than a feudalistic puppet of Beijing. After one final rejection for command of the PLAN's submarine force, he has decided to take matters into his own, nuclear-tipped hands.

CHINESE NAVY OFFICER Typical (Ages 22-34)

STR: 13 CON: 14 SIZ: 12 DEX: 14 INT: 16
APP: 12 HP: 13 SAN: 85%

Damage Bonus: +1D4

Attacks:

Brawl: 25%, Damage 1D3+db

9mm Pistol: 45%, Damage 1D10

Assault Rifle: 15%, Damage 2D8, # of Shots: 30/
magazine

Skills: Bargain: 30%, Climb: 45%, Command: 50%, Dodge: 28%, First Aid: 35%, Hide: 20%, Knowledge (Naval Science): 61%, Knowledge: Submarine Operations: 81%, Language (English): 31%, Language (Mandarin): 90%, Listen: 45%, Navigation: 50%, Sense: 30%, Stealth: 20%, Swim: 65%, Strategy: 45%

Nearly all the Xia's officers were trained at the PLA Dalian Naval Academy, receiving technical degrees in engineering, electronics, navigation, rocketry, or ship command. Older officers from before the mid 1990s were solidly indoctrinated in Maoist political doctrine, while the younger officers have a slightly more Western capitalist ideology, although an extremely nationalist one. Under combat situations, they will try to cajole their crew to ferociously fight on against any attacker.

CHINESE NAVAL INFANTRY, Typical (Ages 18-23)

STR: 15 CON: 15 SIZ: 13 DEX: 13 INT: 11
APP: 10 HP: 14 SAN: 80%

Damage Bonus: +1D4

Weapons:

Brawl: 50%, Damage 1D3+db

Assault Rifle: 65%, Damage 2D8, # of Shots: 30/
magazine

Knife: 40%, Damage 1D4+1+db

Gas Grenade: 45%, Damage POT 15 Stun

Large Club: 40%, Damage: Varies

Skills: Bargain: 20%, Climb: 60%, Dodge: 26%,
First Aid: 40%, Hide: 30%, Knowledge (Mili-
tary Science): 31%, Language (Mandarin):
81%, Listen: 40%, Navigation: 25%, Sense:
30%, Stealth: 50%, Swim: 65%, Strategy: 15%,
Tactics: 45%, Throw: 45%

Due to the value of the nuclear warheads aboard the “Xia”, the PLAN has put two squads of Naval Infantrymen on the submarine as guards. These are highly trained (for PLA standards) and highly motivated troops, being extremely nationalist and loyal to their commander and most likely will be the last crew members fighting.

CHINESE SAILOR, Typical (Ages 18-24)

STR: 14 CON:12 SIZ: 12 DEX: 13 INT: 13

APP: 11 HP: 12 SAN: 65



Damage Bonus: +1D4

Attacks:

Brawl: 45%, Damage 1D3+db

Assault Rifle: 15%, Damage 2D8, # of Shots: 30/
magazine.

Knife: 30%, Damage 1D4+1+db

Skills: Bargain: 25%, Climb: 50%, Dodge: 26%,
Fast Talk: 30%, First Aid: 45%, Hide: 25%,
Knowledge (Sub Operations): 71%, Language
(English): 21%, Language (Mandarin): 81%,
Listen: 45%, Mechanical or Electrical Repair:
45%, Navigation: 30%, Sense: 35%, Stealth:
35%, Swim: 55%, Throw: 40%

The Xia’s crew is the best in the entire People’s Liberation Army Navy, having previously served in other nuclear attack subs and diesel ballistic missile subs. They are highly loyal to their commander and share equally his dream of bring all of East Asia and the western Pacific rim under Chinese domination. However, aside from a day in basic training handling weapons, they have absolutely no combat experience.

NEW GEAR

SEA SCOOTER

Basically, a controllable motor that can pull a diver/pilot behind it. Made of Impact resistant plastic or composite material with heavy duty rubber on the hull for protection. It typically runs up to 3 mph (4.8km/hour), and run up to 1.5 hours with normal use. It weighs around 15-20lbs, including a rechargeable battery. Controls include a variable speed throttle and adjustable buoyancy lever.

MC-1 “QUASAR” TRANSPORT JET

By 2010, with the rapidly deteriorating world situation and limited off shore bases, the United States military decided it needed some way of getting it’s elite Delta anti-terrorist teams into action. For once taking thrift and practicality into account, it was decided to take two 25 year old B-1A bombers and convert them to

extremely fast transports, secretly referred to as the MC-1 Quasar. Reducing the crew to three and having a renovated bomb bay, the MC-1 can carry a fully equipped ten man combat team and an additional 9 person support unit (command and control team, civilian attache, technicians, etc) with an extensive communication center inside at Mach 2 to nearly any spot in on the globe (with refueling). Normally, the team would disembark at a friendly military base or airport, but it is possible to HALO out a specially designed discharge hatch in the belly of the aircraft if the plane drops to stall speed. It is equipped with state of the art avionics and electronic countermeasures. It normally carries no armament (so it can land at civilian airports), but can carry up to 4 rear-firing AIM-9L Sidewinder missiles for more precarious missions.

AIRCRAFT STATS

Fuel Type: AvG

Vehicle Weight: 180,000 pounds

Fuel Consumption: 30,000

Runway Type: Hardened

Min Runway, Takeoff/Land: 1300/1100

Combat Equipment: FLIR, Radar jammers, IR Suppression, integral Flare & chaff dispensers.

Crew: Pilot, Copilot, Navigator/Flight Systems, 19 Passengers

Com Move: 140

Load: 2 Tons 2 Fuel Cap: 30,000

Crew: 3+19



A MERRY BERLIN CHRISTMAS

BY C.S. BARNHART

INTRODUCTION: “A MERRY BERLIN CHRISTMAS.”

Christmas is a magical time for everyone who partakes, especially the fae and ghastly creatures of the world. One such sub-demon is the Krampus, a mischievous and evil sprite who delights in torment and torture, especially of the young and innocent. This evil spirit is the central focus of A MERRY BERLIN CHRISTMAS the first adventure module for the Berlin '61 horror role playing game setting for Basic Role Playing, although some notes have been included for use with Call of Cthulhu. Its basis is centered on US Soldiers serving as members of the Berlin Brigade who begin the game stuck on guard duty the night before their passes for the holiday begin.

The adventure is designed for 3-5 characters where at least one (not recommended) or two (RECOMMENDED) of them are US Soldiers. The other characters can be family members, Berliners who are friends or even complete strangers. Characters who are not US Soldiers will have to sit out the first section of the adventure, but creative GMs can give them a beginning encounter if they like.

PREMISE

June Hemlock the wife of US Army Captain John Hemlock recently purchased a holiday ornament from the local Kris Kringlemarkt in Berlin. Little to her knowledge the ornament is a vessel that traps the soul of the Krampus in it. Members of the Cult of the Black Night have

been alerted to the ornament's disappearance and that it is in the hands of the Captain's wife and plan to recover it as soon as possible.

However to do so they must first sneak onto the grounds of the US Army Administration Office and find the ornament and this is where the adventure begins.

GUARD DUTY DECEMBER 23RD 1961

Guard duty is perhaps one of the dullest and boring details a soldier can be given. Especially near the holidays. When most soldiers are already on leave back home and others have managed to gold brick or @\$ \$ kiss their way



out of the roster, some soldiers manage to get the shaft.

The characters take up guard duty at gate # 3 of their administration office. The exact type of office or military section they work for can vary greatly from GM to GM and player to player but it is recommended that most of the players not be of the combat arms MOS categories as it is better and provides for a more rounded group if they are from signal corps, public affairs, or another technical skilled based occupation.

As the players who are US Army soldiers (should be ranked Sergeant or lower) are now on duty, they sit around in or near their tower, chatting, playing cards, reading or otherwise occupying themselves while listening to the occasional banter of check ins, check ups and rechecks on their station's radio. The players should be allowed to play up the aspects their characters are performing, such as actually play a few hands of cards, or sit down and read a book while the Game Master describes the setting.

Sergeant Reyas girlfriend Sergeant Debbie Brown stops by to talk to Reyas about their holiday plans. He places mistletoe over her head and steals a kiss, which embarrasses her in front of the troops. They lightly quarrel where he says "What else is mistletoe for?" and she replies "Granddaddy always said it was to keep the boogie man at bay!" She then calls him the boogie man and leaves, smiling.

After awhile on guard duty the radio goes silent. No communication goes out and nothing comes in. A check of the radio with any one of several skills (such as Craft (Radios), Electrical Repair, Espionage, Knowledge (Radios), Military) will reveal that there is nothing wrong with the radio and something else non-electrical is preventing it from broadcasting. Eventually either the players will come to the conclusion to walk to the next guard post to check out what is happening there, or the Commander of the Guard (Staff Sergeant Michael Reyas) will order the PCs to go.

While walking to the next guard tower the PCs will make Spot Tests with their Spot scores bettered by a +5% modifier due to them being aware and alert that a situation may be going on and by the snow causing a stark contrast between the ground and anyone walking upon it. A successful check means the characters notice an unauthorized individual slipping out of one of the office buildings where the Chain of Command (specifically Captain Hemlock) houses their work offices.

If the characters approach the individual directly, call after him or shout for him to halt he will immediately open fire (Handgun skill of 27%, handgun of GM's choice, though a small one with a low damage rating is recommended) and flee. If the characters opt to follow him instead of shouting or rushing him, they must all pass Sneak and Hide skill rolls. If any of them fail the intruder notices them and reacts by opening fire and fleeing.

As guards on an American Post fired upon by an intruder the characters are authorized to return fire. If they do so and the individual is hit, he will fall behind a tree, or bush, or low wall or some other conveniently located obstacle and fall out of sight. When the characters clear the obstacle they will find the intruder's long coat, a Latin note that looks like a Bible hymn, the handgun, a pool of dark blood and an expensive and exotic looking Christmas tree ornament buried halfway in the snow. The man has crawled a few feet away and has died of a self inflicted stab wound to his throat. Oddly, his shoes have coal in them.

All characters viewing the Christmas tree ornament must make a POWx5 test or be compelled to immediately pick it up and put it in their pocket for themselves. If more than one character fails their POW test to resist the ornament then opposed DEX tests are required to see who grabs it first. If the players decide it is best to fight it out then the adventure is side tracked, the characters can both fight and the GM can either have them kill each other, wind up in the brig or end up breaking the ornament (see Breaking the Ornament on page

XX). If they all pass the temptation the ornament, weapon and coat will all be taken by the Military Police (MP) to the main Guard Tower where the characters will be required to fill out their statements before being released and signed out for their holiday pass.

If the characters fail to notice the individual while walking to the next guard post, give them a second chance to notice him on their way back, but without the +5% bonus. If they fail to notice both times then the intruder will be killed by the MPs and the characters will be required to fill out statements of why they failed to notice the intruder.

If they fail to stop the intruder the MPs will stop him in the same manner (coat, weapon, pool of blood, ornament) and the characters will still have to fill out statements.

While giving statements the characters will see the ornament again and this time they will have to pass a POWx4 test to resist it. However, because of the increased number of individuals watching and in the general area those who cannot resist the temptation are more likely to try to steal the ornament unnoticed. A GM may allow skills that simulate the following Craft (Pick Pocket), Craft (Stage magic), Espionage, Hide or Sneak to do such a physical act or Fast Talk or Persuasion to gain permission to take the evidence to storage. The ornament (and Krampus inside) will not allow the characters to start a fight over it here, but if they persist Staff Sergeant Reyas will lock up the ornament and take it himself.

If the characters do not fall victim of the temptation or fail to “steal” the ornament successfully, Captain Hemlock will arrive and take the ornament, reveal it was his office broken into and that the ornament was a gift from his wife for Christmas.

Recommendations: If the MPs are the ones who kill/stop the intruder then we recommend that Sergeant Duncan of the MPs become a foil in the plot. He has also seen the Ornament and wants it for himself. He will either try to take it at the Christmas party or at McGuffin’s Irish Pub. At the least he will make an attempt for it

at the climax and be one of the victims of the Krampus.

CORPORAL LANE LOVES CHRISTMAS DECEMBER 24TH 1961

After an event filled night the characters (who are US Soldiers at least) are finally on pass for the next 4 days to enjoy Christmas. The first big plan on everyone’s list is Corporal Lane’s massive Christmas party which he hosts every year since he joined the army. Lane’s parties are known for excessive booze, cute local girls and good music. Even Captain Hemlock and his wife are rumored to be stopping by.

Corporal Lane’s party is the perfect location for non-military characters to arrive and partake in the adventure. Local national friends, girlfriends, family members and guests from all around are invited.

This year Lane is having a special drinking game where the winner of each round places an ornament on the tree, while the losers (everyone else in the room) take a shot of his special imported Vodka (which he got as a gift from a East Berlin checkpoint guard, which by the way is unauthorized).

At this point of time it is highly recommended that the GM role play some scenes with the players, be they mistletoe encounters, spiking the punch (which is already spiked by the way), chasing girls, discussing the events of last night (or the past few months, since the Wall was built the August before and the US and USSR had a tank stand off just two months before the party) or setting up future subplots the GM may want to follow through on if this adventure is part of or the beginning of a campaign.

At some point Sergeant Duncan of the MPs and two of his Privates will arrive at the party to request music be turned down, have local nationals prove they are West Berliners and to be a general pain in the neck. If Sergeant Duncan is under the influence of the ornament and he sees it again he will try to take it. (“Hey isn’t that evidence? I should run you in the brig, give it here!”)

The local nationals like to tell stories about their traditions and customs for Christmas, the most important being the “evil” Santa Claus that comes for naughty children to eat them and how it can only be kept at bay by placing coal in your shoes and singing it a song. Eventually Captain Hemlock and his wife will arrive at the party. If Captain Hemlock never recovered his ornament and one of the player characters has it, his presence is not necessary at the party. However his wife is obsessed with it and will use her husband to get it if she can. And she will show up at the party regardless.

If one of the characters took the ornament earlier (at the guard tower or at the shooting scene) they will still have it on them (in a pocket or something). But other than that they have no ornaments on them and when the player with the ornament loses (or Mrs. Hemlock) then they will be compelled to put the ornament on the tree. If the players were not in possession of it (meaning Mrs. Hemlock had it)

then they now must pass a POW x 3 (POW x 5 if they have never seen it before) roll or desire it. Regardless, Mrs. Hemlock will take the ornament when she leaves (with her husband if he is there) to go to McGuffin’s Irish Pub. If one of the characters had the ornament Mrs. Hemlock will say “My ornament, wherever did you find it? Thank you so much!” and hug the character. Those who failed the POW roll will naturally want to go to McGuffin’s Irish Pub after the ornament.

If the obsessed characters persist or the situation with Sergeant Duncan gets out of hand, a fight may indeed break out. If so the ornament may be broken in the scuffle.

Before the drinking game, once during it and once after all the characters should make a Spot Test with the following modifiers: None before, -5% during and -15% after. Failure indicates they notice nothing out of the ordinary. Success will reveal to the characters that pass that a mysterious and quite stranger is in the room



with them, at all times watching someone (that someone will be whoever has the ornament at the moment) and apparently silently singing Christmas carols to himself. He is short, dark in skin tone, wears glasses and a bit fat. His hair is balding and slicked with grease and his business suit a dirty brown with stains from both snow and grime. Any attempts to talk to him will result in him excusing himself from the party and fleeing. A Spot test after he leaves will reveal a faint amount of coal left behind around the rug where the man was standing.

As Mrs. Hemlock leaves another Spot test is permitted at normal modifiers (or +5% if the mysterious guest was noticed earlier). Failure indicated nothing, while success results in the succeeding characters noticing that the mysterious man follows Mrs. Hemlock (either out of the party if he hasn't fled, or on the street if he did flee).

Recommendations: Give the mysterious man a thick and bad German accent (like an actor from the Bronx playing a German spy in a 1950s thriller movie). Play a hand of high card-low card for every interaction moment at the party, being sure to deal a few extra cards to represent NPCs present (Corporal Lane, the girls, Mrs. Hemlock, Captain Hemlock, the Mystery Man, and whoever else is there). The highest card places a single ornament, the rest do a shot of Vodka. Remember if the highest card holder has the ornament they will place that on the tree without hesitation.

MCGUFFIN'S IRISH PUB DECEMBER 24TH 1961

McGuffin's Irish Pub is one of many Irish Pubs in Germany (East and West). It is a favorite hang out for the character's unit and especially Captain Hemlock and his wife. They come here often and Christmas Eve is not an exception.

The bar is run by a big, buff and gruff former German Soldier named Karl, he has a sad look in his eyes as if his heart and soul broke on the same day, as it did when his side lost the war and then he learned all the horrors his side per-

formed. To make up for what he sees as a great wrong his side committed he often gives GIs and their friends discounts and rarely calls the MPs on them when they cause trouble, something that has earned him the ire of Sergeant Duncan who personally patrols the bar looking for soldiers causing trouble.

Tonight the bar is relatively empty, save for a few drunk US Soldiers, a British sailor, Karl, Captain Hemlock and Mrs. Hemlock. The player characters and possible Sergeant Duncan (GMs call) are the only others at the pub this night. The characters are there on one of two reasons, possibly both. Either they are called by a desire to get the ornament for themselves or they are concerned about the mysterious man the saw following Mrs. Hemlock.

Any mention to Captain Hemlock that his wife may be endangered is met with ridicule and chauvinistic bravado and threats of demotions, passes being pulled and general bullying from a drunken officer who thinks the soldiers are just trying to get "time" with his wife.

Characters that are after the ornament may have to think of clever ways to get this item, as their obsession will not let them damage the ornament nor draw too much attention to it. Either way, before the characters get a chance to go after the ornament members of the Cult of the Dark Night (including the mysterious man from the party) enter the bar. There are six of them altogether and they are armed with small melee weapons, easily concealed in their clothing (such as pipes, wrenches, Billy clubs and knives). Before the characters can even make an attempt to get the ornament for them the Cult members start a bar brawl with drunken soldiers as a cover as the short, fat mystery man rushes Captain Hemlock and his wife.

The dedicated and sober cultists will defeat the drunken soldiers in 1D4+1 combat rounds unless the player characters seek to help them. Otherwise the characters can help with stopping the short, fat man from getting the ornament. If the ornament ever becomes visible to the characters they are now required to make a POW x 2 roll to overcome their desire for it (if

the first time a character saw the ornament was at the party then they test at POW x 4 now).

If the characters fall victim to the ornament now they will fight each other. In order for the mysterious man to escape with the ornament he must not be reduced to 0 HP and must succeed in a DEX x 1 roll (not likely). If he does escape the characters will return to normal when the ornament leaves the immediate area. Otherwise after 2D6+1 combat rounds the Polizei will arrive and break up the fight. Any cultists who used knives will be arrested and the same goes for any characters that used weapons. Otherwise the characters are turned over to Sergeant Duncan and then Captain Hemlock releases everyone back to their homes.

If the Mystery man is captured he will only speak a few broken words before passing out. He speaks in gibberish of German and Austrian and a few words of English. In Sanity he speaks about a holiday spirit and how it must be freed before the holiday is over. In his pocket the Mystery man has a piece of paper written in Latin that looks an awful lot like a bible hymn.

During the fight the ornament may be broken as per the rules on page XX. Otherwise Mrs. Hemlock will feel bad that the soldiers who tried to protect her and her husband got in trouble and will invite them all over to her house for Christmas Dinner. Those craving the ornament will not refuse, believing she still has it. If one of the characters got their hands on the ornament during the fight they can successfully hide it on their person using Hide or Sneak skills (or Craft (Pick Pocket) or Craft (Stage Magic) or Espionage). Even if she loses the ornament Mrs. Hemlock makes the dinner offer.

Recommendations: This is a good place to use Sergeant Duncan as a foil. If he gets the ornament the adventure will take a whole new path where the Krampus will escape, kill him and then terrorize the city. At that point the GM can have the characters hunt down the Krampus after receiving a terrified phone call from Sergeant Duncan or the GM can create a new group of monster hunters to do the job or even

have the Krampus seek out to kill any who have touched the ornament.

Remember, unless the characters specifically said so, they have been drinking a bit this night. If they only drank at the party they suffer a -5% to all skills. If they drank at the pub as well, the penalty is -10%.

HEMLOCK FOR DINNER CHRISTMAS DAY 1961

Despite being in the Berlin Brigade US Army Housing District the Hemlock's have a classic American style house decorated with lights, plastic reindeer and a horrible and almost terrifying cardboard cut out of Santa Claus pinned to their front door. The house has a warm feeling to it and a fresh scent of lavender and pine cleaning fluids. Barely underneath this scent is the smell of a nice juicy ham being cooked in Mrs. Hemlock's new stove, which she is quite glad to have as she will mention how happy she is to get rid of the coal burning stove they found when they first moved into Army housing. She will even point to the old coal stove in the back yard.

Candy, booze and snacks line the walls on various tables and trays and extra chaise and tables are erected for the busy holiday meal. Barely contained under the tree are dozens of presents, most already unwrapped with their packaging paper strewn all about the room, roughly wadded up in ball shape and thrown across the room near the walls to be out of the way.

The Hemlock's only child, the seven year old Joey, is busy playing with his new fire engine truck and building blocks (possibly cabin building logs) and has no interest in the guests unless they intend to help him build a cabin, tell him war stories, give him gifts or candy or allow his new fire engine and firemen toys to arrest them (I know, it doesn't make sense, but he is a 7 year old in Berlin during Christmas, until you've been there don't judge!)

As the evening goes on the meal is served (and it is delicious) and Captain Hemlock

drinks more and more. Eventually he gets into an argument with his wife over why the new ornament is more important and gets a higher place on the tree than the one his parents gave to them their first Christmas together. The fight culminates with him grabbing the ornament, much to her displeasure and throwing it against the wall.

The ornament shatters, cracks and splinters into thousands of shards of glass, light and smoke. Yes smoke, as the shattered remains of the ornament ooze a strange green and red smoke that slowly coalesces into the form of the Krampus which immediately grabs Joey and attacks Captain Hemlock. While attacking Captain Hemlock and any others who come near it, the Krampus will drain 1 point of POW from Joey and in turn regain 1D3-1 HP per round while doing so. If he loses contact with Joey the Krampus cannot drain his POW or regenerate the HP.

Observant player characters will realize this is the Krampus and that by placing coal in their shoes and singing to it they can subdue it. By now they should know of the coal stove out back and have the musical lyrics in Latin the Mystery man had in his coat. The Krampus can not attack people with coal in their shoes and when he hears people singing the hymn the character's found must make a POW against POW resistance roll or be banished back to

his original hell. Each additional person singing adds +1 to the POW of the character with the highest POW of the singing group. If one of the characters has the Craft (Sing) or Art (Sing) skill and passes a skill test they may add 1 POW to the group total. In addition, if any of the characters in the singing groups (Player characters only) never fell victim to the lure of the ornament, then add another +1 to their total POW.

Note that the Krampus can not directly attack those with coal in their shoes, he may still throw things at them, have those mind controlled by him attack them and will definitely try to flee. Any character attacking the Krampus can not sing in the same turn.

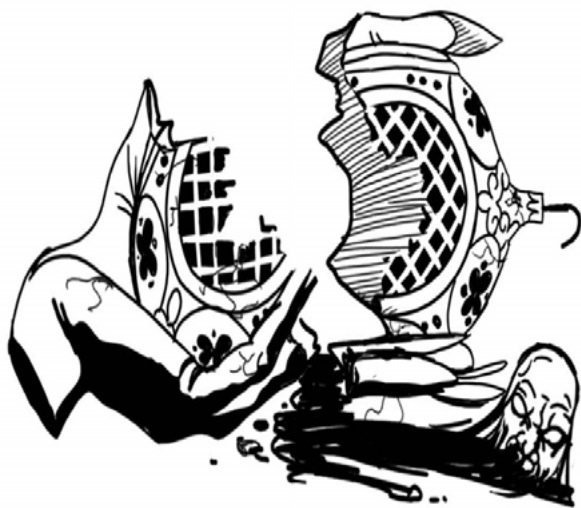
If the Krampus drains Joey Hemlock before he is banished, it will flee out the window looking for other children to eat.

Recommendations: Remember it is entirely possible the ornament is broken in another encounter. If Joey is not around, then the Krampus with attack to kill anything that is in its way of finding children. If the characters haven't put together the clues about the coal and the singing, well that's there bad. But after one of two characters are downed you may just allow the remaining to make EDU x 5 rolls to see if they recall some of the Christmas traditions and push them in the right direction. If Sergeant Duncan has the ornament this encounter will take place at his home instead, with no child and the Krampus will be confused why it can't leave the house (wreath on door and mistletoe in the windows).

END GAME

At this point the Krampus is either defeated or on the loose. If on the loose the GM should have the players hunt it down or start a new campaign based on stopping the evil holiday sprite. Other options include having the Krampus systemically hunt down the characters so they can't stop it or inform others who and what it is.

Alternatively the GM could have the Brotherhood of the Cloth round up some of the charac-



ters, interrogate/torture them to find out what they know, and then they force them to help them kill the Krampus.

At this time the characters are entitled their skill advances if any and to recover their Fate Points. If a character survived the entire adventure without falling for the lure of the ornament give that character +1 Fate Point and a 40% chance of +1 to his or her POW. Each character receives +1% to his or her Knowledge (Blasphemous Lore) or Cthulhu Mythos in CoC games skill if he or she desires. This is a +1D4% if the Krampus is defeated and the player wants it. (They may turn it down so as to not lose Sanity).

The main character who sung the song at the end (the one with the Highest POW who partook, or the one with Craft (Sing) or Art (Sing) if any) gains another +1% Knowledge (Blasphemous Lore) or Cthulhu Mythos in CoC games (in addition to the +1% or +1D4% above) and learns the Banish Krampus spell.

Surviving characters will probably have to face an investigation into what happened, which will probably be covered up and they will most likely go to jail or be sucked into some sort of conspiracy possibly by the Brotherhood of the Cloth or even the CIA (and more than likely also the attention of Office Nine). The main point is that their lives are forever altered and they have entered a new world.

Recommendations: It is recommended that this be the beginning of a campaign, or just a one shot adventure for holiday spirit. Those who survive should be either framed for the crime for a cover up or transferred to another base away from Berlin and each other.

MISCELLANEOUS

The Ornament

The Ornament is the vassal that holds the spirit of the Krampus in it. The Krampus is an evil sprite that was imprisoned in the ornament back in the 18th century and has since waited to be released. Recently rediscovered by an an-

tiques dealer and sold at a Kris Kringlemarkt in Berlin, the Ornament has an ability to reach into others minds and them envious of the artifact and to want to own it. The Ornament is made of enchanted glass and has an AP of 4 and HP of 2. Keeping the Ornament overnight forces a Sanity check for a loss value of 1/1D4 and the bearer is considered to have a Elder Sign while in possession of the item.

If the carrier of the ornament is damaged in a fight the % chance of the Ornament breaking is equal to the damage the carrier suffers minus 4.

Cult of the Black Night

This is a Christian derived cult that worships the spirits of the holidays, primarily the Krampus. They seek to not just release the Krampus but to control it with their songs and special defense rituals (meaning they have coals in their shoes and sing Latin Christmas carols). The cult is small and has only eight known members in West Berlin, all of which show up in this adventure.

Other members may exist at the GMs discretion. After the events of this module they will be hunted down and slain by the Brotherhood of the Cloth, possibly with the aid of the PCs.

Worshippers: Worshippers in the Cult of the Black Night vary very little. The eight members are all the children of former Nazis who turned coat at the end of the war. Their families at first lived in East Berlin until they were set free (or ousted, depends on who you ask) from East Berlin in the early 1950s. Unable to find decent jobs or even respect, they resorted to the worship of the Krampus and his holiday kin.

Cult Skills: Knowledge (Holiday History), Sneak, Hide.

Worshipper Duties: The duties of the cult members are simple. Track down any information possible on the various holiday kin and find means to summon and control them. The Mystery man (the cult leader) desires to harness their holiday powers to remove his remorse, loneliness and guilt. All the followers

(the other 7) are to aid in the goal by whatever means necessary.

Cult Spells: Summon Krampus, Bind Krampus, Banish Krampus.

STATS

Captain Jack Hemlock

STR 10 CON 7 SIZ 12 INT 10 DEX 11
APP 10 POW 7 EDU 8 SAN 35
HP 10 DB 0

Attacks: Punch 60% 1D4
Grapple 45% Damage Special
.38 Handgun 40% 1D10

Skills: Bargain 30%, Drive Automobile 65%, Finances 75%, History 45%, Knowledge (Art History) 40%, Language (English) 80%, Language (German) 51%, Law 25%, Military 40%, Navigate 10%, Persuade 15%, Psychology 05%

Captain Jack Hemlock is a self-absorbed closet alcoholic who married the first girl who began dating him during his first assignment in Germany. It is a loveless marriage that is centered around social functions and smiling for the camera. At heart Captain Hemlock wants to be a hero like his father was, but all he does is handle the company finances and handle disciplinary actions against his troops. To that end, he drinks heavily and tends to get in trouble with the troops around reducing the actual number of cases reported every year. While he doesn't love his wife the way he should he is very fond of how pretty she is. He treats his son Joey well, but more like a neighbor's son than his own. He would never hurt Joey, nor would he go out of his way for the kid.

Sergeant Anthony Duncan

STR 11 CON 8 SIZ 14 INT 6 DEX 12
APP 12 POW 7 EDU 11 SAN 35
HP 11 DB 0

Attacks: Punch 60% 1D4,
Garand M1 Rifle 25% 2D6+2
Grapple 31% Damage Special

Skills: Camouflage 50%, Climb 55%, Craft (Sing) 35%, Drive Automobile 60%, First Aid 50%, Hide 35%, History 50%, Language (English) 80%, Language (German) 50%, Law 60%, Military 60%

Duncan is a mean man, though likable when he actual relaxes. His lack of any former education and his inability to understand even the most basic things that most children could figure out have left him frustrated and angry. He uses his position as an MP to get those who bug him (generally everyone) into trouble and cause great misery in general. Though a bit larger than the average soldier, Duncan doesn't stand out as being "good" at anything other than being stupid. He has a strong dislike for the player characters and Staff Sergeant Reyes and wishes Sergeant Brown was dating him instead.

Staff Sergeant Jorge Reyes

STR 12 CON 12 SIZ 12 INT 7 DEX 7
APP 7 POW 6 EDU 10 SAN 30
HP 12 DB 0

Attacks: Punch 71% 1D4
Grapple 65% Damage Special
Garand M1 Rifle 55% 2D6+2

Skills: Camouflage 20%, Climb 45%, Drive Automobile 65%, First Aid 30%, Hide 25%, History 20%, Language (English) 50%, Language (German) 26%, Language (Spanish) 80%, Listen 70%, Military 40%, Spot Hidden 65%

Staff Sergeant Jorge Reyes is another soldier who isn't exceptional, isn't lucky and isn't that bad of a human being. The military was basically his only way out of his slum of a home back in the States. He generally likes everyone but most people are put off by his general lack of charm and his tendency to speak loud, and say the wrong things at the wrong times. He doesn't like white people much and has a low general opinion of women. The fact that Sergeant Debbie Brown is his girlfriend is more of a flaw in her character than a boon in his.

Sergeant Debbie Brown

STR 8 CON 14 SIZ 12 INT 13 DEX 10
APP 11 POW 14 EDU 9 SAN 70
HP 13 DB -1d2

Attack: Punch 55% 1D4+DB

Grapple 30% Damage Special

Garand M1 Rifle 45% 2D6+2

Skills: Camouflage 20%, Climb 45%, Diagnose Disease 65%, Drive Automobile 60%, First Aid 70%, Hide 45%, History 50%, Language (English) 75%, Language (German) 51%, Military 30%, Occult 25% Treat Disease 65%

Sergeant Debbie Brown is a mystery to most. She is a plain looking young lady in very decent shape who is kind enough and friendly enough, but for some reason this rising star of the Army Medical corps spends her time with a string of loser boyfriends who mistreat her and take her for granted, such as her current beau Staff Sergeant Reyes. Other than that Debbie is a stand up straight forward person who isn't afraid to speak her mind and doesn't see her gender as a hindrance in her occupation and career path.

Corporal Matt Lane

STR 17 CON 9 SIZ 17 INT 7 DEX 17
APP 6 POW 12 EDU 8 SAN 60
HP 13 DB +1D4

Attacks: Punch 60% 1D4+DB

Wrestle 65% Damage Special

Garand M1 Rifle 45% 2D6+2

Skills: Camouflage 20%, Climb 70%, Drive Automobile 50%, Fast Talk 55%, First Aid 35%, Hide 35%, History 20%, Knowledge (Holidays) 85%, Language (English) 60%, Language (German) 01%, Military 30%

Matt Lane is such a nice young man. So nice that it is unbearable. His constant need to help, assist and show everyone how wonderful he is and how beautiful the world is cause many people to turn away from him. He doesn't under-

stand the basic things such as space and privacy. He is a large, strong and fast man who excels at the physical aspect of his job, but he prefers family, friends, cook outs and holidays. Especially holidays!

Mrs. June Hemlock

STR 6 CON 10 SIZ 13 INT 11 DEX 8
APP 11 POW 12 EDU 9 SAN 60
HP 12 DB -1d2

Skills: Craft (Cook) 55%, Dodge 40%, Fast Talk 45%, History 76%, Knowledge (Antiques) 45%, Knowledge (Art History) 45% Language (German) 75% Language (English) 75%, Listen 44%, Occult 65%, Persuade 40%, Spot Hidden 45%

June Hemlock is an unlucky, yet semi attractive, woman. She met and fell in love with Jack Hemlock and married him before she knew him well enough to know better. Since then her life has been one of seclusion, fake smiles and mental abuse. Her one escape was her fondness of antiques which she shared with her husband. Then, one day, much by accident she found and bought the cursed ornament of the Krampus at a Kris Kringlemarkt in Berlin as a gift for her husband, little knowing the addiction and temptation it holds or that a sinister cult was seeking it as well.

Joey Hemlock

STR 4 CON 9 SIZ 9 INT 8 DEX 11
APP 12 POW 16 EDU 6 SAN 80
HP 9 DB -1D4

Attacks: Grapple 70% Damage Special

Skills: Dodge 65%, Language (English) 55%, Language (German) 35%, Play with Fire Engine 45%

Joey Hemlock is a self centered little boy caught up in his own world of fire engines, building blocks and chocolate bars. He sees everyone in the world as one of two things, a means to have fun or an obstacle in the way of having fun. He is selfish, rude, a little obscene at times and loud.

He is everything you are glad your children and younger siblings are not. The Krampus senses Joey's high POW and latches on to that during the climax of the adventure.

Karl the Bartender

STR 14 CON 12 SIZ 16 INT 11 DEX 14
APP 13 POW 12 EDU 10 SAN 60
HP 14 DB +1D2

Attacks: Punch 75% 1D4+DB

Skills: Craft (Bartender) 55%, Craft (Sing) 40%
Drive Automobile 70%, Finances 70%, History 65%, Language (German) 75%, Language (English) 67%, Listen 55%, Psychology 44%, Spot Hidden 44%

Karl is a huge man, he is gruff and mean looking but he has a heart of gold. He was a former German soldier during WWII but will constantly remind everyone he was a German soldier, not a Nazi soldier. He is kind to Americans and feels a great deal of shame for his country's past misdeeds. He will side with the Americans during the bar brawl, which, judging by his stats, is a very good thing. He is the owner and proprietor as well as head bartender of McGuffin's Irish Pub.

Soldiers

STR 10 CON 10 SIZ 11 INT 9 DEX 10
APP 11 POW 8 EDU 9 SAN 40
HP 11 DB 0

Attacks: Punch 55% 1D4+DB

Grapple 35% Damage Special

Garand M1 Rifle 40% 2D6+2

Skills: Camouflage 20%, Climb 40%, Drive Automobile 30%, First Aid 35%, Hide 30%, History 20%, Language (English) 60%, Language (German) 20%, Military 30%

Use the above stats for soldiers and sailors encountered. Remember that drunk soldiers suffer a -15% on all skills.

Girls at Party

STR 8 CON 11 SIZ 9 INT 10 DEX 9
APP 13 POW 10 EDU 8 SAN 50
HP 10 DB -1D2

Skills: Art (Dance) 55%, Art (Sing) 50%, Dodge 40%, Fast Talk 45%, Finances 83%, Language (German) 55%, Language (English) 45%

Listen 33%, Persuade 40%

The above stats are for the typical German girl hanging out at Corporal Lane's party. They are young, eager to dance and sing and know their way around a military man's wallet. Though looking for a quick way out of the questionable safety and security of West Berlin, these girls tend to be honest and generally like the US Military men they seek to capture.

Cult of the Black Night Thugs

STR 14 CON 11 SIZ 10 INT 8 DEX 4
APP 6 POW 5 EDU 7 SAN 25
HP 11 DB 0

Attacks: Punch 51% 1D4

Grapple 27% Damage Special

.32 Revolver 27% 1D8

Skills: Hide 40%, Knowledge (Holiday History) 33%, Language (English) 35%, Language (German) 55%, Listen 51%, Sneak 40%, Spot Hidden 40%

The seven out of work former East Berliners know very little of their actual cult or of the occult. They are laborers who can't find good work and have been lured into the cult by the charming and cunning Mystery man and feel a strong common bond with each other due to their background as exiled sons of Nazi war criminals. Apparently their fathers were so dastardly and criminal that even Soviet Russia dared to keep them in their lands or even to kill them. (Take note GMs, perhaps there is more to that).

Mystery Man (Main Cultist)

STR 13 CON 14 SIZ 13 INT 14 DEX 7
APP 9 POW 15 EDU 16 SAN 42
HP 14 DB +1D2

Attacks: Punch 1D4+DB

Skills: Art (Look Suspicious) 90%, Craft (Sing) 55%, Knowledge (Blasphemous Lore) or Cthulhu Mythos in CoC games 33%, Knowledge (Holiday History) 77%, Language (Austrian) 57%, Language (English) 31%, Language (German) 85%, Language (Latin) 75%, Listen 64% Occult 77%, Sorcery (Bind Krampus) 37%, Sorcery (Banish Krampus) 70%, Spot Hidden 71%

The mystery man is the ring leader of the Cult of the Dark Night. He is the son of an ex-Nazi scientist who was so feared by the Soviets that instead of killing him or keeping him he was forcibly removed from the USSR and East Germany. Forced to live as a worker and laborer he and his family lived a life of poverty. The mystery man was raised poor and uneducated until he found a book of songs dedicated to summoning, binding and banishing the evil Christmas sprite known as a Krampus. Unfortunately he was unable to learn the proper summoning spells and had to resort to using only binding and banishing knowledge as his weapons of choice. Searching through hundreds of occult tomes and works he finally tracked down a legendary Christmas ornament that housed the spirit of a Krampus within it. And arrived five minutes too late to buy it before Mrs. Hemlock. He has since tracked it down and he and his cult are dedicated in their resolve to recover the ornament, free the Krampus and bind it to their will and extract their revenge.

The Krampus

The Krampus is an evil sprite associated with the holiday seasons of Christmas and Yule. In ages past the Krampus was a faerie servant of benign woodland spirits that guided and protected mankind with gifts and presents to help

survival in the wilds. Eventually these spirits evolved into urban protection, fertility and generosity demi-beings. Their sphere of influence became over those who were good to one another and their families. In the end the Krampus had to evolve to be the negative aspect of these spirits in order to bring the balance needed to maintain their power. The Krampus became the punisher of bad children and selfish souls.

Delighting in its role the Krampus terrorized children and families for centuries before being captured and banished by a certain well



known saint. Used a slave to serve the saint for several decades the Krampus escaped and went on a kill spree. It was finally captured and imprisoned in the Ornament by members of the Brotherhood of the Cloth in the 17th century and that is where it has rested until now.

The Krampus

STR 11 CON 14 SIZ 16 INT 10 DEX 13

POW 20 CHA 9

HP 15

Attacks: Grapple 65% Special Damage

Claw 55% 1D4+DB

Horns 35% 1D8+DB

Armor: 3 Hit points of Natural Hide

Skills: Climb 92%, Hide 45%, Intimidate 71%, Jump 76%, Knowledge (Blasphemous Lore)/Cthulhu Mythos 40%, Occult 66%, Track 70%.

Sanity Value: 1/1D4

Special Rules: Power Drain. After successful grapple attack the Krampus drains one point of POW from its victim per turn and in turn regenerates 1D3-1 HP. The Krampus can perform this Power Drain in addition to any other normal attack or movement action other than casting spells.

Weaknesses: The Krampus cannot attack anyone who has coal in their shoes.

Banishment: If confronted by individuals singing the Banishment Song in Latin the Krampus must engage in an opposition test of POW against POW. A failed roll means the Krampus is banished back to where it came.

Size Alteration: The Krampus can reduce its SIZ to 3 at will to escape through tunnel like exits and entrances, such as chimneys.

Mistletoe and Christmas Wreathes: A Krampus cannot enter a room that has a Christmas Wreath hanging from its door or pass a window with the same. Passing under mistletoe inflicts 1D3 HP damage (with no AP) to a Krampus.

Dark Sight: The Krampus can see and function in the dark without penalty. Formidable Natural Weapons: The Krampus as extremely sharp and powerful claws that ignore 1 AP of armor.

Wall Walking: The Krampus can walk along and up walls and ceilings as if it were normal ground.

NEW SPELLS

SUMMON KRAMPUS

MP3 Sanity 1D6

Using holy, mistletoe and singing in Latin the caster can summon the Krampus to the earth. The Krampus is not bound to the caster and will most likely eat him, but before the Krampus can do anything it must eat one pure soul (meaning drain one target of all POW, preferably a child).

The Summon Krampus spell takes roughly 1 hour to cast with no distractions and costs roughly one thousand US dollars.

No copies of this spell are known to exist in a format that is learnable from.

BIND KRAMPUS

MP 1 Sanity 1D2

With this spell a Krampus can be fixed to a single object, location or individual. The Krampus is either trapped in the object, cannot leave a location or must always be within a number of yards equal to the persons POW of the bound individual.

This spell has a permanent effect and the Krampus may try to resist at first using a POW against POW opposition test, The caster gains +1 POW per every additional 2 MP he or she spends on the action and for each additional cultist helping him or her. He or she may also gain a temporary +1 POW at a cost of an additional 1D6+1 Sanity.

BANISH KRAMPUS

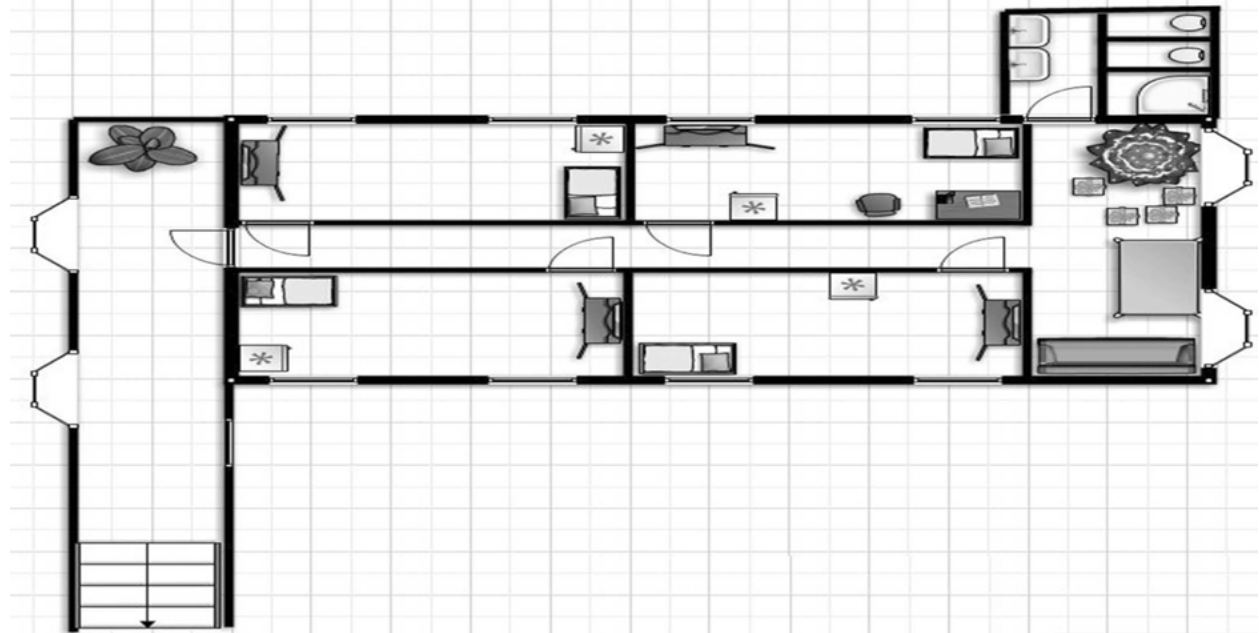
MP See below Sanity See below

More of a ritual than a spell, Banish Krampus involves singing certain Christmas Carols and Bible Hymns in Latin. When the Krampus hears people singing the hymn it must make a POW against POW resistance roll or be banished back to his original hell. Each additional person singing adds +1 to the POW of the character with the highest POW of the singing group. If one of the characters has the Craft (Sing) or Art

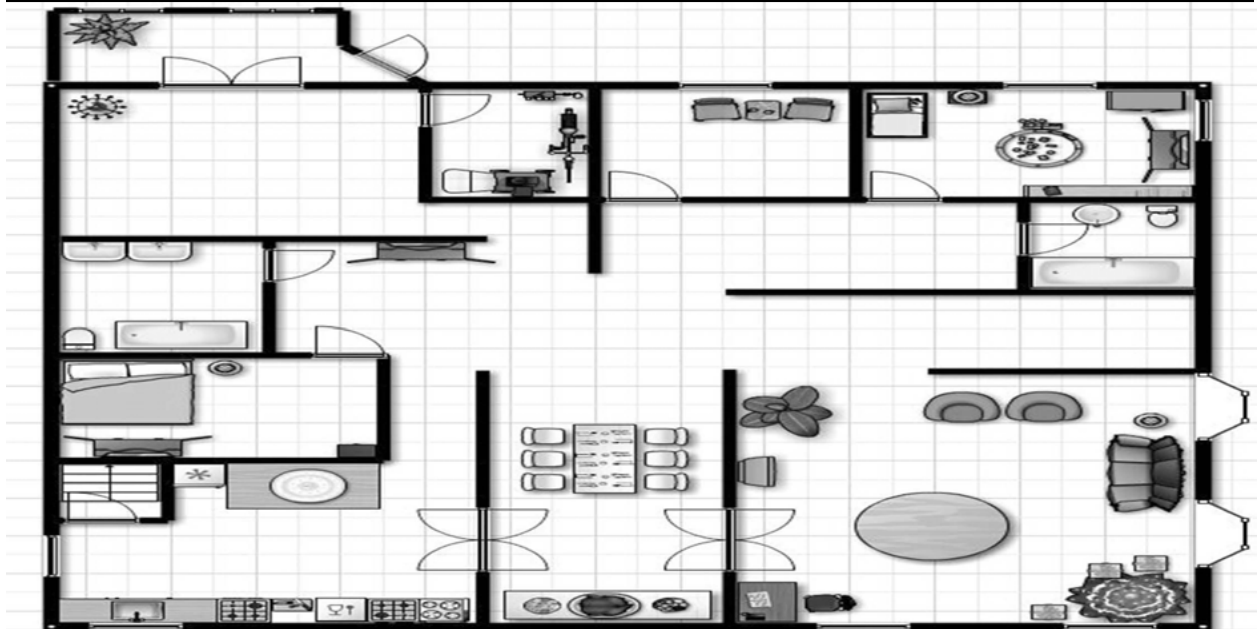
(Sing) skill and passes a skill test they may add 1 POW to the group total.

Cast as a real spell the sorcerer expends 1D6 MP and 1D6 Sanity and adds +2 to his or her POW. He or she may further augment his or her POW as above or as can be done with the Bind Krampus spell.

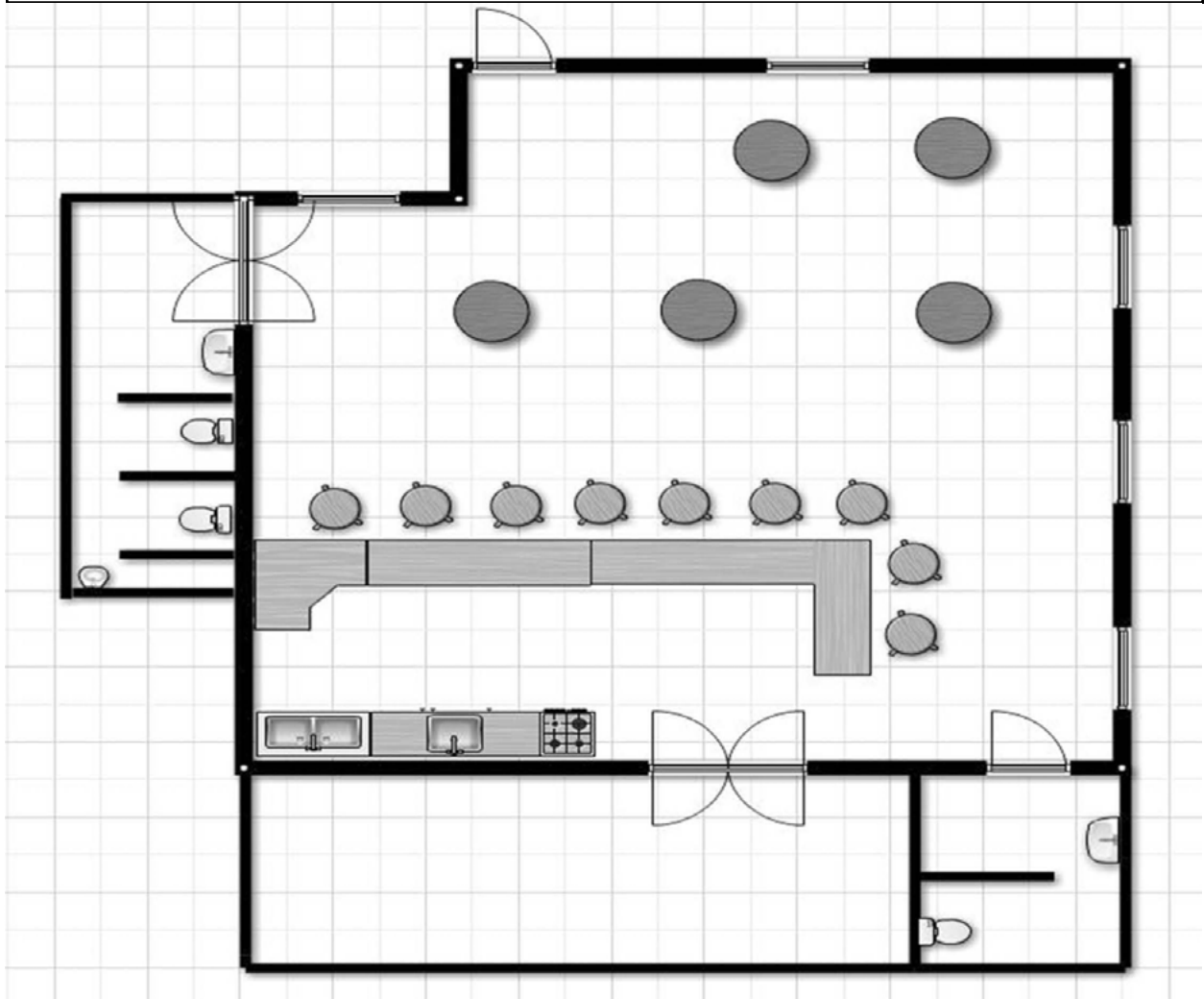
Corporal Lane's Barracks



McGuffin's Pub



The Hemlock's House



A NATION RANSOMED

...

A Chinese nuclear submarine bearing a dozen missiles, each with a nuclear warhead, reported a major mechanical malfunction and would return to port. The ship is late.

World governments receive a broadcast from the captain of the lost submarine, demanding that Japan, Taiwan, and South Korea surrender to the Peoples Republic of China by midnight — to be absorbed into that great nation.

If they refuse, a random city in those countries will be destroyed each hour thereafter. Civil panic has overwhelmed the government's ability to deal with this terrorist threat.

This is a modern-day military adventure for Basic Roleplaying, one of the winners of the second BRP Adventure contest.

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