

The Beast Amid – Document #8250

The Call

A exactly 8:14 one night every one of the player characters will receive a phone call. Note that this phone call will occur regardless of where the PC actually is. If he's at home with his family, the call will come on his home phone. If he's at a restaurant, the restaurant will page his name. On the street, his cell phone will ring. If he doesn't own a cell phone, the cell phone of someone else will ring and ask for him (costing 1 SAN point for both parties). If he refuses, every cell phone on the street will ring at once and ask for him, costing 2 SAN points. If the character is already on the phone, the other person suddenly says goodbye, even if in mid-syllable, then hangs up. Then the phone call comes. If the player calls back the other person, the other person will remember the *player* suddenly saying goodbye. Any attempt to trace the calls will show that they're coming from his own phone.

The voice on the other end is raspy, sounding like a million buzzing insects. It will say only "Channel 9, 11:06 pm" (tonight). And then hang up. A successful Cthulhu Mythos roll will reveal that he has just heard the voice of a Mi-go. The sheer insanity of a Mi-go calling on a phone will cost another SAN point. The Keeper will probably want to change the channel depending on what channel in his city carries news at that time.

The Report

The show is a newscast, and will go as follows:

Anchorman (change name depending on your city): "And in local news tonight, the latest in a series of shocking murders. Anice Petard has the details, on the scene."

(Scene change to a smallish brunette, standing in a blue coat on a street with police lights behind her.)

Alice: "Thank you, (insert anchorman's name). This is the latest in a series of hideous murders that have shaken this normally peaceful community to its roots. For the fifth night in a row, a body of a local resident was found torn to shreds and partially devoured. Daniel Noskos, a father of two who worked at a local computer company, was found in a back alley by a jogger who was simply out for his nightly run. The police are currently holding the jogger as a witness, and have not yet brought in any suspects. Back to you, (Anchorman's name)."

By this time it should be obvious to the cell that they need to investigate the murders.

What's going on

Hundreds of thousands of years ago, the Mi-go attempted to genetically engineer the creatures who would later evolve into humans into beings that would be able to do slave labor for them. However, most of the races thus created needed constant Mi-go supervision in order to get any actual work done, and were largely a failure. When humans themselves evolved naturally, the Mi-go abandoned these projects in favor of the more biologically and psychologically stable human species. Without Mi-go caretakers, almost all of the engineered races were unable to support themselves and died out.

However, there was one exception to this, a race designed for the purpose of hunting down and killing wild animals that interfered with Mi-go operations. They needed to be able to survive in the wild for long periods of time, and were not as severely affected by the departure of their masters.

The Hunters, angered at the departure of the Mi-go, turned their rage upon the race most responsible for them losing the favor of their lords. The humans. The two races warred for millennia, but eventually the humans won out and all but exterminated the Hunters. To be fair, the humans' success was due partially to the fact that Hunters neurology had never been designed to be genetically stable, and over the course of many generations it began to break down, making the Hunters more and more barbaric.

Eventually, all that survived of their race was a single family in England. In order to satisfy its desire for blood, the family started a human farm, growing people like cattle in great caverns beneath the earth. However, after thousands of years a genetic throwback occurred, caused by massive inbreeding, that

resulted in a child with the intellect and self-control of his forefathers. He fell in love with a human girl in violation of all taboos, and eventually murdered his family and fled the place of evil with his wife. (These events are chronicled in H. P. Lovecraft's "The Rats in the Walls.")

The scion fled with his new wife to America, where they started a family in the cell's city. The new children were human, and the loving parents never revealed the truth to their children.

The sole surviving descendant of the de la Poer family, until recently, was an average wino living in a box on the street of the character's city. Exactly the sort of person no one would miss, and therefore a prime target for an experiment based on data from the Cookbook. Twenty vagrants were picked up, ten to be injected with a retrovirus and with a activator chemical and ten to be injected with the activator chemical alone. Of the first group, all quickly died as their skin and wasn't strong enough to stand the strain of the suddenly enhanced muscles. Of the second group, nine died slowly and horribly. However, the last, Jane Ever, did not. The activator chemical regressed her back to her Hunter nature, but when the Hunters were at their most degenerate. Her enhanced abilities enabled her to catch the night guard by surprise.

After devouring him, she fled the facility.

MJ-12 is now very interested in finding her, to find out what in her genetic code enabled her to survive the treatment with such enhanced abilities. If they can discover the cause they will have perfect soldiers. It will not even be necessary to remove the cannibalistic urges; to Justin Kroft's point of view, the cost of providing enhanced soldiers with human flesh on a regular basis will be more than made up for by their superior capabilities.

The Mi-go, however, have a vested interest in insuring that MJ-12 does not recover Jane Ever, as analysis of her genetics might reveal that genetic engineering took place on her ancestors in the distant past. This could lead MJ-12 on a path to certain discoveries the Mi-Go don't want them to make. Therefore, the Mi-go have called the cell in, hoping that the cell will destroy Jane Ever for them. Furthermore, when the MJ-12 Steering Committee finds out that Delta Green denied them such a prize, they will hopefully step up the campaign against the rogue organization. The Mi-go will win both ways.

The Crime Scene

It's your standard murder scene, with cops, curious onlookers and chalk outlines. Widely spaced chalk outlines, in shapes that don't really seem to correspond to the conventional shape of a human body. The police won't be happy to have a bunch of feds intruding on their turf, but if the players can show that the agents have orders (real or otherwise) to investigate the murders the cops will back off without trouble. If the players don't, the cops will still accede but will also obstruct whenever possible. For the rest of the adventure they'll be late getting notification of the murders, cops will "forget" to ship them the autopsy and lab reports unless specifically asked, etc.

Talking with Detective Roah, in charge of the investigation, will reveal the following:

There is no common ground connecting any of the victims. They all lived in different parts of the neighborhood and had different jobs; three (including the current victim) were white and two were black, so race doesn't seem to be a factor. The police have checked out any clubs or organizations that the victims might be members of, revealing nothing.

Furthermore, the MO doesn't seem to match any known criminal and there were no witnesses. Unless this crime scene is different from the others and there are usable fingerprints, this case is going nowhere fast.

The previous victims were:

Deng Tsu (Asian, first victim)

Grad student in biology at the local college, his entire family is in China. He was doing research into safer organ transplants at the time of his death.

Juanita Lopez (Hispanic, second victim)

Programmer at E-tech management. The only one to survive the assault, he has a wife and two children. He is currently hospitalized in critical condition.

John Doe (white, third victim)

Wino, known on the street as “Doc”. Legal name unknown.

Jennifer Avis (black, fourth victim)

Night watchman at Aendern Foundation, left behind common-law husband.

Charles Hart (white, latest victim)

Plumber, lived alone.

The forensics reports show that wounds are consistent with bite marks of some large feline, though the exact shape of the teeth does not match any known cat species. Neither do the hairs found at the crime scenes. The police and Animal Control are working together to try and find out if anyone imported some large cat recently, but with no luck. There were also fingerprints found at each scene, but they aren't usual. You see, although all fingerprints are unique they can be sorted as one of four general shapes (whirl, loop, arch and composite). This seems to be a fifth general shape, which they are tentatively calling the “central pentagram”. If any investigator sees a picture of this odd fingerprint, have him make a Mythos check. The fingerprint looks suspiciously like an Elder Sign (and was in fact designed that way by the Mi-Go, in case their creation came up against a Mythos creature on its hunts). The investigators should talk to the friends and family of the victims and look through their records (not applicable with Doc, though they may be able to find those on the street who knew him, Keeper's discretion depending on how they go about it.

For Deng Tsu, all avenues will prove fruitless until they talk to his thesis advisor, a Dr. Herman Trenton. He will be glad to give the agents any documents they may require, including a copy of Tsu's thesis proposal (Player Aid #1).

Talking to Juanita Lopez' boss will reveal that she was an excellent employee, dedicated and hard working, and that E-tech management was engaged in a joint venture with Aendern Foundation, and that Juanita Lopez spent a great deal of time there. The project was to design a new computer language that would work on a computer with very little memory but possessing massive parallel processing ability, far greater than anything on the market today. But Aendern Foundation was paying top dollar, so E-tech Management wasn't asking any questions.

Doc won't be quite so simple, but if an agent talks to either the police that patrol the area or the other street people of the area will reveal that he was constantly under suspicion of being a pickpocket but no one could ever prove anything.

Jennifer Avis' common-law-husband has nothing important to add to the investigation.

Charles Hart did plumbing jobs all over the area. A check of his most recent jobs will reveal that he worked at a number of private residences, and fixed up a sink in Aendern Foundation.

Keeper's Note

Jane Ever is hunting down people who have the smell of protomatter on them. It prowls the streets until it finds the scent, then kills the person with it. Tsu picked it up in his research, Lopez while in the labs of Aendern Foundation (the operating system is for a protomatter-based computer), Doc pickpocketed a man who did have the scent, Avis picked it up while guarding and Hart got it while fixing the Aendern Foundation sink. She doesn't have the intelligence to stake out the place, so she simply wanders the street until her super-sensitive nose picks up the correct scents.

Note that the next events depend on how quickly the agents manage to get their investigation done. Every night, there will be another murder. They will be as follows:

Sachiko Tsung: Janitor in a Aendern Foundation plant (note: she will not be found till the third day after her murder, since no one notices when a janitor is missing).

Doris Voss: Wife of a salesman, her husband is currently out of town. His last job was to sell some copying machines to the Aendern Foundation facility.

Ron Person: No obvious connection with the company, however he was secretly the lover of a man who was working on the protomatter project. After this the Keeper should invent murders as needed, but by this time the agents should have figured out that Aendern Foundation has some sort of connection with this.

Aendern Foundation

Checking up on the Aendern Foundation will reveal the following. It was set up in 1982 from the estate of a researcher named Hendricks Aendern. In the early 1940s, Aendern took out several patents relating to vacuum tubes, and in order to build ENIAC the government was forced to offer him some highly lucrative licensing offers. He never made another useful scientific discovery in his lifetime, but what he lacked in academic acumen he more than made up for in business skill. He invested his money wisely, and set up a large number of trust funds for researchers who couldn't get grants elsewhere. This continues after his death. The Aendern Foundation is basically the Xerox Park of biological research, and has developed dozens of highly useful vaccines, chemicals and genetic engineering techniques. There are offices in every major city, and the group employs hundreds of researchers.

In reality, the Aendern Foundation is a recruiting office for Project ARC DREAM. Practically every graduate biology student in the country wants to intern there. The very best are accepted and are given projects relating to the Cookbook. As the student moves from one project to the next, they become progressively more challenging both intellectually and morally. By the time they have completed their "internship", the success cases are brilliant biologists with no concern for details like human suffering and patient survival rate. Those who fail in either criteria are mindwiped, and given false memories of stimulating intellectual environment that changed their life.

The local facility is three stories high, on the outskirts of town. If the agents visit without a court order, they will be given a polite tour by director Craig Small. The tour won't touch any sensitive areas. If they do have a court order, they will be allowed access to the files, but they won't show anything. (The Aendern Foundation keeps two sets of papers, one for itself and one for the government. Nothing short of a full IRS audit team will find the discrepancies.) However, successful Biology rolls will show that the innocuous research the characters are being shown is too innocuous. It seems no actual work is being done in the country's premier biological research foundation.

It is possible, with official avenues being exhausted and a new corpse turning up every 24 hours, that the agents will try a break-in. The facility doesn't have a fence, but it does have a highly efficient security system. There are actually two systems, one that burglars are supposed to find and one they aren't. To see the first one requires a Spot Hidden roll, and a Locksmith roll to bypass. To find the second requires a Spot Hidden x 1/2 roll, with another Locksmith roll to bypass. Also, note that bypassing the first one automatically sets off the second.

Setting off the alarm will not call the police, but it will alert the six security guards, who are in fact highly trained NRO Delta agents. Use template found in "Puppet Shows and Shadow Plays". If the agents manage to defeat them, the last Delta agent will call the real police. Luckily the guy holding six co-workers hostage in a bottle factory is on the other side of town, and that's where the SWAT teams are. The agents have one less worry. However, two police officers will be present in five minutes, six more in nine and thirty in twenty. Obviously there is a real time limit here. If your characters are stupid enough to try and shoot it out with the police, kill them.

On the third floor is a secret elevator that leads down to the sub-basement, where all the real work is done. Some of the gems that can be found down here include:

- 1-A kitten playfully batting around the head that until recently rested on its tawny shoulders (1D3/1D6 SAN).
- 2-Spiders with webs in a double helix shape (1/1D3 SAN).
- 3-Plants with purple fruit. If the fruit is cut open the insides look suspiciously like microchips (1/1D3) SAN.
- 4-A blob of pastel pink goo, with arms and legs apparently sticking out at random intervals (1D6/1D10 SAN).
- 5-Anything else the twisted imagination of the Keeper can provide.

They can stay down here until the cops leave, but come morning Craig Small will know that someone is in his basement and flood the area with caustic gas, killing everyone inside. Granted the experiments will also die, but you can't have everything.

There are also files in the basement, but no one who has not trained extensively with the Cookbook can possibly understand them.

If the characters didn't break into the facility, one of them will be contacted that night by Anne Poirson. She is a researcher working for the Aendern Foundation who has managed to grow a conscience (and who is scheduled to be terminated day after tomorrow, though she doesn't know it). She wants to turn state's witness, and will bring with her files from Project BEELZEBUB, the research into artificially generated insects species with military value, as proof of her sincerity.

The important thing is that both options lead to the character's acquiring the protomatter scent on them. The next time they are together, Jane Ever will attack.

Jane Ever

A genetically engineered killing machine, and all torn up about it

STR 31 CON 32 SIZ 13 INT 11 (Special) POW 14

DEX 36 APP 9 EDU 8 SAN 0 HP 9

DAMAGE BONUS +2D6

Education: Middle School

Occupation: Monster out for revenge

Skills: Climb 87%, Dodge 91% Hide 73 % Jump 95%, Sneak 88%, Track 74%

Attacks:

Claw 62%, 1D6 + db

Kick 69% 2D6 + db

Bite 89%, 1D6 + db

Notes: The mind of Jane Ever has degenerated completely, and she now lives only for the hunt. Though the ability to think and reason is almost completely lost, she now has an incredible amount of raw cunning and killer's instinct. This is what is reflected in her INT stat, not her conventional brainpower.

Though her skills were once more varied, the only ones remaining to her are those of the hunt.

Also note that the way she moves is completely inhuman. She runs around on all fours now, moving like she was born to it. She has also gained literally unnatural mobility, leaping around in ways more reminiscent of an anime character or Spiderman than the real world. Her most common attack is to leap over the character like a cat, and slash with her hindclaws as she passes by. Watching these incredible acrobatics costs SAN because the human body isn't supposed to move that way. When describing Jane Ever, emphasize how **fast** she is. She makes fifteen-foot leaps straight up, and shoots across the room so fast she might as well be teleporting. Remember, she was **made** to hunt and kill; the characters are just a bunch of genetic accidents. Her blows are devastating, and she's almost impossible to hit in return. The only advantage the characters have is that one good hit will kill her. Otherwise, they'd be dead meat. As it is, they should only just survive the encounter.

Although her physical abilities are heightened, she is more vulnerable to bodily harm, and it takes less to kill her outright than it does a normal human (a failsafe the Mi-go built in). If she takes damage that wouldn't kill a normal human but would kill her (Keeper's discretion), have every character make an Idea roll. A "successful" one costs 1 SAN point.

SAN Loss: 1/1D6 when seen still, 1D3/1D8 if seen performing leaps

Aftermath

Assuming the group survives Jane Ever, the Foundation facility will mysteriously burn down due to an electrical fire. Possible future adventures include:

1 – If Ever got away, she may appear in a later adventure.

2 – Only a person with Cookbook training can understand the files the characters may have acquired. Getting someone with such training is an adventure in itself.

3 – MJ-12 may come after the characters to find out what they know about their operations.

Sanity

Killing Jane Ever is worth 1D10 SAN points.

If the killing blow on Jane Ever is struck from a close enough range, the character will be close enough to see the light of sanity and lucidity return to her eyes, and she will whisper “Thank you” in a tone almost too soft to hear before finally expiring. This will fill the killer with confidence, granting an additional 1D3 SAN points.

Saving the scientist is worth 1D8 SAN points. If she dies, subtract 1D8.

Player Aid #1

Research Proposal of Deng Tsu

The document is a ten page thesis proposal, but only the last paragraph is really of interest to the investigators. It goes as follows:

“In conclusion, the key to successful organ replacement is not mechanical substitutes, nor is it crude drugs that shatter the immune system and leave in vulnerable to infection. No, the key is to grow new organs for the ill, using some form of ‘unformatted’ biological substance that can be shaped into precise duplicates of the needed organ. Though this may seem ambitious, researchers for Aendern Foundation seem to have had developed a material with the appropriate properties, and have consented to have my help in this research. I await only your approval.”

Documents

Project Succubus

This documents that experiments done on Jane Ever and the other subjects. It is a hideous document that describes what amounts to slow torture, made all the worse by its cold, clinical language.

Reading time: One day

Spells: none

Project BEELZEBUB project summary

This is listing of many (but by no means all) of the artificial insectoid life forms created by MJ-12. Some of the highlights include a spider that weaves monofilament webs, a worm that hunts down and devours gun oil and explosives to render an enemy force helpless, a form of timed locust infestation that will strip a strictly defined radius of all plant life in a matter of days, and a form of tapeworm that can be tailored for people of various skin coloration. The full details are only understandable to someone with Cookbook training.

SAN Cost: 1D6

Skill Checks for Biology and Zoology

Study Time: 1 month