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The BLACK SEAL

The magazine of modern horror gaming

Alien Cultures. . . . . Strange Things and Even Stranger Places. . .

Cthulhu Now

Delta Green

D20 cthulhu

Now 100 Pages!

Alien Landscape
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"WE FEW, WE HAPPY FEW, WE BAND OF RUTHLESS BASTARDS."

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The BLACK SEAL #3

Volume 1 Number 3
Spring 2004

Welcome to the third issue of *The Black Seal*. I had hoped to publish earlier this year but a number of factors have conspired to hold up production.

It seems that the good times have finally returned to Chaosium and 2004 looks like it may be finally the year of Call of Cthulhu's return to proper production. This year has already seen the release of *Cthulhu: Dark Ages*. Whilst this new setting won't be supported by *The Black Seal*, we applaud the decision to release it. Together with the launch of the Miskatonic University Library Association Monograph series Chaosium seems to be increasing its output slowly but surely.

On the other hand Pagan Publishing seems incredibly quiet. The Delta Green novel *'Denied to the Enemy'* and the long-awaited reprint of *Delta Green* with *d20 Cthulhu* stats are all reported to be on their way, but so far have not made an appearance.

Another piece of good news is the imminent release of *'Worlds of Cthulhu'* magazine. I'm biased reporting this, because I'm the Editor of the magazine. Pegasus Press of Germany will be producing a twice-yearly glossy magazine dedicated to all settings and systems of Call of Cthulhu. I know *Worlds of Cthulhu* will be a success because Keith 'Doc' Herber is Chief Editor, and Frank Heller, editor of Worlds' German mother magazine *'Cthuloide Welten'* is overseeing the whole process. Worlds of Cthulhu should be in a games shop near you in August. Whilst you are waiting you cna check out Worlds website at: www.worldsofcthulhu.com.

Look out for the next appearance of *The Black Seal* in the next 12 months. The fourth issue will be a special issue titled *'The Black Seal's 'Nam: the conflicts, the land, the people, the mythos'*. We will be producing material for the period 1945 to 1975 in Vietnam ranging from character generation to scenarios and mini-campaigns. We will return to our normal mix of material in issue five.

In the meantime enjoy this issue's mix of articles and scenarios.

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Legalese:

Elder Things in Flight
Neil Beatty © 2004

TerraOcculta

An atlas of strange places

by Nick Brownlow, David Conyers and others

"This planet is haunted by us; the other occupants just evade boredom by filling our skies and seas with monsters." —John Keel

Truth is often stranger than fiction, and the kind of high weirdness that's eminently suitable for inclusion in a *Call of Cthulhu* game is rife even in the real world. Terra Occulta is intended to serve as your guide to this strange planet we live on; a catalogue of the bizarre and the esoteric that the enterprising Keeper is welcome to plunder for their campaign. In this, the first in a series of irregular columns, we cast our single all-seeing eye over those lesser known places of mystery around the globe.

Ark of the Covenant
Âksum, Ethiopia

The legends of the Ark of the Covenant are many. A wooden box decorated with gold linings overlaid with a golden lid with two cherubs standing with wings outspread, the Ark holds the Ten Commandments, given to Moses by God and written on stone tablets in the 13th century B.C. King Solomon gained possession of the commandments and the ark and kept them in his temple in Jerusalem from 955 B.C. onward, but they had disappeared by 587 B.C., when Nebuchadnezzar's army destroyed that city searching for them. For the last 25 centuries, the ark has been lost to history. In that time many a knight, adventurer, and crusader has scoured the world seeking it. None, of course, ever found it, although the quest has been made famous through the Indiana Jones movie *Raiders of the Lost Ark*.

Today, reputed sites for the location of the Ark of the Covenant are many. But the most popular theory has the ark kept in a plain stone temple next to Saint Mary of Zion Church in Âksum, Ethiopia.

Âksum (or Axum) is the holiest city in Ethiopia and the first place in Africa where Christianity was officially declared a national religion in the Fourth Century A.D. This ark is locked away in the temple and no one is allowed to look at it. Protected by a metre-high fence, the ark is guarded by an unarmed monk who will spend the rest of his life inside the temple. In return for his service to God he is the only person permitted into the inner sanctum to gaze upon the ornate box and its contents. To date there have been 30 guardians, many of whom have reputedly lived 100 years or more. The robes of the previous 30 guardians are on display in the church.

Although the ark cannot be viewed, the church does hold a collection of impressive religious and historical artefacts including bibles, crosses, and crowns. Some of these items, the monks claim, are taken from the original Temple of Solomon and brought to Ethiopia by the Queen of Sheba when she constructed her capital in today's neighbouring country of Eritrea. These objects include metal forks, bronze bowls, and two silver trumpets that exactly match those depicted in the Arch of Titus, found in Rome, commemorating the Roman conquest of Jerusalem and the destruction of Solomon's Temple. During their reigns, King Solomon and the Queen of Sheba had a son, Menelik, who may have stolen the ark from Solomon and taken it to Ethiopia.

Verifying that the Saint Mary of Zion Church actually holds the Ark of the Covenant is impossible so long as no one but the guardian is allowed to look upon this relic.

Black Mountain
Cooktown, Queensland, Australia

In the tropic north of Australia, some 26 kilometres south of Cooktown, lies Black Mountain. Known to the local aboriginals as Kalkajaka, the name literally translates as 'The Place of the Spear,' or more loosely as 'The Mountain of Death.' Not without good reason—the number of disappearances associated with Black Mountain is staggeringly high.

The first recorded disappearance was in 1877, when a farmer on his horse, out looking for his cattle, was never seen again. Not only did he disappear, but so too did his mount and all his livestock. Thirteen years later, Cooktown-based Constable Ryan vanished while chasing a criminal in the scrub on the edge of the mountain. Constable and quarry ventured into a cave, but neither returned. In another tale, a station owner by the name of Harry Owens went looking for his cattle and never returned. Not only did he disappear but also so did his partner and an aboriginal police sergeant who was searching for him. On the

same case, two more police entered a cave to continue the hunt for the missing men, but only one returned. He was so shaken by the experience that he never talked about what he saw. The list goes on.

Although surrounded by tropical rainforests, Black Mountain has no soil whatsoever and thus has very little vegetation. The majority of the mountain consists of huge boulders of grey granite coated in layers of iron and manganese oxides, which are stacked on top of each other from a height of 120 metres above sea level to its peak at 420 metres. Across the mountain, huge holes between boulders make climbing treacherous. These holes could be a rational explanation for the numerous disappearances, for to fall down one of these pitch-black pits would likely be fatal. However, wallabies, pythons, and thousands of bats and frogs live on the mountain, suggesting that water pools in the holes. The rock of Black Mountain has another peculiar quality: it gives off a peculiar metal ring when struck.

Aboriginal legends shed some light on the mountain. In one tale, a sorcerer created Black Mountain from the Dreamtime. He had the ability to camouflage himself like a chameleon and a taste for human flesh, and it is said his spirit still lurks in the rock, taking people and cattle when he becomes hungry. Another explanation is that during the early period of settlement, Europeans massacred dozens of the local aboriginal people, and their ghosts continue to take revenge on other Europeans.

Whatever the explanation, scores of people have disappeared into Black Mountain, leaving no trace at all behind.

Clapham Woods

West Sussex, Great Britain

Clapham Woods and the quiet 13th-century village of Clapham lie just a few miles north of

the seaside town of Worthing in West Sussex. In the mid-1960s Clapham Woods were a hotspot of UFO activity, and enthusiasts and serious researchers alike descended on Clapham. Soon, however, the UFO spotters began to experience other unusual phenomena, reporting encounters with patches of highly mobile black mist, fox-headed apparitions, and various poltergeist phenomena.

In the 1970s, new mysteries emerged when dogs began to regularly go missing in the woods. In some cases the missing animals would simply never be seen again, whilst in others they would be found crippled or mad, foaming at the mouth. Four people—including a retired vicar and a police constable—were found dead in or around the woods over a ten-year period during the 1970s and early 1980s. Only one of the cases was officially designated 'murder'—the bodies of the other three victims being too badly decomposed for the coroner to ascertain cause of death.

In their 1987 book *The Demonic Connection*, Toyne Newton and Charles Walker alleged that the woods were being used for rituals by a satanic cult calling itself 'The Friends of Hecate.' Walker had been investigating Clapham Woods for nearly 20 years, and maintained that in 1978 he had been contacted by an initiate of the cult, who claimed that they were behind the abductions and that the dogs were being sacrificed to the triple-headed goddess Hecate—an ancient Greek deity associated with the underworld and favoured by witches. Clapham Woods, he said, was a place of power and the cult wanted it for themselves. The initiate also claimed that the Friends of Hecate had membership in high places, and that if Walker continued his investigations the cult would take action against him.

In October 1987, the unexpectedly savage winds and rain of the 'Great Storm' swept across south England, felling many trees in Clapham Woods and changing the landscape of the area forever. Walker reported that the damage caused by the storm, combined with the media interest generated by *The Demonic Connection*, seemed to cause the cult to abandon the area. In the mid-1990s, however, he began to notice signs of occult activity in the woods again—fire damage, makeshift altars, and scattered animal remains. The Friends of Hecate, it seemed, had returned.

In summer 2002, an episode of the paranormal investigation/reality TV show *The Scream Team* was filmed in the woods. The programme-makers' all-night vigil passed without incident, although the two psychics who accompanied the TV crew made some interesting observations. One reported sensing the presence of a non-human 'intelligence' in the woods, something old and powerful that evaded all her attempts to make contact with it. Another predicted the murder of a local girl in nine months time. Her killer, he suggested, would be a local man of good social standing. So far, nothing has happened…

The Doorway of Aramu Muru

Ancasayo, Puno, Peru

Twelve kilometres outside the village of Ancasayo, located a short walk from the Carretera Pan Americana highway running

from Puno to the Bolivian frontier, is the Doorway of Aramu Muru. The local Aymara people call the huge rock carving 'the Gate of the Gods' or 'the Gate of the Spirits,' and it lies at the head of the Valley of Spirits, where local shamans have conducted sacred and secret ceremonies for centuries. The doorway is less than 11 kilometres from Lake Titicaca, where the supreme Incan sky god Viracocha is said to have created the Sun, Moon, stars, and all living things.

The doorway is a smooth area about seven metres high and wide, carved into the natural cliff face. Two tubes carved at the left and right edges are said to represent male and female energy. Located in the centre bottom is a T-shaped niche with a very wide down-stroke. Between the cross-section and down-stroke is a smaller indentation, which is at the right height for a person's 'third eye' if someone knelt in the niche.

Local legends say that people who went to the doorway, particularly at night, disappeared, never to return. Local people other than shamans will not venture close. There also legends of a vast network of tunnels beneath South America, particularly the Andes and Lake Titicaca. Some say that these tunnels link to the Inner Earth, an Inner Kingdom, Shambhala, or even other dimensions.

The doorway is intimately associated with Aramu Muru (also known as Manco Capac, founder of the Incan Empire), the Lemurian Master Sage and Keeper of Scrolls who came to the Andes before Lemuria sank below the Pacific Ocean bearing the Golden Sun Disk. Amaru Muru also brought with him the mystery school tradition of Serpent Wisdom, and founded the Solar Brotherhood of the Seven Rays. Near Lake Titicaca, Amaru Muru created the underground Monastery of the Seven Rays where the Golden Sun Disk was kept. Members of the Solar or Serpent Brotherhood were known as 'Serpents' or 'Amarus,' and it is said that the Amarus kept their traditions alive after the Spanish conquest.

After the Spanish conquest, the Conquistadors pursued Aramu Muru to possess the power of the Golden Sun Disk. He fled into the Hayu Marca Mountains to escape, eventually reaching the doorway. There, shamans welcomed him and observed his rituals at the doorway. After Amaru Muru placed the Golden Sun Disk into the indentation of the doorway, a portal opened up, spilling blue light from a now-revealed tunnel that led away into the rock. Amaru Muru is said to have stepped through the portal 'into eternity.'

El Paititi

Parque Nacional Manu, Peru

In the early 16th century, the Incas commanded one of the largest empires ever seen in the Americas, ruling over 20 million people and a fifth of South America. For a period of 100 years they had conquered virtually every Andean civilisation from Ecuador to the northern reaches of modern-day Chile and Argentina. Their capital city was Cuzco, also called Tawantinsuyo, 'The Four Quarters of the Empire.'

In 1532 the Incan Empire, already at war with itself, was destroyed by conquistadors from Spain; and so the glory of Tawantinsuyo came to an end.

During the fighting many Incans were killed and enslaved, and others surrendered and submitted to Spanish rule, but a few continued to fight on. The most successful of these was Tupac Amaru, who established a base in the Vilcabamba mountain forests and held out against the conquistadors for 40 years. In 1572 the Spanish discovered Tupac Amaru's hideout and led a force against him, defeating his forces and executing him by drawing and quartering in a public arena.

But the Incans had anticipated the Spaniards' move and removed all their treasures of gold, silver, and turquoise that the Spanish loved so much, and hid them in the eastern quarter of their empire, in a secret city in the Amazon jungle called El Paititi. When the Spanish learnt of the existence of El Paititi, they sent 80 men accompanied by 200 Andean Indians into the jungles to find the Incan treasures. Unfortunately for them, not even the Indians they took with them knew how to find food in the jungle, nor did they know how to avoid or cure the diseases that are common beneath the green canopy. Most of the expedition died from malaria, starvation, insect-borne infections, intestinal worms eating away at their guts, and attacks by Amazonian tribes who killed them one by one with poisoned blowgun needles. The survivors turned back, beaten; El Paititi, which means 'Of Itself,' was never found. The city passed into legend.

Like El Dorado, El Paititi remains undiscovered, protected in its green world. Historians, archaeologists, and explorers believe that the most probable location of this lost city—if it exists—is in Parque National Manu (National Park of Manu), a bio-reserve containing an abundance of Amazonian animals and plants. While Manu Park is massive and is visited by hundreds of thousands of tourists each year, only a few areas of the park are open to visitors; most of it is inaccessible. Even driving to the Park from Cuzco, a journey of no more than a couple of hundred kilometres, can take up to seven days because the roads are often flooded, washed away, subject to landslides, or blocked by fallen trees. Flying is much quicker, taking half an hour at the most, and once in Manu the Amazonian jungle is so thick that it is impossible to travel anywhere except by aeroplane or boat; but even then there are only certain places where these forms of transport can take you.

If El Paititi is to be found in Manu, the only way to find it is to walk into the jungle, carving out a path with machetes and lots of determination. Today, expeditions still set out hoping to discover El Paititi and its treasures; but while petroglyphs have been found in large numbers in Manu, nothing conclusive suggesting a lost city and a wealth of gold and silver has been found.

The Ghosts of Pluckley

Kent, Great Britain

The small village of Pluckley in southeast Great Britain has made it into the Guinness Book of Records for having the most hauntings in England.

With a population of 1,000 people, Pluckley is situated on the edge of Andredsweald, an ancient Saxon forest also known as 'the Screaming Woods,' which is amongst the oldest woodlands in England. Pluckley, however, is more famous because it is home to at least half a dozen ghosts—which have been seen by most of the villagers.

The most famous of all the ghosts is 'the Coach and the Horses,' a spectral carriage seen as recently as 1997, which travels down Forge Hill toward Maltman's Hill and then turns around to return to the Old Forge. Most accounts report two horses, occasionally headless, and a four-wheeled carriage but rarely a driver. Others have heard but not seen the carriage clambering across cobbled stones.

Another popular ghost is 'the Highwayman,' who haunts a place now called Fright Corner. An 18th-century legend tells of

a highwayman who hid in a hollow of a tree to escape officers of the law. Unfortunately his horse did not ride on but instead started grazing, and gave away his position. One of the officers snuck up to the hollow tree and plunged his sword through a knothole, piercing the highwayman through the heart. The ghostly act of this killing is supposed to play out every night at the very spot of the Highwayman's death.

At the Church of Saint Nicolas there has been seen a ghost believed to be Lady Dering, a wife of one of the Lords of Pluckley from the 12th century, who had a stillborn child which was then buried in an unmarked grave. Legend has it that she later died at a young age and was buried in a sumptuous gown holding a brilliant red rose. Her body was placed inside seven lead coffins, one inside the other, then locked away in a vault under the church. Her ghost is said to wander the churchyard at night, sobbing bitterly, searching for the grave of her unacknowledged child. There is a similar tale of another beautiful young woman, 'the White Lady of the Manor House' of Surrenden Dering, often seen gliding through the manor's library; she may have been a Dering herself.

Other ghost stories include a worker in a clay-pit near the Pluckley railway station who was smothered to death when a wall of clay fell on top of him; at night his screams are still sometimes heard just as when he died.

Rose Court is a house haunted by its previous owner, a woman who killed herself drinking a concoction of ivy and crushed poisonous berries. Her ghost is only seen between four and five in the afternoon, the same time that she killed herself.

On Pinnock Bridge there is the apparition of an old, pipe-smoking gypsy woman who accidentally set herself alight, seen today as a misty figure by the occasional passer-by.

Then there is the Colonel, who hung himself from a tree in Park Wood; but the wood was levelled in 1965 for agricultural purposes and the Colonel hasn't been seen since. Similarly, in 1920 there was a schoolmaster who hung himself, and his ghost has been seen wandering around the old windmill or swinging from a rope on a tree. This windmill is also haunted, for in 1939 it was struck down by lightning and quickly burned to the ground; its ghost is seen just before a thunderstorm breaks.

Across town, in a pale-grey mansion called Greystones built in 1863, one of Pluckley's most regularly sighted ghosts, a monk, patrols the grounds. Similarly, in the house named The Black Horse lives a poltergeist that hides objects; the objects show up after a time in prominently visible places where they were not found before.

Probably the strangest ghost in this unusual town is the old lady who sits herself at a table by the window in The Dering Arms inn. So clearly visible is she that many have mistaken her for a living customer. But as soon as she is commented upon or approached, she immediately vanishes into thin air.

All these hauntings have been documented for at least 80 years, but due to the large number of tourists that now visit the town to hunt ghosts the locals have been forced to play down the supernatural aspects of their home. That doesn't stop busloads of tourists, especially at Halloween, scouring the town for ghosts, or authors from writing books on the village and its phenomena.

Hal Saflieni Hypogeum

Burial Street, Paola, Malta

Behind a classically proportioned Italianate door in a stuccoed wall on a residential street lies a unique prehistoric subterranean temple. Regarded as the jewel of Malta's many neolithic temples, the Hal Saflieni Hypogeum is a mysterious maze of three superimposed levels and 800 square metres of tunnels and chambers. The Hypogeum is only a few hundred metres from the Tarxien temple, which is contemporary with some parts of the Hypogeum, and the two may have formed one whole complex in the past.

Designated an UNESCO World Heritage site in 1980, and closed to the general public in 1991 for major conservation work that cost UNESCO £850,000, the Hypogeum reopened in October 2000, but today only 200 people a day can visit the complex. The conservation work is impressive, having installed climate control systems, air locks, low-level lighting inhibiting algae growth, and removable visitor walkways. The surrounding leaking sewers were replaced, and the buildings above the Hypogeum, which led to its initial discovery, were demolished to make way for an archaeological excavation of its upper levels and a visitors' centre hung from steel cantilevers. Tickets to the Hypogeum cost Lm 3.00 (£4.75) and must be bought in advance.

The Hypogeum was first discovered sometime between 1899 and 1902, when builders digging cisterns for new housing above the site broke into one of the chambers. Their discovery was kept from the authorities until the houses were finished, and in the meantime building waste dumped in the upper levels of the complex caused further damage. The Hypogeum's existence was revealed in 1902.

The first archaeological investigation was undertaken by a Jesuit priest, antiquarian and folklorist Father Emmanuel Magri, who conducted investigations until 1905. He found that the buildings above hampered access, and that the site was badly waterlogged. Magri's actions are controversial, as he cleared the central chambers in an unscientific manner: No records of context or association were made, and the disarticulated bones that filled the chambers were simply disposed of. Magri died in Sfax, Tunisia in 1907 whilst on the mission that curtailed his excavations at an apparently fruitful stage, and his archaeological records, if there were any, have never been recovered.

The remainder of the complex was properly excavated between 1905 and 1909 by Sir Temistocles Zammit (Curator of Malta's Archaeology Museum) according to the standards of the time. Many of the niches off from the main chambers were also filled with disarticulated bones. Zammit calculated that 6,000 to 7,000 people had been interred in the complex, but without the evidence from Magri's excavations these figures are merely an estimate. Many amulets, figurines and vases were also recovered, the most famous of being the Sleeping Lady, a reclining female figure, naked to the waist with a small head and exaggerated hips, thought to be a representation of fertility or slumber.

Visitors today find a complex arrangement of passageways, irregular chambers, halls, and niches that were cut from the limestone rock without metal tools and mimic the trilithon entrance and corbelled roof features of megalithic temples found elsewhere on Malta.

The Hypogeum is most famous for its painted rooms. The Main Chamber's wall surfaces are washed in red ochre with an area of black and white chequers; the Oracle Room, with its acoustic effects that affect only male voices, has red ochre swirls and blobs; the Unfinished Chamber is decorated with rows of spirals and honeycombs; a black bull fresco decorates the 'Holy of Holies'.

Archaeological evidence suggests that the complex was in use from 3,800 to 2,500 B.C., and that its uses changed over time as its role evolved from sanctuary to necropolis. The artefacts found match those at other above-ground temples, and several rooms were found abandoned and unfinished. Zammit found the Holy of Holies unfinished and full of water, and it has been suggested that it was used for grain storage. The many disarticulated remains suggest the ancient Maltese had a strong sense of community and reverence for a shared

ancestral past.

The Holy of Holies, which is the deepest chamber of all, 10.6m below the modern road surface, is also rumoured to link to 'deeper catacombs' and a tunnel system that is said to run across the entire island of Malta.

It's reported that in 1940 Miss Louise Jessup crawled through one of the niches along the sides of the Holy of Holies and emerged onto a ledge overlooking a deep chasm; strong winds blew out her candle and something 'wet' slipped past her in the dark. Three days later, 30 schoolchildren and their teachers disappeared in the same place, their securing rope cut by a sudden cave-in. The British, then rulers of Malta, sealed all the entrances to this tunnel system. Today the children's disappearance is dismissed as urban folklore.

Hanging Rock

Melbourne, Victoria, Australia

This obscure volcanic outcrop, only 100 metres high, has found its way into Australian folklore mostly thanks to the Loan Lindsey novel Picnic at Hanging Rock, and the later film of the same name, directed by Peter Weir in 1975. The story concerns the disappearance of several schoolgirls at the rock in 1900. Despite public opinion to the contrary, there is no historical basis for the tale. Even so, the rock is not without its mysteries.

Created six million years ago in a violent eruption, Hanging Rock contains geological specimens found nowhere else in the world. Because of the viscosity of the erupting lava at the time, when the rock cooled it created unusual formations that today make a maze of disturbing, almost sentinel-like outcrops. Often the rock is shrouded in mist, particularly in the colder months of May through August in the Australian winter, enhancing its eerie feeling.

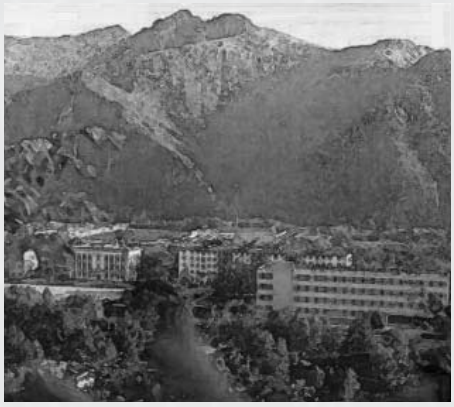
Visitors commonly report loss of time while exploring the Rock. Watches stop or run fast or slow, or people feel that they have only been away for an hour while their friends in the nearby picnic grounds swear they've been gone most of the day. The phenomenon was recorded by the film crew of Picnic at Hanging Rock.

Located approximately 80 kilometres north of Melbourne, Hanging Rock is easily accessible by car. Despite local tales concerning its mysterious nature, no documented deaths or disappearance have ever been associated with it. Probably the most interesting tale concerns bushranger Daniel 'Mad Dog' Morgan, who used the rock as a hideout in the early 1860s. Shot dead in 1865, his head was cut off and his scrotum used to make tobacco pouches. Despite the fact that thousands of tourists visit the rock every year, in the surrounding area people regularly manage to become lost for days or more, suffer serious accidents, or die from fatal falls.

Australian aboriginals from the Wurundjeri tribe have lived near the rock for at least 36,000 years, yet strangely there has never been any evidence of these people living at or visiting the rock itself, which goes against the trend of other prominent Australian natural landmarks such as Uluru and the Olgas. Similarly flying in the face of aboriginal traditions, Hanging Rock is not regarded as a sacred site. It is as if malevolent Dreamtime spirits have kept them away.

Height 611

Dal'negorsk, Primorskiy, Siberia, Russia



Sometimes referred to as the 'Russian Roswell,' Dal'negorsk is a small town in the Vladivostock area of Siberia, not far from the Pacific coast, some 8,800 kilometres from Moscow. On the evening of 29 January 1986, a low-flying red metallic sphere about ten feet in diameter passed noiselessly over the town. Flying parallel to the ground, it touched down on the nearby Izvestkovaya Mountain (known as Height 611), where it caught fire and seemed to explode, although some eyewitnesses reported seeing it take off again, this time heading in a northeasterly direction.

A team of scientists from the Omsk branch of the Academy of Sciences later visited the 'crash' site and made a number of unusual discoveries. Amongst the debris, they found a strange, intricately woven 'mesh' material and a previously unknown type of aluminium alloy. Tiny iron and lead balls found at the site proved to have an extremely complex chemical composition, incorporating just about every element on the periodic table. Some researchers saw these findings as evidence of a technology far in advance of anything currently available on Earth, whilst others, more sceptical, concluded that the object was most likely a secret, possibly experimental, space probe or satellite of terrestrial origin. In 1993, Russian UFOlogist Gennady Belimov presented evidence (which he claimed was based on classified intelligence sources) that the object was in fact a Soviet military satellite, although none of his evidence proved to be conclusive.

The story, however, does not end there. For a period of three years after the crash, insects and birds were said to avoid the site completely, and human visitors frequently reported disorientation and a loss of coordination. Mechanical and electronic equipment appeared to be affected, too.

A week after the 'crash,' two yellowish spheres were seen circling the site, before departing at high speed in a northerly direction. Over a year later, in November 1987, no less than 13 individual UFOs were reported flying over Dal'negorsk, cigar-shaped, cylindrical, and spherical. Five of them were seen 'hovering' and 'searching' the earth with beams of light, whilst another four were spotted flying over the summit of Height 611. This time the eyewitnesses included law enforcement and military personnel.

UFOlogists claim to have found increased evidence of animal mutilations in the area and to have suffered harassment at the hands of Russian army units. Interestingly, since 1986, sightings of the Yeti-like Almas are said to have increased locally.

Iron Pillar of Mehrauli

Mehrauli, Delhi, India

This exotic artefact has defied archaeological and metallurgical analysis for centuries, for although it is made of 99.9 percent iron, it has not rusted throughout its 1,600-year history.

The pillar is in the centre of the Quwwat-ul-Islam Masjid mosque complex next to the

equally prominent Qutub Minar, in the historic Mehrauli district of Delhi. It is believed that the pillar was constructed during the Gupta Dynasty as a memorial to King Chandra. Inscriptions in Pali script on the pillar mention that it is a Vishnudhwaj or a symbol of the Hindu god Vishnu. Other inscriptions state that it is a monument of victory to King Chandra.

Modern analysis shows that the pillar was once surrounded by an image of a Vishnu, but Muslims probably stripped this image bare centuries ago, as dictated by their religious scriptures, when the pillar was incorporated into their mosque.

Approximately seven metres high and averaging one metre in circumference, the pillar was at first thought to have been cast as a single piece of iron, a feat that is extremely difficult and problematic even with today's smelting technology. Recent analysis showed this not to be the case: Skilled artisans welded several pieces of iron together to create the final effect. Historians still do not know how metallurgy reached such heights during the Gupta Dynasty.

None of this, however, explains why the pillar remains rust-free despite its continual exposure to rain and wind. Impurities in the metal are of compositions that would promote rust, yet they have had no effect in doing so.

Mokele-Mbembe

Likouala Swamp, Republic of Congo

In central Africa there is a vast rainforest that stretches from the Congo coast of the Atlantic Ocean to the Mountains of the Moon in Uganda. To westerners this seemingly impenetrable jungle has always been a place of folklore and mystery, ultimately giving rise to the legend of darkest Africa—for what lives in the jungle is unknown, and, as a wise man observed, the greatest fear is fear of the unknown. African people are just as fearful of this forest. Living within a green world seemingly without end, they too have created legends of dark monsters that live beneath the green canopy to explain away what they do not understand themselves.

Recently an intriguing tale came out of the Congo concerning a monster called Mokele-Mbembe, who lives in the heart of the jungle. For the Bayaka pygmies from the Likouala Swamp regions of the northern Republic of Congo, this creature is real and terrible. Described as a giant lizard with the neck of a giraffe, it is said to have the legs of an elephant and the head of a snake. Some speak of a frill on its neck, a horn on its head, and a long flexible tail, and say that it has reddish-brown skin. They say the beast lives in water and is herbivorous, does not like hippopotamuses and will attack them on sight, and will overturn boats and bite the people on board, although it will not eat them. This fearsome creature can be anywhere from five to ten metres in length and weighs several tonnes.

When the Bayaka draw this creature, it has a striking resemblance to a sauropod dinosaur and the Loch Ness Monster.

The Bayaka people are not the only tribes to describe Mokele-Mbembe, for many others who live in the central African jungles claimed to have seen it. In 1960, a missionary reported that fishermen pygmies of the Bangombe tribe managed to kill a creature in Lake Tele in the northern Congo, the description of which closely matched the Mokele-Mbembe.

Many cryptozoologists are convinced that the creature exists, and that if there are still mega-fauna to be found on this Earth, the jungle is the best place to search for them, in the heart of Africa's jungles. Other academics believe that the creature is nothing more than a rhinoceros.

So far the only evidence that Mokele-Mbembe exists is a 1992 film shot at Lac Telle (Lake Telle) by a Japanese expedition. This perfectly circular lake is approximately 20 kilometres in diameter, found in the middle of a swampy forest between the Ndoki and Oubangui Rivers. The film shows something moving quick through the lake, although no features are discernable. The film is reminiscent of photographs taken of the Loch Ness Monster; until such time as a specimen of Mokele-Mbembe can be recovered, alive or dead, it will remain a mystery.

Nan Madol

Pohnpei, Federated States of Micronesia

Located in the Pacific Ocean approximately three-quarters of the way from Hawaii to Indonesia, the Federated States of Micronesia is comprised of four interdependent states: Pohnpei (Ponape), the Truk (Chuuk) Islands, the Yap Islands, and Kosrae. The capital city Palikir is located on Pohnpei, the largest of the islands. Pohnpei's economy is based largely on subsistence farming and fishing, with only a small, underdeveloped tourist trade due to its geographical isolation and poorly developed infrastructure.

Despite this, Pohnpei is famous for its many megalithic sites, the foremost of which is Nan Madol. The ruins of an ancient city, Nan Madol is comprised of 92 man-made islets, criss-crossed by ocean-filled channels and covering almost 800,000 square metres just off the southeast coast of the island. The megalithic structures were constructed atop a reef using basalt columns stacked 'log cabin style' to form high walls, after which the interiors were filled with coral rubble to form a dry surface above the tide level. Approximately 500,000 to 750,000 metric tonnes of material was utilised in the city's construction, all of it quarried elsewhere on the island.

Its exact origins are the subject of much academic debate, but Nan Madol appears to have been the seat of a prehistoric civilisation that existed on the island from the 1st or 2nd century A.D. to around the mid-1500s, culminating in the Sau Deleur dynasty that succeeded in uniting Pohnpei's (estimated) population of 25,000 people under centralised rule. As the political and religious centre of the island, Nan Madol was the residence of nobility, and was also used for religious ceremonies and mortuary activities presided over by a priesthood. Its population did not exceed a thousand, even at its height. The Sau Deleur dynasty eventually went into a sharp decline, and by the 1700s the city was largely abandoned (although a handful of islanders continued to inhabit it until as late as 1945).

Predictably, legends abound as to the city's exact origins. One popular myth states that the brothers Olosohpa and Olosihpa founded the city, both of them sorcerers; another maintains it was constructed by a race of tyrannical giants (eventually overthrown by proto-Pohnpeians). Also interesting to note is the widely held belief amongst islanders that a race of learned, lighter skinned men once visited the island, long before European explorers arrived, men who 'flew' above the sea in great 'shining boats'. Today Pohnpeians refer to Nan Madol as 'the Forbidden City' and strongly advise against venturing there after dark.

Roycroft Inn

40 South Grove Street, East Aurora, New York, United States of America

Roycroft began as a printing operation founded by philosopher and writer Elbert Hubbard in 1895. Selling his interest in a thriving soap trade, Hubbard embraced the English Arts and Crafts movement and set up shop in East Aurora, selling fine furniture and books produced by a small community of artisans. There are hints that something mystical was going on in this place.

It is likely that Hubbard was one of the founders of a major Rosicrucian group, but many of his mystical ties remain secret. In his early years he wrote *The Man with an Aspasia Hobbs*, a book that tells of a man who was the son of Shakespeare and lived until the present through an unspecified process. Hubbard later destroyed almost every copy of this book, perhaps because it was bad—or perhaps for another reason. AMORC, a major Rosicrucian organisation, claims Hubbard as one of their founders, though no documentation has turned up to support this. If Hubbard believed in the supernatural, he kept his beliefs hidden from most.

Though Hubbard claimed he styled Roycroft after Wordsworth's church in Grasmere, hidden interior supports resemble trapezoids, a significant occult symbol. The Ruskin Room that crowns the structure and was once used as Hubbard's office includes seven angles in its roof, reminiscent of the vault in which the body of Christian Rosenkrantz, founder of the Rosicrucians, was supposedly found. The seal of Roycroft, a double cross surmounting a circle containing an 'R,' may be found throughout the building. Oddly enough, a former associate of Hubbard's once criticised him because he thought the sign symbolised Dagon, the fish-god of the Philistines. The campus includes several painted images which may contain alchemical symbolism.

One figure involved in the Roycroft movement was Katharine Maltwood, a traveller and artist who contributed a blocky sculpture entitled *Magna Mater*, the name of the Phrygian mother-goddess Cybele whose terrifying rites shocked the Romans and whose worship H.P. Lovecraft refers to in *'The Rats in the Walls.'* Maltwood was also the discoverer of the 'Glastonbury zodiac,' a ten-mile circle around Glastonbury Tor containing features reminiscent of the zodiac. Roycroft itself stands on a slight rise, almost unnoticeable save from aerial features that serve as some of the highest points in the surrounding countryside.

Hubbard went down with the Lusitania when it was torpedoed in 1915 (sightings afterward in France were never confirmed), and the Roycroft community went bankrupt during the Depression. The inn passed through a number of hands, emerging just before the new millennium as a high-class hotel and restaurant. Mysterious lights are often seen in the Ruskin Room, poltergeists sometimes make the rounds, and the rest of the hotel has seen many ghostly experiences, most often a presence that amuses and vexes, or more rarely, terrifies.

Stone Statues of San Augustine

San Augustine, Colombia

Located 520 kilometres southwest of Bogotá, the Parque Nacional Arqueológico de San Augustíne (National Archaeological Park of San Augustine) is known for its bizarre collection of some 300 large stone statues unlike any other cultural art found in all of South America.

Ranging from four to six metres in height, these statues have a unique decorative style, mostly featuring human heads with teeth similar to those of cats. The heads, which often account for a third or more of the statue's mass, are terrifying, many with features similar to aquatic animals such as frogs, snakes, and lizards. Other statues depict cannibalistic rituals, including feeding upon small children.

It is believed that these statues, dating from the 5th to 12th centuries A.D., may have been used in sacrificial ceremonies. Since no signs of a city have been found nearby, it is also believed that this place may have been a pilgrimage site. Others suggest it is a graveyard, locally referred to as a 'dead woman city' since funerary objects such as bone and obsidian jewellery, graves, and sarcophagi have been unearthed by archaeologists in recent times.

One surprising aspect of statues is their uncanny resemblance to the stone statues of Easter Island and their similarity to Polynesian artefacts. They certainly resemble those more than the architecture and artwork of Incan and pre-Incan civilisations.

While the park is a protected archaeological site and remains a common haven for archaeologists from all over the world, FARC guerrilla activities are regularly reported in the area and visitors are often warned to be cautious at all times. Sometimes they do get shot at, kidnapped, and even killed.

Tomb of Jesus Christ

Shingo, Aomori, Japan

This obscure grave, located on a hilltop in northern Japan, is believed by some to be the resting place of Jesus Christ. This belief is held

so strongly by the locals that the grave has become a popular tourist site, attracting some 10,000 visitors each year.

The legend goes that Jesus visited Japan while in his early 20s to study Japanese culture and religion, and then returned to Judea when he was 33 to spread the word of the scared nation of Japan. He didn't die on the cross; he swapped places with his brother Isukiri, and then managed to flee across Siberia and Alaska before finally living out his days in a snowbound hamlet in Shingo. Jesus is said to have married, had three daughters, and lived to the age of 106. Next to Jesus' grave is a second mound supposedly containing one of Isukiri's ears and the hair of Jesus' mother Mary.

The theory of Jesus-in-Japan emerged in the 1930s when a man called Takennouchi Oomaro discovered a manuscript entitled *The Will of Christ*, which indicated that Jesus was buried in Shingo. Oomaro discovered the manuscript in 1935 and founded the Amatsu sect. Later the original manuscript disappeared, but copies of *The Will of Christ* remain in public circulation.

Other evidence is inconclusive but nonetheless intriguing. Clothing from the Shingo region dating back hundreds of years have embroidered a symbol similar to the Star of David, which is believed to originate from an old village practice where children painted this symbol on their forehead. The village also regularly performs a public chant, 'Nanya Do Yara Nanya Do Nasareno Nanya Do Yara,' which is meaningless in Japanese but has strong similarities to Hebrew. The former name of the village, Herai, is not a Japanese name but is close to the modern Japanese for 'Hebrew,' and means 'mountain' in Hebrew.

So far the grave has never been exhumed. Until forensic analysis of the origin and lifestyle of the reputed body of Christ is undertaken, the mystery will remain inconclusive.

References

Credit for Roycroft Inn goes to Mason Winfield's Shadows of the Western Door and Spirits of the Great Hill.

Unusual Suspects

Subject: The Shragged Man
Investigator: Brian Boyington

Definition: Shragged—*The word shragged was created accidentally by one of the Shragged Man's street companions while she was drunk. It was an amalgam of a number of adjectives that all came out at once, and really means the sum of them all. It means that whole big mess of words that describe his appearance and smell, without having to say them all: greasy, ragged, scruffy, slap-dash, sloppy, slipshod, and more.*

Background

Although nobody really knows much about the Shragged Man, it is generally agreed that he was born and bred in Colchester, Britain's oldest recorded town, the streets of which he roams to this day.

In his younger days the Shragged Man walked and debated with the best-educated and most respectable folk of his ancient hometown, mixing with the Good and the Great, but as his occult learning increased, so did his yearning for more arcane knowledge and more practical examination of some of the blasphemous entities that his studies had described. At some time, lost now in even his own memory, the Shragged Man summoned up something unwholesome with elder knowledge of its own, able to bring forth from the void some abomination beyond his feeble ability to send back.

Whatever abomination it was that the Shragged Man summoned is still a mystery, and whatever it is that the abomination brought into our world with it is doubly so. When these unimaginably alien monstrosities toyed with the Shragged Man, they physically warped his body into a distorted and skewed remnant of human form. Obviously this left him the shell of a man with few mental faculties, and only a vague faltering understanding of the studious leaning that he had put in so many years to attain.

Now a pathetic, degenerate and hunched character, covering his diabolical disfigurements as best he can, the Shragged Man appears as a tramp, with long thinning grey/brown hair, and a slightly pointed beard to match: these cover putrescent growths of alien origin. As the age-old adage so clearly warns "by his foulness you shall know him." Beyond filth, or any lack of cleanliness, his stench permeates his very being, seeming unholy to most folk. However repugnant this façade may appear, within his twisted shell is the remnant of a soul shattered by what he has learned of the Great Old Ones during his years as a magician.

Now he busks on the street corners for money to buy cheap strong cider, and generally twitches nervously when he sings snippets of songs that might echo some of his lost memories. A chronic alcoholic, if he doesn't drink he may have a fit, and with his inhuman body he does not want to go to hospital…

Using the Shragged Man in a Game

The Shragged Man can be encountered in the streets of Colchester busking performing esoteric songs. He is usually drunk, and once met he is easily recognisable again by his foul odour and hunched stagger even when relatively sober. He could also be encountered in 'The Lakes' (a local mental health unit) or in police cells, for obvious reasons.

The Shragged Man will attract the investigators' attention because of the nature of the songs that he sings, many of which include snippets or more of Mythos Knowledge. Talking to him is awkward, due to the delirium that he suffers as a chronic alcoholic. He often finds it difficult keeping a train of thought focussed within his mind. However, simply listening to what he sings may bring out some useful information. If confronted with a minion of the Old Ones, or artefact, it is unknown how he would react, but some of his lost knowledge may surface and reassert itself in a potentially useful or deadly manner.

As a link into the underworld, the Shragged Man can also be useful. As a man of the streets and not a real criminal, he has many acquaintances that are drug addicts, and has contacts that are certainly willing to break the law. It is probably through this man's friends, if they can suitably impress them, that investigators may be able to contact more hardened villains: serious drug dealers, smugglers, fences, and illegal weapons dealers.

As an alternative location, the Shragged Man may be found in any ancient, long-inhabited city in Europe, Asia or South America such Damascus, Rome, Mexico City or Marseilles.

Adventure Hooks

- Recently a string of disappearances and unsolved barbaric murders have occurred in Colchester. Most of the disappearances seem to have happened at night, around the large Castle Park area of town. Although the Castle Park is closed round sunset, it is still used as a shortcut between the north of town and the town centre. The first two victims found were discovered in odd corners of the Castle Park. The first mutilated victim, was found floating face down in the sunken garden with her face torn off, near the south of the park. The second victim found was skewered on some railings in the middle of the park, between the Upper and Lower Parks.

  The police are now considering the other disappearances as probably linked, and are planning to stake out Castle Park at night, intending to catch the fiend responsible at work. For their own sake it may be better that they don't meet the true culprits: the creature that the Shragged Man summoned and the other foulness that it enabled to enter into our world, which never chose to leave. They lurk in the rafters of

Colchester Castle, now converted into a museum, making unnerving sounds during the day and at night preying on anyone foolish enough to remain within the Castle Park grounds.

Once news of these disappearances is out, something deep inside the Shragged Man resurfaces, and he may be found busking at the bandstand at the heart of the Upper part of Castle Park, singing gruesome warning songs which may alert astute investigators to the Shragged Man's connection with the monsters. Perhaps, hidden in his shattered psyche is the key to banishing the evil that remains, if the investigators can only tease it out of his fragile mind without causing further damage.

- The Shragged Man's alcohol problem becomes acute, and after a day during which he was too ill to beg, he suffers a fit in a public place, possibly witnessed by an investigator.

  In the course of the fit he is taken to Colchester General Hospital, where his inhuman deformities are discovered, and reported to another agency that has an interest, such as the Communicable Disease Surveillance Centre, or PISCES, and their appearance either brings the investigators or sparks their interest.

  Alternately the investigators could read about a mobilisation of soldiers from the local barracks to the hospital, and the subsequent isolation of a single ward. With suitable investigation, they may be able to find out what happened: who was isolated, by which organisation, why and to where he has been moved.

- Coming home from a pub or club at night, the investigators come across what appears to be a fight between two homeless men. In the middle of the fight everything shifts slightly out of phase, and one of the men goes down.

If the investigators intervene, upon closer inspection they find that the injured homeless man doesn't appear completely human, and the other man runs, or rather staggers off. The injured man is actually a Gofnn Hupadgh Shub-Niggurath, one of the "Eaten of God". These poor souls were once cultists to Shub-Niggurath who were particularly devout. In a ritual they were eaten and spewed forth transformed by the Outer God into something other than human.

There is an underground war going on between these creatures. If the investigators catch the fleeing man, it turns out to be the Shragged Man, if not, they will recognise his hunched limp in town the next time they see him. Although the Shragged Man is not one of these creatures, he is now been caught up in their war, and although he doesn't know how or why it happened, some of his old learning manifested itself to aid him in his escape. Can the investigators save this poor soul?

Ref : 105-AQ-9328-11

The Shragged Man

Amnesiac busker of arcane knowledge, age unknown
Race: Caucasian (English)

STR 9	CON 7	SIZ 7	INT 9	POW 11
DEX 9	APP 4	SAN 30	EDU 18	HP 7

Damage Bonus: -1D4
Education: Unknown.
Occupation: Busker.
Skills: Art (Sing) 70%, Art (Play Guitar) 70%, Bargain 45%, Credit Rating 01%, Cthulhu Mythos 36%, Occult 45%, Psychology 50%.
Languages: English (own) 90%, Latin 60%.
Attacks: Fist/Punch 50%, 1D3+db
Kick 70%, 1D6+db
Spells: As the keeper sees fit, including a number of summoning spells (forgotten, but may come back at some opportune moment).
Sanity Loss: 1/1D3 to see the Shragged Man's inhumanly twisted body.

The Shragged Man; 3rd-Level Male Defence Option; hp 16; Init -1 (Dex); AC 9 (+2 Def); Spd 30 ft.; Atk. +0 melee (1d3-1 punch) or +0 ranged; SV Fort +0, Ref +3, Will +4; SZ M; Str 9, Con 7, Wis 11, Dex 9, Int 14, Cha 4, San. 30.
Languages: English (own), Latin +8.
Skills: Concentration +1, Cthulhu Mythos +4, Knowledge (occult) +6, Knowledge (psychology) +7, Perform (guitar) +9, Perform (sing) +9, Sense Motive +4, Spellcraft +6.
Feats: Sensitive, Tough, Weapon Focus (unarmed strike).
Spells: As the keeper sees fit, including a number of summoning spells (forgotten, but may come back at some opportune moment).
Sanity Loss: 1/1d3 to see the Shragged Man's inhumanly twisted body.

A Road Less Travelled

by Jonathan Turner

A Rough Guide To Fighting Evil In A Hot Country

'I was going to the worst place in the world and I didn't even know it yet.'
—Apocalypse Now

Introduction

The taint of the Mythos often leads investigators into the developing world. Whether it's the jungles of Central America, the African bush or the deserts of Egypt, a remote destination throws up a variety of challenges. If your investigators are heading off into the *oulou* looking for some mouldy old temple, they'd better spend a bit of time working out how they're going to do it.

Most groups prefer to fly into the target country, hire some 4x4s, pay a visit to a convenient general store, and then head off clutching their maps and their GPS. But real life ain't like that. There's only one thing you can say with any certainty about taking the road less travelled—nothing you do is ever going to go according to plan.

In my experience, players relish such a challenge. Planning an expedition and coping with each drama as it happens reminds them that what they are doing is exceptional. Sometimes the Mythos will be the least of their worries.

Remember: Getting there is half the fun.

Don't Drink the Water

'If the camels die, we die.'
—Lawrence of Arabia

Sanitation is appallingly bad throughout the developing world. Running water, where it exists, is usually nothing more than a transmission vector for some particularly nasty diseases: *E. coli* (the pensioners' favourite), shigellosis or bacillary dysentery, giardiasis, cryptosporidiosis, hepatitis A, typhoid, cholera, and a variety of other parasites. All can also be transmitted via what medics call the 'faecal-oral' route. Let's just picture that for a second: the 'faecal-oral' route. Now wash those hands.

Years of warfare, poverty, and neglect tend to wreck a country's sanitation, big-style. In Afghanistan, for example, where the mineral-rich mountains already pollute the water with dangerous levels of naturally occurring toxins, years of drought prompted farmers to use more and more pesticides in a misguided effort to increase crop yield. Now that the rains are slowly returning, surface run-off is washing the toxic chemical residue into the ground water.

I once stayed in a 'hotel' in Karachi, Pakistan, where the trace level of human faeces in the water was a hundred times more than the safe level. We only knew because we tested it—and because it stank of shit, of course. . .

Even showering in such water can be dangerous if the water gets in your mouth or your eyes. Experienced or paranoid investigators will do all they can to avoid it.

Good basic hygiene in the field is crucial if investigators are to avoid going down with minor illnesses. Close contact with locals and livestock should be kept to an absolute minimum—which can be difficult as most people want to shake hands with the rich folks. It's easier to steal your watch that way.

Still, every cloud has a silver lining. If the water is bad, you should stick to drinks like tea, but only when you're sure the water has been boiled. Booze, of course, is generally safe, but in a Muslim country it might be hard to come by. A friend of mine once registered as an alcoholic in Pakistan to get booze. He didn't even have to go to meetings afterwards.

Needless to say, investigators who drink the water—or brush their teeth with it—are in for a rough couple of days. This is quite different from 'travel tummy,' which most travellers pick up for a few days as their gut gets used to new bacteria. Oh, no. This is something else.

Diarrhoea is the first symptom. And we're not talking about the odd loose bowel movement here. No sirree. This stuff is explosive, triggered by cramps commonly known as the '30 second warning'. Investigators will have no choice but to go there and then, whatever the situation. More tea, vicar?

Vomiting follows in more serious cases, and yes folks, it is quite possible to do both at the same time. Normally, the stench of the victim's diarrhoea is more than enough to make him throw up. Quite entertaining to watch, though. From a distance, obviously.

Drinking nothing but (clean) water for 24 hours is usually enough to deal with such a bacterial infection, although it will be a rough couple of days for the sufferer and not much fun for the rest of the party, either.

Just try and imagine what it's like to be suffering from this while you're sweating to death in the back of a Land Rover bumping and scraping over some God-forsaken track

Going In With Your Eyes Wide Open

Time spent in reconnaissance is seldom wasted. As soon as it looks like a group is heading somewhere out of the way, it pays to get someone on the ground immediately.

Depending on their contacts and how happy the Keeper is to split the group, this advance party may consist of a PC or two or simply a local NPC contact who is assumed to do all the work. The advance party should find local fixers and establish relationships with them, track down and hire reliable transportation, secure supplies, and chart a route to the party's destination.

They should also secure as much intelligence on the situation in-country as possible. Likely sources might be ex-pat communities, contacts in embassies, friendly mercenaries, and the word on the street from local contacts.

When the rest of the party arrives, simply having a friendly face at the airport to make sure the wheels turn smoothly makes all the difference. And a bit of pre-arrival bribery never hurt, either.

in the middle of Africa.

See how much fun this is gonna be when you spring it on your players? I'm laughing already.

Disease

'I don't feel so good.'
—The Simpsons

Simple research on the Internet will reveal what charming diseases are prevalent in the region.

Malaria is endemic in the Third World, and is usually the biggest killer of the native population. Transmitted by mosquitoes, it comes in four main varieties—none particularly pleasant.

The most common strain involves a parasite attaching itself to the victim's liver, where it will remain for life. Occasionally it will release itself into the bloodstream, leading to fever for a few days. Treated correctly it's rarely fatal, and eradication therapy can remove the parasite.

Another version of malaria, found mainly in sub-Saharan Africa, is lethal. Symptoms include chills, headache, and a fast-peaking fever which leads to death in a matter of days. Again, professional medical treatment can rapidly halt the disease. The cure is a cocktail of pills, and if it works you can be back on your feet in days.

Travellers heading to the developing world should take anti-malarial prophylaxis, but it can be up to a month before they take effect. Some, like Larium (or mefloquine), can cause serious side effects. 'Larium moments' can include loss of short-term memory, bizarre dreams and nightmares, irritation, anxiety, and—you guessed it—diarrhoea! Staying on Larium for more than a year is not recommended due to the risk of long-term psychological damage.

Air crew and other specialists are usually given other drugs (such as Malarone) to combat malaria, which usually do not have such side effects. They are expensive, however, and there is still no guarantee that they won't cause some adverse reaction.

Lassa fever and other haemorrhagic fevers are spread by vermin. Humans normally pick up the virus through water or dust from droppings. Lassa fever has such a fast incubation period it is possible to accurately chart an epidemic as it spreads, and people often flee areas on the fringe of infection. It causes unpleasant fever symptoms in about 80% of cases, and slow, lingering death in the other 20%. Like them odds? I thought so.

Dengue fever is carried by a variety of mosquito that bites during the day. An acute febrile illness, it is known as 'breakbone fever' because of its severe muscular pains. Endemic in southeast Asia and parts of Africa, it also has a haemorrhagic variant.

But everyone knows the big daddy of haemorrhagic fevers is **Ebola**. First discovered in 1976, it's named after the river in the Congo where it was identified. No-one knows what its natural reservoir is, but some variety of monkey is suspected, or even bats. Or perhaps it has a Mythos origin?

Ebola's incubation period ranges from five to 21 days. The onset of illness is abrupt and is characterised by fever, headache, joint and muscle aches, sore throat, and weakness, followed by diarrhoea (there it is again!), vomiting, and stomach pain.

A rash, red eyes, hiccups, and internal and external bleeding may be seen in some victims. Sufferers are often mistaken for those who have been out on the pop with the *Black Seal* editorial team. Ugly. Very ugly.

The disease is probably initially spread by some kind of contact with an animal. After that, it spreads through contact with the blood or secretions of an infected person. Often it is the victim's family members or close friends who come down first.

Altitude Sickness

The best way of treating altitude sickness is by building up tolerance and acclimatisation before ascending to higher altitudes. Acclimatisation improves levels of red blood cells in the bloodstream making oxygen transport more efficient. Altitude sickness can be extremely hard to predict and can affect the same person differently on different occasions. Most altitude sickness deaths occur in groups where peer pressure and itineraries cause the symptoms to be ignored. The best treatment to prevent severe altitude sickness is to avoid further ascents until all symptoms have passed.

[See page 90 of the *d20 Call of Cthulhu* rule book for altitude sickness rules.]

Acute mountain sickness (AMS)

AMS is the most common form of altitude illness and can occur at altitudes as low as 1,219–1,829 m (4,000–6,000 ft), but most often occurs in abrupt ascents to heights greater than 2,743 metres (9,000 ft). AMS symptoms resemble a hangover: headache, fatigue, loss of appetite, nausea, and, occasionally, vomiting. AMS's onset usually begins 6–12 hours after arrival at a higher altitude, but occasionally occurs more than 24 hours after ascent.

Treatment: Rest. Descend to a lower altitude if the symptoms persist. Acetazolamide can prevent AMS when taken before ascent and can speed recovery if taken after symptoms have developed, and can help in acclimatisation.

Game stats: CONx5 (CONx6 if taking medication) roll to see if affected by AMS, failure means character has AMS. If the CON roll is fumbled, the character has to wait 1D6 weeks to try and acclimatise again. Physical activity without penalty requires a successful CONx3 roll.

High-Altitude Cerebral Edema (HACE)

HACE is a severe progression of AMS. In addition to AMS symptoms, lethargy becomes profound, confusion can manifest, and ataxia will be demonstrated during the tandem gait test (walking a straight line while touching the heel of one foot to the toe of the other with each step). A traveller who fails the tandem gait test has HACE by definition, and immediate descent is mandatory.

Treatment: Rest. Descend to a lower altitude if the symptoms persist. Dexamethasone is effective in the prevention and treatment of AMS and HACE. The drug prevents or improves symptoms, but does not help acclimatisation. There is a risk of a sudden onset or worsening of symptoms if the traveller stops taking the drug while ascending. It is preferable for the traveller to use acetazolamide to prevent AMS while ascending and to reserve the use of dexamethasone to treat symptoms while trying to descend.

Game stats: CONx3 (CONx4 if taking medication) roll if character is already suffering AMS, failure means character has HACE. HACE-affected characters' DEX rolls are reduced to DEXx3, Ideas rolls to INTx3, Know rolls to EDUx3. A successful CONx3 roll is required to do anything physical without penalty.

High-Altitude Pulmonary Edema (HAPE)

HAPE can occur by itself or in conjunction with HACE. The initial symptoms are increased breathlessness with exertion, and eventually increased breathlessness at rest. Diagnosis can usually be made when breathlessness fails to pass after several minutes resting. At this point, it is critical to descend to a lower altitude. HAPE can be more rapidly fatal than HACE.

Treatment: Descend to a lower altitude immediately. Nifedipine has been shown to prevent and ameliorate HAPE in persons who are already susceptible to HAPE.

Game stats: CONx1 roll if character is already suffering HACE, CONx5 if character is not suffering from HACE; failure means character is affected. Medication raises multiplier by 1 if previously afflicted with HAPE. If the affected character does not immediately descend to a lower altitude, ask for a CON roll every minute. Start at CONx5, with every failure reduce the multiplier by 1, until a minimum of 1, until the character has descended to a safer, lower altitude. When a CONx1 roll is failed the character takes 1D6 damage.

Heat Stroke

Occurs when the body is unable to regulate its own temperature when the sweating function fails to cool the body down. Symptoms include high temperature, flushed dry skin, headache, dizziness, nausea, fatigue, confusion, and ultimately unconsciousness and death.

Treatment: Victim must be cooled down as quickly as possible. Intravenous fluids and bed rest may be required as body readjusts to normality.

Game stats: CONx3 to remain conscious. A successful CONx10 roll is required to recover. If the CON roll is failed, death occurs on a roll of 00. While conscious and affected Idea rolls are reduced to INTx3 and Know rolls to EDUx3.

[See page 85-86 of the *d20 Call of Cthulhu* rule book for heatstroke rules.]

Sun Burn

Skin becomes red, painful and abnormally warm after prolonged exposure to the sun. In severe cases fluid-filled blisters, headaches, nausea and vomiting, and fever may occur.

Treatment: stay out of the sun, take aspirin to reduce pain, cold compresses in first 48 hours, moisturising lotion afterwards.

Game stats: Luck roll to avoid sunburn. If Luck roll failed, roll 1D100 against CON to define severity. The character has normal sunburn if the result is less than CONx5. If the result greater than CONx5, the character has severe sunburn. Normal sunburn: CONx5 roll to do anything physical without discomfort. Severe sunburn: CONx3 roll to do anything physical without discomfort. Discomfort might translate as a skills penalty according to keeper whim.

[Fort saving throw: normal sunburn DC 15 / severe sunburn DC 20 to avoid a -2 penalty on skill checks.]

Hypothermia

Is caused when wind and wetness take away body heat faster than it can be produced. The symptoms of hypothermia are tiredness or reluctance to move, slurred speech or disturbed vision, clumsiness or stumbling, abnormal behaviour, and finally collapse when the body cools below 32-30°C. The body loses heat to water 30 times faster than to air.

Treatment: Prevent further heat loss, attempt rewarming in the field, and watch for further drop in body temperature. Transfer to hospital for body core rewarming. Do not stop attempting resuscitation until revival or dead and warm. Careful handling of victim is needed to avoid cardiac arrest.

Game stats: If core body temperature is 36-35°C, a successful CONx6 roll is required to recover, failure means drop to CONx5; 34-32°C, a successful CONx3 roll is required to recover, failure means drop to CONx2; 32-28°C, a successful CONx1 roll is required to recover, failure means death.

[See page 86-87 of the *d20 Call of Cthulhu* rule book for hypothermia rules.]

Rift Valley fever is also spread by our friend the mosquito, and is common in most of Africa, especially in years of heavy rainfall. It is transmitted by mosquitoes from livestock. Sufferers may have no symptoms, or a mild illness characterised by fever and liver abnormalities.

In some less hardy folk the illness can develop into hemorrhagic fever, eye illnesses, or inflammation of the brain, which can lead in turn to headaches, coma, or seizures. Patients who become ill usually experience fever, weakness, back pain, dizziness, and weight loss. Most victims recover within two days to a week—but some can suffer permanent damage to their vision.

Leishmaniasis is a parasitic disease spread by the bite of sand flies. These little buggers are small enough to get through your mosquito net, by the way. It comes in two varieties—one that causes charming, volcano-like skin sores, and another that affects internal organs such as the spleen.

The skin sores from leishmaniasis can take months or even years to heal. A lot of kids in areas endemic with the disease have badly scarred skin, pitted noses, and so on, as from infection early in life. Some of the scarring is pretty horrific. Leishmaniasis is found in 88 countries, and the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention estimate there are 1.5 million new cases every year.

African trypanosomiasis is better known as sleeping sickness, and is passed on by the tsetse fly, a bug about the size of a bee which can bite right through lightweight clothing. The fly is unaffected by insect repellent, though a rolled-up magazine to the brain might do the trick. It's commonly found in east Africa, especially in game parks.

Symptoms of infection are generalised fever, skin lesions, and rash, though it can quickly spread to more serious conditions such as swelling of the brain.

Yellow fever sucks as well. Mosquitoes spread this one, too, bless them. Occurring only in sub-Saharan Africa and South America, yellow fever causes symptoms ranging from the flu to full-on haemorrhagic fever. It's fatal in over 20% of cases, although, fortunately, a pretty effective vaccine is available.

HIV/AIDS is extremely common in the Third World, and is endemic in many areas of Africa. If players are involved in close combat with any of the locals, or are handling bodies after a firefight, for example, they risk contamination unless they take precautions.

And a final word on **altitude sickness**, should your players intend to get their heads in the clouds. Anyone going over around 6,000 to 8,000 feet risks this condition. Its effect varies widely, but obviously those with health problems such as a heart condition will be at far greater risk.

There are three major conditions in altitude sickness. A*cute mountain sickness* (AMS), which brings on symptoms like a bad hangover; *high-altitude cerebral edema* (HACE), which adds general lethargy and confusion; and *high-altitude pulmonary edema* (HAPE), which affects the lungs and causes extreme breathlessness, even at rest.

HACE is an extension of AMS, but HAPE can occur whether or not a victim is suffering from the other conditions. HAPE can be rapidly fatal, and the only answer is to descend to a lower altitude as quickly as possible. Though preferably not by just jumping off the mountain. . .

It Ain't Half Hot, Mum!

'The weather out there is hot and shitty, with continued hot and shitty in the afternoon. Basically, it's hotter than a snake's ass in a wagon rut.'

—Good Morning, Vietnam

Investigators travelling from the U.K. or the States to a hot, humid climate would be well advised to take a few days to acclimatise. Feel free to penalise those who don't, but who attempt physical activity anyway. Like halving their physical skills.

Out in the field, heat can be a killer. Investigators doing a lot of physical activity, such as breaking a trail through jungle, had better take on plenty of fluids or they'll go down fast. An Idea roll [INT roll: DC10] should be enough to remind them that they will need eight to ten litres a day as well as frequent breaks.

The symptoms of **heat stroke** are nausea, exhaustion, confusion, and an elevated temperature. The best treatment is shade, fluids, loose clothing, and rest. And then bollock the casualty for not drinking enough water.

Sunburn can be very painful and distracting. Those who don't cover up with sun screen or use hats and other shade are fair game. The discomfort caused by sunburn is certainly worth about a 10% to 15% penalty on skills [-2 or 3 skill ranks]. Encourage other investigators to slap them on the back, shouting: "How's that sunburn, buddy?" before laughing loudly at their screams.

And while the temperature can climb during the day in direct sunlight, it plunges at night in the desert and mountainous regions. It's not unusual to have freezing temperatures

Disease	Transmission	Symptoms	Diagnosis
African Trypanosomiasis and American Trypanosomiasis (Chagas' disease)	Tsetse fly bite	Fever, malaise, progressing to headache, stiff neck, wasting, seizures, coma and death	Clinical: Hard Lab: Blood test
Cholera	Contaminated water	Abdominal pain and cramps, fever, profuse watery diarrhoea (up to 20-30 litres per day!)	Clinical: Easy Lab: Culture
Dengue (Breakbone fever)	Mosquito bite	Fever, headache, severe pain in joints	Clinical: Medium Lab: Blood test
Dysentery/Giardiasis	Contaminated food and/or water	Fever, abdominal pain and cramps, diarrhoea (often bloody)	Clinical: Hard Lab: Culture
Ebola (also Marburg disease)	Contact with bodily fluids (often during burial preparations) or infected animals	Fever, nausea, vomiting, bleeding from orifices (including eyes), coma, death	Clinical: Hard Lab: Blood test
Food Poisoning	Contaminated food (rarely by contact with animals and/or water)	Fever, vomiting, diarrhoea, abdominal pain and cramps	Clinical: Easy Lab: Culture
Gas Gangrene	Uncleaned infected wounds (or following insanitary childbirth)	Fever, pus, shock, overpowering stench, blood poisoning, death	Clinical: Easy Lab: Culture
Haemorrhagic fever (Lassa Fever, Crimean-Congo Haemmorrhagic Fever etc.)	Contact with bodily fluids, infected animals, mosquito bite depending on virus type	Fever, nausea, vomiting, bleeding from orifices (including eyes), coma, death	Clinical : Hard Lab : Blood test
Hepatitis A	Contact, contaminated food and/or water	General body pain, fever, malaise, jaundice	Clinical: Medium Lab: Blood test
Hepatitis B and C	Contact with bodily fluids, blood transfusion, use of dirty needles or medical equipment	Fever, jaundice, increased risk of liver cancer and cirrhosis	Clinical: Hard Lab: Blood test
HIV/AIDS	Sexual contact, blood transfusion, use of dirty needles or medical equipment	Initially fever, then apparent recovery before progressive wasting disease, cancers, dementia and unusual infections (AIDS). Eventual death	Clinical: Hard Lab: Blood test
Leishmaniasis (Visceral Leishmaniasis or Kala-Azar, Cutaneous Leishmaniasis)	Sandfly bite (rarely blood transfusion)	Spreading sores or blisters at bite site, fever, enlarged spleen and lymph nodes, weakness, weight loss	Clinical: Hard Lab: Culture or blood test
Malaria (*Plasmodium vivax, P. ovale, P. malariae* – mild, recurrent disease: *P. falciparum* – severe, acute, cerebral disease)	Mosquito bite (rarely blood *transfusion)*	Periodic bouts of chills, fever, *nausea, vomiting, headache, and* sleeping. Coma and death in *severe (P.falciparum) cases*	Clinical: Hard *Lab: Blood test*
Meningococcocal Meningitis	Contact, airborne particles coughed or sneezed	Fever, rash, stiff neck, vomiting, sensitivity to light, deafness (often permanent), coma, brain damage, death	Clinical: Hard Lab: Microscopy of Spinal tap
Plague (bubonic plague, pneumonic plague)	Flea bite (bubonic plague) Inhalation of airborne particles (pneumonic plague)	Fever, rash, swollen lymph nodes, vomiting, diarrhoea, heart and kidney failure, death	Clinical: Hard Lab: Blood test or culture
Pneumonia	Contact, airborne particles coughed or sneezed	Cough, fever, general discomfort, chest pain, fluid-filled lungs, death	Clinical: Medium Lab: Culture
Rabies	Contact with contaminated blood or saliva usually through a bite	Fever, malaise, sore throat, followed by severe pain, excessive salivation, sweating, fluid loss and eventual death	Clinical: Hard Lab: Blood Test (or autopsy of original host)
Schistosomiasis (blood fluke disease, bilharzia)	Skin contact from bathing in water infested with infected snails	Skin itch, rash, followed by chills, fever, sweating, eventual liver damage, possible eventual brain and spinal cord damage	Clinical: Hard Lab: Microscopy of stool sample or blood test
Septicaemia (blood poisoning)	Infected wounds	Fever, swelling, shock, multiple organ failures, death	Clinical: Hard Lab: Blood test or culture
Tapeworm (also liver fluke and lung fluke disease)	Contaminated food/water (especially associated with pork and shell fish)	Often no overt symptoms, but ulcers in intestine, liver or lungs (associated with difficulty breathing) dependent on type	Clinical: Hard Lab: Microscopy of stool sample
Typhoid Fever	Contact, contaminated food and/or water	Severe fever, headache, pain, cough, apathy, constipation later proceeding to bloody diarrhoea	Clinical: Hard Lab: Culture or blood test
Typhus (Scrub Typhus)	Bite from body lice	Fever, headache, rash, malaise, enlarged spleen/liver, meningitis and death in severe cases	Clinical: Medium Lab: Blood test
Yellow fever	Mosquito bite	Fever, headache, backache, jaundice, nausea, vomiting, liver	Clinical: Medium Lab: Blood test

Course of Disease	Treatment	Recovery	Notes:
Inc: 1-4 weeks Ph I: 2-3 weeks Ph II: 2-8 weeks	Intravenous antibiotics (Suramin, Pentamidine, Melarsoprol for late stage disease). If untreated, death is common for African Trypanosomiasis	CON x7	American form is milder than African
Inc: 1 day Ph I: 3 days Ph II: 3 days	Oral rehydration therapy (or intravenous fluids, if available) antibiotics, pain relief	CON x7	Vaccine available, but often ineffective
Inc: 3 days Ph I: 5-7 days Ph II: 4-7 days	None usually needed, but repeat infections can result in haemorrhagic fever (see below)	CON x8	
Inc: 1-3 days Ph I: 3 days Ph II: 7 days	Replace fluids, pain relief, antibiotics	CON x8	
Inc: 5-21 days Ph I: 3-7 days Ph II: 7-10 days	Various experimental treatments (in western nations), quarantine, supportive care	CON x1 (Ebola) CON x3 (Marburg)	Natural host is. unknown
Inc: 1 day Ph I: 2 days Ph II: 7 days	Specific antitoxin (if known), antibiotics, rehydration as necessary	CON x9	
Inc:1-3 days Ph I: 3-5 days Ph II:5-10 days	Surgical removal of dead tissue at affected area (amputation may be required), antibiotics	CON x2	Antibiotics won't work to save dead tissue
Inc: 5-21 days Ph I: 3-7 days Ph II: 7-10 days	Quarantine, supportive care, experimental treatment in western nations	CON x5 for most types of haemorrhagic fever	Multiple viral causes. No effective vaccines or treatments exist
Inc: 1-6 weeks Phase I: 3 days Phase II: 5 days	Pain and fever relief if needed. Hyperimmune serum available in western nations if needed	CON x9	Vaccine available
Inc: 7-14 days Ph I: weeks Ph II: Years	Usually none, but intravenous interferon used in severe cases in western nations	CON x5 (failure results in 5% per year cancer risk)	Vaccine available vs. Hepatitis B but not vs. Hepatitis C
Inc: 10-14 days Ph I: 1-10 years Ph II (AIDS): months to years	Antiviral drugs (expensive and hard to come by except in western nations) do not provide a cure, but delay onset of AIDS. Supportive treatment of opportunistic infections, dementia, and cancers	Untreated: 11% per year (cumulative) progress to AIDS Treated: 6% per year (cumulative)	In hospital settings, accidental exposure usually preventable by immediate drug treatment
Inc: 2-4 weeks Ph I: 2-3 weeks Ph II: Months to years	Surgical cleaning of lesions at early stage, anti-parasitic medication (pentamidine)	CON x9	Visceral disease (affecting internal organs) is more severe than the cutaneous form
Inc: 10-16 days Ph I: 7-10 days Ph II: Years (1-2 weeks for P.falciparum malaria)	Quinine based anti-malarial drugs such as Chloroquine, or Mefloquine (Lariam). Use of DEET mosquito repellent to prevent biting recommended, as is prophylactic treatment with anti-malarial drugs, but drug resistant malaria is becoming more common	CON x7 Relapses occur if CON x8 check is failed (check once every 6 months)	Mild (but usually not severe) cases of malaria often cause recurrent infections.
Inc: 3-10 days Ph I: 1-24 hours Ph II: 2-7 days	Immediate high dose antibiotics	CON x3	Epidemics frequent in sub-Saharan Africa
Inc: 2-7 days Phase I: 1-2 days Phase II: 2-10 days	Antibiotics (tetracycline or streptomycin)	Bubonic: CON x6 Pneumonic: CON x1	Vaccine available. Commonly found in animals world-wide
Inc: 1-6 days Ph I: 5 days Ph II: 9 days	Pain and fever relief, antibiotics, intravenous steroids if needed	CON x7	Various viral and bacterial causes
Inc: 1-6 weeks Ph I: 2 weeks Ph II: 1-6 weeks	14-day vaccine series (many painful intramuscular injections at bite site and around torso). Invariably fatal (due to respiratory failure) if untreated	Without treatment before end of incubation period death is inevitable	Death is particularly horrible and protracted
Inc: 1-10 days Ph I: 1-2 months Ph II: Months to years	Anti-helminthic medications (Praziquantel, Metrifonate, Oxamniquine)	CON x8	Symptoms may disappear totally during phase I and reappear months later
Inc:1-3 days Ph I: 3-4 days Ph II: 3-4 days	Immediate, high dose antibiotics	CON x4	
Inc: Around 2 months Ph I: Several months Ph II: Several months	Anti-helminthic medications (Praziquantel, Metrifonate, Oxamniquine). Surgical removal in extreme cases	CON x9	Tapeworms (Tania spp.) can grow up to 25 metres long!
Inc: 10-14 days Ph I: 1-2 weeks Ph II: 1-3 weeks	Antibiotics	CON x9	Vaccine is not especially good (but better than nothing)
Inc: 1 day Ph I: 5 days Ph II: 10 days	Antibiotics, sulphur powder or pesticides to eliminate lice	CON x5	
Inc: 3-6 days Ph I: 2-3 days	Supportive treatment (use of DEET mosquito repellent to prevent biting recommended)	CON x7	Excellent vaccine available

Expanded Disease Table Notes:

Disease: Gives the scientific and (where appropriate common) name of the illness. Note that this list is not intended to be comprehensive. Interested readers are directed to any of a number of excellent medical microbiology texts: The author particularly recommends Jawetz, Melnick, & Adelberg's *Medical Microbiology*, 19th Ed, Appleton and Lange, NY. 1991. The U.S. Centers for Disease Control has an excellent website, which should be the first port of call for further information: www.cdc.gov/ncidod

Transmission: Gives the most common ways in which you can pick up the infection. Devious Keepers will be able to think of others. Bear in mind that not all diseases are easy to catch and some are confined to certain geographic areas (e.g. Ebola in Africa). Note that insect transmitted (also called vector-borne) diseases can be avoided by preventing mosquito bites (by insect repellent, mosquito nets, or spraying rooms/vehicles with insecticides. The author suggests that careless Investigators should be fair game to things like cholera and malaria, but their careful colleagues should be spared the worst (after all, you don't want the entire party dead before they get to the Jungle Temple of D'vid-Icke do you? This goes double for the really nasty infections (haemorrhagic fevers etc.), which are likely to permanently end an Investigator's career (or life)—these infections are campaign-changing events.

Symptoms: Most infections have at least some incidence of fever (a good, early "non-specific" symptom, which is great for worrying nervous investigators). Remaining symptoms are listed in order of occurrence and severity. Death is listed as the ultimate symptom in many cases, and is a potential consequence of most infections (especially if untreated: see "Recovery").

Diagnosis: "Clinical" represents the relative trouble a competent, western educated physician would have diagnosing a patient on symptoms alone with little or no laboratory support. The following modifiers apply to the Medicine skill roll: Easy: +20%; Medium: No modifier; Hard: -20% to skill roll. As time, and hence the severity of disease progresses, further modifiers apply (see "Course of Disease"). Specialists in tropical medicine may have an easier time making these diagnoses than other physicians, as may doctors practicing in the local area (example; if a Kenyan doctor sees 200 malaria victims a week in his bush clinic, a diagnosis of malaria isn't going to be difficult for him!) "Lab" represents what samples would be taken to help diagnose the illness in a western hospital. A successful series of lab tests will give an immediate diagnosis (usually within 48 hours) at the Keeper's discretion, but such tests may not be available in developing countries, and some tests will only be available in specialist institutes (especially diagnostic tests for Ebola or the other haemorrhagic fevers).

Course of Disease: "Inc" gives the incubation period (time from exposure to first symptoms of the disease). Diagnosis in this time period is usually impossible, except by laboratory testing (as there are no symptoms yet, so no reason to suspect the patient to be is going to get sick). Phase I ("Ph I") is the time period in which the first symptoms appear. During phase I, diagnosis is at the modifier given in the "Diagnosis" column. Phase II ("Ph II") is the period in which the remaining symptoms manifest (things usually get much worse at this stage…). During this period diagnosis gets a modifier of +20% to the medicine skill check. At the end of this period, the patient will either recover or suffer the consequences (see "Recovery"). Note that the time courses represent estimates for game use—in real life there can be significant differences from person to person.

Treatment: This is the standard therapy, which, if given in time, will be effective at treating the disease (see "Recovery" for game mechanic). Note that in many non-western nations, the needed drugs will not be easily available (unless the investigators import their own supplies). This can be an even worse problem for the diarrhoeal diseases that need lots of clean drinking water to aid recovery. It should be noted that antibiotics have only been widely available since the mid-1940's—in earlier time periods, little or no effective treatment was available (although, thankfully, by the Gaslight and Roaring Twenties settings the days of leeches and bloodletting were well and truly over!). "Supportive care" means therapy to treat the symptoms rather than the root cause of the disease and doesn't actually fight the infection but can act to help survival of the patient (it is assumed that this will be given by a physician regardless of specific treatment).

Recovery: At the end of Phase II, the patient must roll under the given CON multiplier or die, unless the notes in the column state otherwise. This assumes that the patient is in overall good health—wounded or malnourished investigators may suffer additional penalties at the Keeper's discretion. The CON modifier can be doubled by effective treatment started in Phase I (for example CON x5 becomes CON x10), or increased by 1.5 if treatment is started in Phase II (CON x5 becomes CON x7.5). Treatments work… but only if given in time.

Notes: Is pretty self-explanatory, and covers vaccination and prevention etc.

in the desert just before dawn, for example. Ill-prepared investigators will face **hypothermia** and eventual death from exposure.

There are various stages of hypothermia, and it's crucial that team members watch each other for symptoms. The biggest initial sign is occasional grogginess or confusion, coupled with shivering. As the condition worsens, the shivering becomes more acute, and the victims can't think for themselves—which is most gamers anyway. From there, it's a short jump to coma and death. But hey, at least you've stopped shivering!

The Road To Hell

'Honey, I never drive faster than I can see, and besides . . . it's all in the reflexes.'

—Big Trouble in Little China

Generally speaking, good quality **roads** in the developing world are like hygiene at a Star Trek convention—as rare as rocking-horse shit. Even main routes are littered with pot-holes, ad-hoc checkpoints, debris, and other obstacles.

Away from main routes, investigators face rutted tracks impassable to anything except off-road vehicles. Expect to be going at about walking pace the whole way. Impose a Drive Auto roll [Drive check: DC15] for every hour or so of travel, depending on the driver's experience of such conditions.

Failed rolls will result in being bogged down, suffering a flat tyre, or a mechanical failure, or even leaving the road—a potentially fatal mistake on many mountain tracks.

Digging a vehicle out is a time-consuming, frustrating process. Smart investigators travel in more than one vehicle and have winches. Others spend a lot of time standing by the side of the road swearing.

Investigators who don't wear their seat belts, by the way, will spend a lot of time slamming their heads off the roof. Persistent offenders should lose a hit point or two.

If the roads are appalling, the standard of driving is even worse. Frequent use of the horn is essential, but indicators will only confuse the enemy. Even on main routes, a Drive Auto roll [Drive check: DC15] every hour will not go amiss as investigators avoid crisis after crisis. However if they fail the skill check roll on the **Trouble Ahead** table (see sidebar, page 24).

In my own experience, the worst drivers are locals who work for non-government organisations like the Red Cross or the U.N. Their brand-new 4x4s are often seen barrelling along at about Mach 3, flashing their lights, blaring their horns, and swerving all over the damn road.

Other vehicles on the road are typically held together by a film of dust and a few bits

of baling wire. It's not unusual to be stuck behind a truck which is puking out enough thick oily smoke to choke and blind an elephant. Overtaking in such circumstances is always an emotional moment.

In the Middle East, the metalled roads which run through desert regions are usually in good condition, but come with their own risks. Firstly, the monotonous nature of long journeys in what's essentially a straight line can cause drivers to fall asleep—and then put the vehicle into one of the steep ditches on either side of the road.

Camels and livestock make their way onto the roads, especially at night when the tarmac holds the heat of the day. Hitting a camel parked in the middle of the carriageway when you're barrelling along at 80mph can be fatal for all concerned. Take breaks and swap drivers regularly, and only drive as fast as you can see.

Away from deserts, the rainy season will render many routes through the bush completely impassable. The only other option is to travel by **air**—and that can be very expensive. There are many bush airlines out there, operating various aircraft ranging from small fixed-wing planes to elderly Russian helicopters.

They usually take you wherever you want to go, but the price is high. Anything up to £1,000 an hour for a medium-sized helicopter is realistic. What's more, the skill of the pilot may well be less than his courage or stupidity allows. But if you're prepared to take a little risk, it could well pay off in the long run.

If you do drive in the wet, the risks are high. Roads are likely to either be flooded or to fall away if a vehicle passes over them. Kenya and other parts of Africa are home to **black cotton mud**, which is as slippery as ice when wet. Cleverly, the mud is also red, not black. God knows how that works, but it's quite an experience to be in a Land Rover as it hits a patch and pirouettes across the road, I can tell you. A Drive Auto roll at half normal skill [Drive check: DC20 or 25] should be necessary to avoid something really ugly after that, and the vehicle and/or the passengers taking damage.

Needless to say, driving at night is not recommended unless it's absolutely necessary. For a good indicator of how badly screwed up a country is, check the number of functional street lights in its capital. It's not unusual to find none whatsoever. Pedestrians wander around willy-nilly, and other drivers use what lights they have on full-beam or none at all, 'to save power.'

Driving at night in the Third World is always a deeply moving, emotional experience. And a good indicator of how much you can swear if conditions are right.

Equipment

'Well, are you sure you're using that thing correctly?'
'Yeah. I think so.'
—Ghostbusters

Investigators will almost certainly want to hire **vehicles** when they arrive in a country. But that might be slightly trickier than they imagine. It's relatively easy to find someone willing to rent you some old 4x4s, but you will certainly want a competent mechanic to give it the once-over before you get behind the wheel.

Most hire vehicles in the developing world are death traps. It's not unusual to find yourself behind the wheel of an aging Land Cruiser with almost 100,000 miles on the clock—and no idea how many times it's already been around.

The ingenuity of Third World mechanics knows no bounds, but it can hardly be described as safe. Battlefield-style repairs might include rubber cut from old tyres used to fill the gap in ball joints in the suspension, for example. Tyres are often retreads of retreads, with bulges in odd places. Blowouts are common, especially on the rare metalled roads where tyres heat up and expand during a journey.

Wheels tend to be loosely attached, and I know of two occasions where a wheel simply came off while driving. Try and imagine the looks on their faces when they were overtaken by their rear wheel. . . . Investigators may also find major components held on by thin wire, faulty brakes, major oil leaks, and impossibly loose steering.

In such punishing conditions, keeping vehicles on the road requires hard work and not a little luck. The party mechanic (they do have one, right?) will find himself spending several hours a day making minor repairs and carrying out routine maintenance.

Communications are crucial to any investigation, if only so you can call for help when the black cotton hits the fan. In some regions, like the Middle East and the Balkans, tri-band mobile phones will probably work. In other places like West Africa, Iraq, or Albania, the only mobiles which work are those bought locally. Eventually, though, most expeditions will go to places where the only communications will be by **satellite**.

There are many types of satellite phones on the market, capable of sending everything from voice to heavy data like video. All these phones are very expensive.

Inmersat phones come in a lap-top sized bag which contains a collapsible dish and the phone itself. All it needs is for the dish to be pointed in the right direction. Once locked onto a satellite, voice communication is easy and with the right software even video can be sent. The phone can run off a vehicle battery.

Iridium satellite phones are the next

What Should You Bring?

The following is a pretty good general equipment list for any major expedition.

Personal Equipment:

- Hiking trousers, boots, long-sleeved shirts, sweat rags
- Light gloves
- High-capacity rucksack with waterproof liner
- Daysack (one with a CamelBak-style water carrier is ideal)
- Two-season sleeping bag with liner
- Mosquito net (absolutely essential)
- Insect repellent (likewise)
- Sun cream
- Floppy hat (I hate 'em)
- Camp cot
- Leatherman/Gerber multi-tool
- Personal toiletries (avoid scented soap as it attracts mosquitoes and other bugs)
- Wet wipes (useful when water is in short supply)
- Alcohol-based hand-wash (allows you to disinfect without using water)
- Anti-fungal powder (prevents Athlete's Foot in unpleasant places)
- Head-torch (you need both hands free to answer nature's call in the bush)
- Toilet paper (pocket-sized Kleenex is ideal)
- Water purification tablets (may not be strong enough to make some water completely safe)
- GPS and map (ensure the map grid is correctly aligned with the GPS system)
- Silva compass (as a back-up)
- Thermal mug
- Mess tin
- Camping stove and suitable fuel
- Variety of boiled sweets, disposable pens and notebooks (ideal for making friends with locals)
- Cigarettes (whether or not you smoke – good for barter)
- Petrol lighter and fuel (Zippos can even run on aviation fuel – but stand well back!)
- Wristwatch
- 'Sharps' kit of clean needles and medical equipment like latex gloves

General Equipment:

- At least two off-road vehicles equipped with engine snorkels, winches, and scene lights
- Additional fuel supplies and spares
- Full tool kit
- Water supplies and purification kits
- Two satellite phones
- Headset radios for communication between vehicles
- Vehicle radio kit
- As much medical gear as you can cram in

More tips on equipment can be found here:
www.comebackalive.com/df/wht2pack.htm

See anything you want meester?

generation of portable communications. The size of a bulky mobile phone, they simply require the aerial on the back to be aimed at the sky. They also come with a magnetic disk aerial for a vehicle, which usually provides a far better signal. The quality of the link is normally good, but can vary depending on terrain and weather conditions. It also suffers while on the move.

If hire cars and sat-phones are hard to come by in the developing world, **weapons** usually aren't. But their quality is another matter.

Depending on the region's recent history, investigators might be able to source everything from assault rifles to rocket-propelled grenades. Certainly the ubiquitous **AK-47** can be found almost everywhere, alongside G3s, FN-FALs, Uzis, and even SKS or Word War II-era Lee-Enfields. More elderly weapons can also be found—some Afghan tribesmen still use muzzle-loading muskets.

Naïve players may find themselves buying rusty rifles with equally dodgy ammunition. Even AKs, renowned for tolerating the most appalling treatment, are not indestructible.

Stoppages in Third World weapons are extremely common. Heat causes ammunition and barrels to expand until it becomes hard to fire off even a full magazine without some kind of drama. For weapons bought off the roadside without serious cleaning, any failed roll is a malfunction.

An AK can be found in places like the Balkans and Africa for as little as US $5—although the quality will be highly questionable. Pistols are generally more expensive, as they are often regarded as criminal weapons. Up to US $50 is a reasonable price for a 9mm automatic.

Generally speaking, the bigger the weapon, the harder it is to find in decent condition. A good AK and a couple of clips of ammunition in reasonable condition are easy in most places; anything above an RPG-7 is not.

Ammunition is a different matter. Strangely enough, in the Third World it often isn't cared for very well. I once watched a policeman beat someone over the head with an armed RPG-7 warhead because he didn't have a baton.

Ammunition and explosives that don't function as required are known as 'blinds'. Depending on the age of the ammunition and how it's been stored, it may not do exactly what it says on the tin. In fact, only about 30% will function as required. Some may partially explode or do nothing, only to go off when disturbed.

Conflict zones are littered with all kinds of blinds, from hand grenades to land mines and RPG-7 warheads. Enterprising locals will no doubt try to sell these to dumb investigators asking for weapons.

A final word on **hand grenades**. If investigators insist on getting their hands on some, they may be in for a nasty surprise. In rare cases, grenades have been fitted with an instant fuse for use as a booby-trap. Careless or unlucky investigators may find their new grenade goes off as they pull the pin—if it works at all!

What's more, in most countries in the developing world, taking an interest in the military or security apparatus will get you into serious trouble. Photography of anything even vaguely regarded as military will get you arrested, and trust me, you don't want that to happen. *Midnight Express*, anyone? 'Secret police' lurk virtually everywhere. That is, they're thugs in civilian clothes with rifles. So they must be 'secret police,' right? Right. Avoid military tourism—you know it makes sense.

Fuel distribution networks in the Third World are patchy at best. Most major towns and cities have several fuel stations, but the quality of what is available varies wildly. A Luck [Will saving throw: DC10] roll should be called for unless the party is sure a particular station is reliable. Failure means problems later in the journey as their engine chokes to death.

Often, a fuel delivery will not arrive until the afternoon, leading to queues and potential trouble among impatient locals. Fuel problems are an ideal way of delaying your smarty-pants investigators if they're moving too fast for your liking.

Unless buying **food** from a recommended restaurant or supplier, eating local scoff is generally a dodgy move. A colleague of mine working in Africa once enjoyed a meal with a local, only to later discover he'd eaten a dog. He didn't care, but your investigators may not be so practically minded. Experienced players might know how to prepare meat if they buy it themselves, but as I learned in Albania, a skinned donkey looks very like a skinned cow to anyone but a real expert.

That said, eating nothing but trail rations for weeks on end can be a real drag. This is why American military ration packs come with a tiny bottle of Tabasco sauce. Curry powder is just as good, and it helps fight off colds.

If investigators do eat local food, call for CON rolls [Fortitude save] to resist food poisoning or infestation by intestinal parasites. It's safe to assume they're there. Trust me. Which means another dose of the shits.

All investigators like shiny stuff like laptops and cameras and perimeter lights and satellite communications. But all these toys need power. While a lot of field equipment comes with adapters to run off a vehicle battery, this can be an unnecessary strain on a valuable power supply.

Generators come in all sizes. Good generators are usually easy to find in the developing world, but bear in mind they also need fuel to run. It is even possible to find hand generators which work by muscle power, giving investigators just enough juice to make one last sat-phone call before they get dropped in the cooking pot.

General equipment like rope, jerry-cans, flashlights, and so on are quite difficult to find. Those that are available will either be in very poor condition or will be very expensive, having been flown in from Europe or elsewhere.

In the Bush

"Lions, and tigers, and bears! Oh, my!"
—The Wizard of Oz

Hidden Mythos temples are not usually found in big cities. Normally, investigators will have to take the plunge and head out into the bush. All kinds of trouble will be waiting for them.

Generally speaking, any **wildlife** in the bush is more afraid of you than you are of it—but there are exceptions. There are several ways of frightening wildlife away rather than killing it. Flares are good, as the noise and light surprise and disorient animals. Flashbang grenades are the next resort if you have them, and firing blanks at wildlife tends to drive it away.

Beware of just weighing in and hosing big game with live rounds. A big animal like an elephant or rhino can take a lot of bullets before dying, and modern assault rifle are not designed to penetrate their thick hides and heavy bones (see Beasts & Monsters, p.178 BRP 5.5 edition). And the pain is just as likely to enrage the animal and cause it to attack as to drive it away. The Taliban conducted some charming experiments like along this line in the zoo in Kabul, chaining an elephant to a wall and quite literally shooting it to pieces. They eventually used an artillery piece to put it out of its misery.

Crocodiles in Central America will want to get away from you, but African and Australian crocs are exactly the opposite. Capable of huge bursts of speed on land, they are responsible for the deaths of several tourists each year. Probably the odd investigator, too.

Big cats seek to avoid humans unless cornered or very hungry. **Lions** will certainly take down and kill a lone person travelling at night on foot, but they are easily frightened off by gunfire or other loud noises. A large fire kept burning at night is usually enough to keep them at bay, though they are attracted by the smell of food and human waste, which should be buried.

Investigators taking to the rivers of Africa would do well to keep a sharp eye out for **hippos**. They are extremely territorial, and they find the vibration from outboard motors painfully irritating. They often attack boats, and are responsible for more deaths than any other big game animal. On the land they will normally ignore humans. Just don't get between them and the water.

Snakes and other lizards vary wildly in their behaviour. In general, snakes will only attack if surprised, but there are notable exceptions. The **Fer de Lance** of Central America is an extremely violent and territorial creature. It will attack multiple times and has been known to chase humans from its territory. It even strikes at vehicles as they pass by on tracks.

Peccary are small pigs that travel in packs and will turn on a human if they feel threatened. They slash the legs and groin with their tusks to bring the victim down, and then deliver a horrifying coup de grace.

Elephants are gentle giants with great memories and life-long circus careers, right? Wrong. Bull elephants are among the most territorial of African animals, and will attack people and vehicles if they feel like it. Like most wildlife, they are most dangerous during the mating season, when their dander is up. They really don't like vehicles, as they tend to believe they might be some kind of rival. Being in a Land Rover when it gets slammed by five and a half tonnes of pissed-off elephant with a hard-on ought to be worth a SAN roll or two. . . .

Unlike most wildlife, elephants tend to remain unfazed by flares and blank rounds. Hey, if you were the biggest land animal in the world, you wouldn't really give a shit about a piddly little flare, either. A guy I knew once had a stand-off with a bull elephant for 40 minutes one night, firing flares at it, throwing flashbangs, and firing blank rounds. It just stared at him until it thumped his Land Rover again, got bored, and wandered off. And they say the lion is the king of the jungle. . . .

In my book, **baboons** should be shot on sight, the little fuckers. Make no mistake, investigators camping near a pack's territory are in for a rough night. Baboons are absolutely fearless. They throw stones, brazenly break into vehicles, steal equipment of all kinds, eat rations, and vigorously masturbate at every opportunity. Just like the kids of Moss Side. While they spend their lives bickering and screaming at each other, in combat they act as one. The preferred tactic is to grab a leg and snap it with their immensely powerful jaws, so the pack can tear the fallen victim to pieces. They use this tactic to kill leopards, and have been known to attack human villages in the wild.

In general, if you get charged by wildlife, get out of

Water

Without water, your investigators will be dead within days. And while there may well be water supplies in the wild, unless you know for sure they are safe, using them is a gamble.

There are many water purification systems on the market, ranging from water purification tablets to filters which can allegedly make even urine drinkable. Yummy!

Carrying one or even more of these systems is essential. But by far the best option is to supply the party with bottled water. If you're an affluent foreigner, it's possible to get safe, bottled water in most parts of the world.

But water is bulky. And in typical bush conditions, the average person will go through six to eight litres of water a day depending on activity.

Investigators have to reach a compromise between what they can take with them and what they will have to find in the wild.

Baboons should be shot on sight...

More tea vicar?

the way with a minimum of panic and get upwind of them quickly. And for God's sake, stop screaming. It isn't terribly British.

Insects and spiders pose more of a problem to the average party. Apart from the danger posed by mosquitoes, there are lots of other wee beasties who can make life irritating, itchy, and just plain nasty. Lots of them carry the sort of parasites described in the diseases section above.

The infamous **Camel Spider** is widely feared thanks to a couple of impressive myths about its abilities. The usual story is that its venom contains an anaesthetic which allows it to eat huge portions of a victim undetected—half your face, for example. This, while a myth, is clearly something worth using in *Call of Cthulhu*. (Actually, they're not even spiders. They're solifugids, a cross between a spider and a scorpion. They aren't even venomous.)

While **tarantulas** have a fearsome reputation, too, in reality they're pretty harmless. Scary looking, though.

Scorpions can be a different story. While regarded as desert animals, in fact they can be found in many environments, including the Himalayas! Only 20 species worldwide have venom powerful enough to pose a real danger to humans. Most stings result in flu-like symptoms for a few days.

Going off the beaten track tends to bring a party face-to-face with some nasty surprises in the environment as well. Every hot country I know has its own version of the 'bastard bush'. This can be any kind of viciously barbed plant. Normally, you only realise the thorns are there when you grab hold of a branch and slice your hand open. At which point you normally say: 'Bastard!' See how that works?

Many trees' sap can cause all kinds of problems if it gets in a person's eyes. Temporary blindness is assured, and medical treatment will be necessary to prevent a more serious reaction. After an exchange of gunfire in the average jungle environment, this stuff will be everywhere. An Idea roll [INT roll: DC10] should save an investigator from getting it into his eyes from his hands or face.

Mapping in some areas is slightly ropy, to say the least. The Royal Engineers may have mapped the world, but there are a few places they haven't visited in a while.

Getting good maps is essential, and isn't always as easy as poking around on the Internet. And some maps may not be correctly aligned to a GPS grid, forcing investigators to resort to more traditional methods of navigation. GPS is all well and good, but never leave your compass at home.

Finally, sometimes Mother Nature just feels like kicking you in the balls. Rainy seasons are prime time for disasters, ranging from tropical storms to mudslides and flash floods down dried-up river beds. Earthquakes are also reasonably common in a lot of the Third World; the attitude is to keep everything as flimsy as possible so that it's quicker to put up again. Either of these disasters can really put a

Selected Animal Stats

Baboons

Characteristics	Average
STR 2D6	7
CON 3D6	10-11
SIZ 2D3	4
INT 6	6
POW 3D6	10-11
DEX 3D6+6	16-17
Move 4	HP 7-8

Av. Damage Bonus: -1D6
Weapons: Bite 40% 1D8
Armour: 1 point of fur
Skills: Spot Hidden 40%, Climb 75%, Dodge 25%
Habitat: Open land, wooded areas, Africa and Arabian Peninsula.
[Use Ape stats, pages 199-200 in d20 Call of Cthulhu rulebook.]

Crocodiles
See p.180 BRP rules 5.5 edition.
[See page 199-200 in d20 Call of Cthulhu rulebook.]

Elephants
See p.180 BRP rules 5.5 edition.
[See page 199 & 201 in d20 Call of Cthulhu rulebook.]

Fer-de-Lance

Characteristics	Average
STR 2D6	7
CON 4D6	14
SIZ 1D6	3-4
INT 5	5
POW 3D6	10-11
DEX 5D6	17-18
Move 6	HP 8-9

Av. Damage Bonus: -1D6
Weapons: Bite 40% 1D6+1D3 + POT 10 venom
Armour: None
Skills: Bask in sun 75%, Dodge 50%, Hide 60%, Sense Body Heat 80%, Sneak 80%
Habitat: South and Central America, various islands of the Caribbean, often near sugar plantations.
[Use Snake stats, pages 200-201 in d20 Call of Cthulhu rulebook.]

Hippos

Characteristics	Average
STR 5D6+18	35-36
CON 3D6+8	14-15
SIZ 5D6+24	41-42
INT 5	5
POW 3D6	10-11
DEX 3D6	10-11
Move 8	HP 29

Av. Damage Bonus: +4D6
Weapons: Bite 40% 1D10
Armour: 6 points of thick skin
Skills: Smell 60%, Swim 80%
Habitat: African rivers.
[See 'Hippo' page 232 in Nyambe: African Adventure]

Lions
See p.182 BRP rules 5.5 edition.
[See pages 200-201 in d20 Call of Cthulhu rulebook.]

Peccary
Use stats for Bush Pigs, p.179 BRP rules 5.5 edition.
[Use Boar stats, pages 200-201 in d20 Call of Cthulhu rulebook.]

Scorpions

Characteristics	Average
STR 1D2	1-2
CON 2D6	7
SIZ 1	1
INT 2	2
POW 3D6	10-11
DEX 4D6	14
Move 10	HP 4

Av. Damage Bonus: -1D6
Weapons: Sting 50% 1D4 + POT 9 venom
Claws 50% 1D3
Armour: None
Skills: Bask in Sun 75%, Dodge 50%, Hide 60%, Sense Body Heat 80%, Sneak 80%
Habitat: Warm and dry temperate and tropical regions.
[See 'Monstrous Scorpion, Tiny' d20 SRD Monsters (Animals).]

Tarantulas

Characteristics	Average
STR 1D2	1
CON 2D6	7
SIZ 1	1
INT 2	2
POW 3D6	10-11
DEX 5D6	17-18
Move 10	HP 4

Av. Damage Bonus: -1D6
Weapons: Bite 50% 1D3 + POT 5 venom
Armour: None
Skills: Climb 80%, Jump 75%, Sneak 90%, Weave 60%
Habitat: South America Central America, south-western United States, Africa, south-eastern Asia, and Australia.
[See 'Monstrous Spider, Tiny' d20 SRD Monsters (Animals).]

party on the spot as their 4x4s disappear up to their roofs in thick mud or go down a bloody great hole. And, of course, they will no doubt see a far more sinister reason for such bad luck.

Dealing With the Locals

"All right . . . stop right there, and I'll bring back the sun."
—Spies Like Us

Affluent Westerners poncing around the cities of the Third World are asking to get ripped off, rolled, and possibly killed. While tourists generally know to stick to safe areas, investigators rarely have such luxury. A cult operating out of a penthouse in the Marriott hotel is possible, I suppose, but unlikely.

Experienced investigators will adopt a 'grey man' approach, blending in as well as they can. But remember, despite what the CIA and DEA might think, a white face is still a white face, and just dressing like a local doesn't mean you're going to pass for one.

It pays to have **local muscle** attached to the group to put out the message that the investigators are not to be messed with. After some thefts from a warehouse in Albania, for example, some people I worked with paid two local hoods to stand outside all night with AKs and every light in the building blazing. No-one came calling after that. The point was made.

If investigators are out on the streets, hit them with all kind of baffling **scams**. People offering to sell shares in diamond mines. A beggar with one leg, stripped to the waist but with an artificial limb and new clothes in the boot of his nearby Mercedes. Women bandaging children to pretend they have injuries. It's all out there.

Wherever they go, investigators will also tend to pick up crowds of kids who cheekily beg for whatever they can get. If hard-hearted players ignore them, the next step is normally to turn on the waterworks. Continuing with the stony-faced approach normally works. Investigators who crack are lost.

Handing over money, pens, sweets, or food will normally result in a lot of other children suddenly arriving as well. This can actually work to your advantage if, say, you think a local may be planning to shoot at you. It's rare for them to risk shooting and hitting kids, although cultists might not be so fussy. Of course, if a monster were to attack all the investigators would have to do is throw it three or four kids and it might just fly away. But anyway. . .

Corruption is a way of life in the developing world. Westerners are special targets, starting at their point of entry, whether port or airport.

Whether they need documentation, their baggage, or just to get through Customs with a minimum of hassle, officials will try for a back-hander. Generally speaking, the more chaotic the country, the better an idea it is to make some kind of payment.

Finding out the going rate beforehand is crucial. Giving too little may be seen as

"ensure the map grid is correctly aligned with the GPS system"

Trouble Ahead

Use the table below when you feel it's about time Something Went Badly Wrong. Roll percentile dice and then roll them again. The first roll tells what went wrong; the higher the second roll, the more serious the problem.

D100 result	What Went Wrong/Description
01-10	**Vehicle trouble** A mechanical gremlin strikes. This can be anything from a flat tyre to a broken shock absorber, depending on the circumstances.
11-25	**Illness** Roll or have the party make CON rolls and penalise the highest roller. They come down with a general fever and diarrhoea for 1D3 days.
26-30	**Animal encounter** A PC has an unexpected close encounter with the local wildlife, ranging from a scorpion in his boot to a hungry lion as he answers a call of nature.
31-35	**Equipment failure** A key piece of equipment fails. The failure may not be immediately apparent, such as a flashlight which doesn't work when needed. Roll to determine what has gone down.
36-40	**Difficulty with communications** Sunspot activity, satellite overload, or an imminent alien invasion screw up comms for 1D3 hours.
41-55	**Logistical delay** A requested spare, follow-on baggage, the next flight out of country, or something else the party needs from elsewhere is delayed for 1D100 hours.
56-60	**Fuel crisis** A fuel shortage strikes. The next delivery is expected in 1D6 days and the cost will be much higher than normal. This may lead to civil unrest and other incidents.
61-70	**Theft of equipment** Something has been lifted from the party's inventory. It may well be some time before it's missed. Roll to see what. The item(s) may be recoverable: local fixers should know where stolen goods are offered for sale.
71-80	**Corrupt official** If out on the road, this may be a bored cop or soldier on a checkpoint. Elsewhere, it can be a customs official or even local embassy rep who wants a backhander.
81-85	**Disease outbreak** Something wicked this way comes. The party hears rumours of a particularly bad disease sweeping the country. This may well panic the general population.
86-95	**Civil strife** Whether it's elections, a coup attempt, famine, or just general ill ease, the mood on the street becomes tense very swiftly. Refugees may try and leave the country, and the renewed tension will close shops and businesses. Locals will generally be much more cautious and fearful.
96-00	**Medication side effects** One of the players comes down with some kind of serious side-effect. This might be fever, diarrhoea, hallucinations, chills, vomiting, or extreme irritation and a dangerously short temper. Or all of the above!

On the Road

Use the following table to spring unpleasant surprises on investigators behind the wheel.

D100 result	Unpleasant surprise/Description
01-15	**Road traffic accident up ahead** Bushes placed on the road indicate an accident ahead. Roll percentile dice—the higher the roll, the more serious the collision, ranging from a fender bender to a bus plunged off a bridge.
16-30	**Checkpoint** A bored policeman with an AK or a bunch of rebels/government soldiers waves the party down. Depending on how they react, they might get waved through with big smiles all round, or get themselves kidnapped, robbed, raped, and shot. And not necessarily in that order.
31-40	**Speed bumps** Suddenly, in the middle of a metalled road, there are some home-made speed bumps. A failed Drive Auto roll [Drive check: DC15] results in 1D2 HP to a random investigator as they are thrown around violently.
41-55	**Slow-moving vehicle** A truck laden with locals putters along at walking pace, belching oily black smoke. Occasionally a local clambers on or drops off as it passes. A successful Drive Auto [Drive check: DC15] roll is needed to get past safely.
56-65	**Livestock in road** A cow, camel, or a bunch of sheep have decided to camp out in the road while their herder looks on and smokes a stolen Marlboro. A Drive Auto [Drive check: DC15] roll averts disaster. Note that in Hindu areas, cows can do exactly whatever they want. Players killing one can expect big trouble, and lots of bribery to escape.
66-75	**Landslide** The road has either fallen away or been blocked by a fall from higher up. On a successful Luck check [Will save] the players can squeeze past somehow; a tense Drive Auto [Drive: DC20] roll should be made to avoid a plunge off the side of the track.
76-85	**Debris in road** A burned-out truck, armoured personnel carrier, bundle of bricks, or just a pile of junk has been dumped in the middle of the road, probably on a blind bend. A Drive Auto roll [Drive check: DC15] is needed to avoid a collision.
86-95	**Road traffic accident** The players come across the aftermath of an accident— gangs of opposing locals shout and scream at each other while police ineffectually try and mediate. Tempers flare and eventually someone is likely to start firing in the air. Or at each other. For an extra tense moment, have the accident occur right in the front of the players, who must make Spot Hidden rolls to spot the danger and a Drive Auto roll [Drive check: DC15] to avoid it.
96-00	**Non-governmental organisation driver** A local employed by the U.N., Red Cross, or a similar group tears past the players at break-neck speed. A Drive Auto roll [Drive check: DC15] is needed to avoid a mishap as he plunges past on a blind bend.

insulting, and the investigators may come across as particularly gullible if they pay too much. They also run the risk of pushing up the price for everyone after them in the queue—never a popular move.

Clever investigators will find a local fixer and get him to do all the hard graft—they just give him the cash and make sure he knows what will happen if he screws them over.

Another shadowy side of life in such countries is **prostitution**. *'Night-fighters'* will be in most bars frequented by Westerners, and in many less salubrious areas.

Prostitutes' attitudes varies widely from country to country. Some are quite stand-offish, others extremely pushy and aggressive. They sometimes operate in packs, surrounding a group of men and then gradually separating them from each other.

Prostitutes are often petty thieves, of course. Whether it's swiping your drink from the bar while you're looking the other way or swiping your wallet while your trousers are down, they will rarely miss an opportunity.

Particularly stupid or drunk investigators may be tempted to indulge, though the risks are high. The prevalence of HIV in the developing world means such a dalliance could well be fatal.

Investigators of a nervous disposition (which includes most people in my scenarios) had better prepare themselves for the Third World phenomena of **"celebratory fire"**. It's also very common in the Balkans, and indeed any shit-hole where AK-47s are cheaper than fireworks. The principle is simple. If you're happy about something, shoot into the air while grinning stupidly and showing total disregard for weapon safety. Sadly, most of the loons involved in these types of high-velocity shenanigans have yet to learn that "what goes up, must come down". Many people die each year, killed by falling rounds.

And it's not just AKs. Got something belt-fed? Even better. And why not show you're ***really*** happy by letting off an RPG or three? Tracers are especially sought after, as they look pretty at night. I'm not kidding. . . Celebratory fire is extremely common during the Eid festival to mark the end of Ramadan, for example. But it's also common at births, weddings and funerals—especially for those who were killed by celebratory fire at a wedding the day before.

So when investigators are trundling through somewhere in a bit of a daze, hit them with a local wedding. The resulting gunfire and explosions will sound like a battalion-sized attack. That ought to shake them up. And as they take cover, they're gonna feel pretty dumb when the wedding rolls around the corner. . . Aheh.

Or even better, have them make Luck rolls [Will saving throws: DC10]. If anyone fails, give them another chance. If they fail that, they get hit in a random body part by a falling round. If they make the second Luck roll, it merely lands next to them. Or comes through the roof of their vehicle and lodges in the dashboard. Or goes through the side of their tent and goes through their laundry bag. That sort of shit happens all the time. . .

A little bribe can go a long way...

A last thing to bear in mind is the likelihood of **civil unrest**. White faces will generally be the first target for those involved in civil insurrection or terrorism. Players who do not keep a weather eye on the situation in their host country may well find themselves on a sticky wicket if a civil war suddenly blows up.

Needless to say, the chaos and bloodshed of a coup can provide an excellent back-drop for a fast-paced adventure.

Getting Into Trouble

"My son, we're pilgrims in an unholy land."

—Indiana Jones and the Last Crusade

When the wheels come off and everything goes Pete Tong (for our U.S. readers: pear shaped; wrong), there are several sources of help for the players.

The first and most obvious is their local **embassy** or **High Commission**. Smart players intending to travel up-country will have already checked into the embassy to state their intentions and ask for the latest intelligence and advice. So when they're making that last desperate sat-phone call as the rebels or cultists close in, they might actually be taken seriously.

If investigators are arrested or injured, embassy staff will try and take on the case and assist. They can arrange legal counsel, medical care at local hospitals, and flights out of the country. All this depends on the size of embassy in the country, the general situation, and how badly the players have screwed up. Help from an embassy in a country in the grip of a civil war is going to be virtually nil.

If Her Majesty's Government decides to pull British nationals out, the message will be spread on the Internet and by a warden system throughout the expatriate community. Reception centres are set up at pre-arranged locations, and if the situation is especially bad the military may deploy to assist with the evacuation.

A less obvious source of help may be the **expatriate community** in the country. Players may find Brits, Aussies, or Americans who can provide local knowledge, advice, and a safe house if necessary.

Many western companies have interests in the Third World, which are normally aimed at raping the country in question of all its valuable natural resources. The players will find engineers, advisors, and various other

professionals in most places they go to—no matter how remote.

Likewise, if the country has suffered recent trouble, foreign journalists may be there in force. While not necessarily the sort of people players might want to deal with, given the nature of their business, journos can be a friendly face in a jam.

Non-governmental organisations operate throughout the Third World, and many employ westerners as well as locals. These may be doctors or other medical specialists, logisticians bringing in humanitarian aid, or simply volunteers out to make the world a better place, the saps. Needless to say, players with suitable communication skills may be able to get all kinds of assistance here, from medical treatment to a few free sat-phone calls. And you usually get the only fit chicks for miles around working for NGOs, as well. . . .

Finally, unstable regions tend to attract mercenaries of various nationalities. Investigators with military background may encounter people they know from their previous careers. Whether or not they can help will depend on the scenario.

They Think It's All Over—A Sting in the Tail

"I'm not going to have anything good to say about this place when I get back!"

—Indiana Jones and the Temple of Doom

A stay in the developing world can provide all kinds of excitement—and it doesn't necessarily end when you get back home.

The bush provides Keepers with all kinds of nasty tricks to spring on players at a later date. The first is malaria. Players will have to continue their medication for about a month after they leave a malarial area, but here's the punch line: It can take up to two years for some strains of malaria to show itself.

And mosquitoes aren't the only thing likely to be biting you. A stay in the jungle might result in an encounter with a bot fly. These insects lay their eggs just underneath the surface of the skin, where they incubate and feed on the host's flesh. The first the host usually knows is when they discover a painful lump which appears to be an infected bite. If untreated, the lump will begin to move occasionally. Eventually, the larvae inside will poke its head out now and again for a look around, before eventually hatching and flying off. Of course, *Call of Cthulhu* players may have entirely the wrong idea about what's growing inside them.

Then there are all the new friends they made on their brief stay abroad. Cultists hell-bent on revenge, for example. Jealous professional rivals after the artefacts they've recovered: artefacts that have been expensively and dangerously smuggled out of the Third World, artefacts with ancient curses on 'em, probably. Or that turn out to be fake, after all. Or that disappear off into a big government warehouse somewhere, never to be seen again.

Unfortunately for most investigators, it's unlikely they can get any of that covered on their travel insurance.

Further Reading

Much of the best stuff can be found on the Web.

The *Foreign Office* website (**www.fco.gov.uk**) contains extremely useful travel advice covering everything from vaccinations to emergency telephone numbers if you get arrested or seriously injured. Well worth a browse.

The *American Centers for Disease Control and Prevention* have a good site aimed at travellers (**www.cdc.gov/travel**). Well worth a good root around if your group is heading south of the border.

The Central Intelligence Agency maintains the extremely useful *World Factbook* at **www.cia.gov/cia/publications/factbook.** It contains a huge quantity of maps and general information about every country in the world. Great for researching a target country before saturating it with cruise missiles and cluster bombs.

There are lots of Lonely Planet-style tips at *1,000 Travel Tips* (**www.1000traveltips.org**) written by independent travellers passing on their experiences.

The *Lonely Planet* guides themselves have an online presence at **www.lonelyplanet.com**. Personally I don't rate 'em much, but if you want to shell out cash they're probably worth a go.

British players can equip themselves with a lot of good kit at *Adventure Shop* (**www.adventureshop.co.uk**). All the GPS, altimeters, and snazzy digital watches you could possibly need. No silver bullets for those were-jaguars, though.

And I don't care what anybody says. There is nothing I'd rather be driving off-road than a *Land Rover* (**www.landrover.com**).

Lastly, but most importantly, Robert Young Pelton's *Come Back Alive* web site is here: **www.comebackalive.com.** I didn't know of its existence, or his book The World's Most Dangerous Places, before I wrote this article. Otherwise, I wouldn't have bothered. Everything you could need is here. Buy it right now.

Additional Material

Adam Crossingham and Graeme Price.

Graft, Right and Wrong

Every problem in the Third World can be solved with bribery—if you do it right. Here's a lesson on how to do it, courtesy of World Citizen and Black Seal aficionado Mr Marino Fresch.

First, the wrong way. . . .

Smiling Official: 'Anything to declare?'
Smug PC: 'Nope.'
Smiling Official: 'OK, my friend. Please to open bags and wait. I will get supervisor and return in an hour, no more, for sure. Then we check paperwork and you can pay "entry permit". For sure.'

And the right way. . . .

Smiling Official: 'Anything to declare?'
Smart PC: 'Why, yes. I have several cartons of Marlboro in my case. In fact, I believe I may have one extra. Perhaps I can offer it to you as a small gift for you and your colleagues to enjoy?'
Smiling Official: 'For me? But thank you, sir, this is too kind. Have an enjoyable stay in our country.'

A PISCES Assignment into the Heart of the Congo

Time passed. Deep in the forest the ground spurted upward like a grapefruit hit by a rifle bullet. Something thicker than a tree hole surged, caught at a nearby human, and flung the body, no longer distinguishable as to sex or race, a quarter mile through the canopy of trees. The earth subsided then, but in places the surface continued to bubble as if made of heated tar.—David Drake, 'Than Curse the Darkness'

In the heart of Africa, deep within the jungle hell that is the untouched Congo Basin, evil stirs. Eons ago several seeds fell into Africa and then lay dormant. These were the seeds of Ahtu, an aspect of the Messenger of the Outer Gods Nyarlathotep, and their coming spelt doom for the Earth. Thousands of years ago one of the seeds stirred and then hatched, releasing a mere tendril of Ahtu. Gaining its freedom, it was able to destroy as it pleased. Later, prophecies were written in the Necronomicon that when all the fallen seeds of Ahtu hatch, the god will be free to consume the world; and consume it would, for Ahtu is an aspect of the Crawling Chaos. Now, after millennia of patient slumber, Ahtu's long wait is almost over…

'The Spiralling' is designed for 3-6 experienced investigators who are agents of the United Kingdom's paranormal investigations department, PISCES. It can also be easily transferred to a Delta Green setting by substituting a few place names and organisational acronyms. Due to the nature of the narrative, investigators with military backgrounds—especially those with special operations experience or those previously employed as field agents by the SIS—are the most appropriate occupations.

Keeper Background

Central Africa is dominated by cults associated with Nyarlathotep. In the Rift Valley they call themselves the Bloody Tongue, worshipping their god in its guises of the Howler in Darkness or the Black Wind. In the Congo Basin they are the Cult of the Spiralling Worm, whose members are cannibals, necromancers and mutilators worshiping the same deity in the form of Ahtu or the Spiralling Worm. In the past these two cults have occasionally joined together in their rites and ritual killings, but for the most part they operated independently.

Up until the end of the 1930s both cults were powerful; they ruled through fear and brought swift retribution against any who spoke or acted against them. But World War Two brought its own brand of terror as Africans fighting for the Allies in Europe learnt about western culture, and so turned away from the old superstitions. Back home many more Africans migrated from their traditional village communities into the cities similarly denying the beliefs of their parents. European colonialism was also on the decline; one by one the African people turned against their former masters and came to rule their own countries. Gaining confidence in their own ability to govern, they also gained the confidence to turn their back on those evil cults they once feared.

In the aftermath of the Second World War the Bloody Tongue and Spiralling Worm realised they needed to reassert their power or become irrelevant. The cults recognised the potential of ruling their own nations and set about forming their own political parties and paramilitary groups.

The first cult-backed uprising occurred in 1953 during the Mau Mau rebellion in Kenya. The Cult of the Bloody Tongue, assisted by their Spiralling Worm brothers, attempted to summon forth Ahtu—to both terrorise the country's British rulers and to demonstrate to the Kenyan people that the old cults still possessed real power. Fortunately, British PISCES agents put a stop to this summoning, although afterwards it was mainly innocent Kikuyu tribesmen who took the blame, the real cultists having melted into the background.

Even though the summoning was unsuccessful, this event lead to the Bloody Tongue and Spiralling Worm Cults forming a single organisation. They planned to act again, this time to summon Ahtu in the jungles of Central Africa. In 1964, under the guise of Simba and Mule'le' rebels, the cults attempted to call forth their god, and would have succeeded but for the intervention of American Delta Green operatives (tipped off by PISCES). A series of pitched battles decimated both sides, and by the end of the conflict, the cults of the Bloody Tongue and the Spiralling Worm were almost destroyed. Almost…

During the 1960s the Congo region descended into chaos as the independence movement degenerated into a bloody civil war. Eventually, in 1965, CIA backed military strongman General Joseph-Desiré Mobutu staged a successful coup, taking control of the Congo and declaring himself President Mobutu Sese Seko. Mobutu's brutal dictatorship would last more than 30 years and anyone opposing him was quickly eliminated. Whilst inherently corrupt, Mobutu's strong man approach did have the positive effect of suppressing the Cults of the Bloody Tongue and the Spiralling Worm, whose few surviving members could do little except lie low throughout Mobutu's rule.

Then in May 1997, rebels in the east of the country led by Laurent Desire ousted Mobutu following a seven month guerrilla campaign. The country was renamed the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) and Kabila promised stability and reforms, none of which emerged. August 1998 saw concerned neighbours Uganda and Rwanda back rebel forces in the eastern Congo which led to a military campaign to oust Kabila. The rebels gained control of a large portion of the country until troops from Angola, Namibia and Zimbabwe came to Kabila's aid and a standoff developed. It was now that the Bloody Tongue and Spiralling Worm decided the time was right for their

long awaited resurgence.

The cults formed their own paramilitary organisation based in the heart of the Congo, calling themselves the Ulamali Revolutionary Party (URP)—Ulamali being the Swahili word for "black magic". Their leader was the Kabila forces trained soldier and Spiralling Worm cultist Captain Jonathon Madzu. Madzu was known for his bloodthirsty savagery and the hideous tribal mask he wore at all times. Under his command, the URP practiced cannibalism, necromancy and the worship of Ahtu.

In 1998 PISCES became aware of the resurgence of the Ahtu cult, and dispatched a small contingent of Special Air Services (SAS) troops to investigate under the command of PISCES agent Major Daniel Ackermann. Their orders were to identify the cult leaders and then call in a pre-emptive missile strike to eliminate them. The mission—codenamed MORNING LIGHT—was only a partial success. Ackermann and his troops located Madzu and the URP, but were forced to engage them in a bloody jungle battle. Madzu was captured, despite his apparent imperviousness to harm, only to later die in the team's custody, his face having been eaten to the bone. At the same time, Ackermann himself went missing. Of Madzu's infamous mask, there was no sign.

Two days later, however, Ackermann contacted PISCES command and called in the missile strike; his target supposedly a pitched battle between the surviving SAS troops and remaining URP forces. PISCES complied, closing the file on the URP, believing them destroyed along with Ackermann. This however, was only the beginning.

The mask on Madzu's face was a gift from Nyarlathotep, a living entity that conferred imperviousness to harm on whoever wore it. The mask extracted a terrible price for its gifts, however; the wearer being required to eat raw human flesh every day to stop the mask from consuming its host's face instead. The latest victim tricked into this diabolical bargain was Ackermann.

Betrayed and abandoned, yet seemingly chosen by Ahtu, Ackermann was soon accepted by the URP as their new leader. A few of his surviving men—driven insane during their time as URP prisoners—also willingly joined the self-mutilating cultist army, feeling similarly betrayed by their masters. Ackermann and his troops trained the URP, transforming them from thugs and bandits into the semblance of a professional, well-equipped and dangerous armed force.

Under Ackermann's leadership the URP continued to terrorise Congolese villages, spreading the word that Ahtu was returning. Once again they planned to wrest control of the Democratic Republic of the Congo by summoning forth Ahtu, displaying their real power. Having located one of Ahtu's seeds, they know they only have to shatter it to release their god. And whilst no weapon possessed by the URP is capable of damaging the seed, Ackermann has a few ideas about how they might obtain one.

Ackermann has developed a plan to free the seedling while simultaneously extracting revenge upon Britain and PISCES. Having informed PISCES command that he is still alive, and that the URP is planning to bring back Ahtu again, Ackermann expects PISCES to send a team of field operatives to either retrieve or eliminate him. And indeed, PISCES have reacted exactly how he expected them to.

Introduction

The session commences when the investigators are called to Stirling Lines, the SAS's barracks in Credenhall, Herefordshire. Their Case Officer is Alice Tumbas, a PISCES Intelligence Analyst originally from Kenya, educated at Nairobi and Brichester Universities.

Ahtu awakened...

Arriving at Stirling Lines, the investigators' IDs are checked carefully by the armed guards at the security checkpoint. They are subsequently admitted and escorted under guard to a non-descript briefing room where they are provided with secure files marked 'Top Secret' by Intelligence Corps personnel which they are instructed to read (see Handouts). Shortly afterwards they will be met by Alice Tumbas.

Tumbas starts the briefing stating that they have recently received HUMINT from a reliable source that SAS Officer Major Daniel Ackermann—mentioned in the report—is alive and well, or was one week ago. Not only that, but he passed a message onto PISCES London requesting that a team be sent into the Congo to retrieve him. Ackermann claims to have vital intelligence regarding the URP, which he believes to be operational and planning to summon the deity Ahtu again. PISCES wants to ensure that the summoning does not come to fruition under any circumstances, and have agreed to retrieve Ackermann: this is the investigators' role.

PISCES currently has no contact with Ackermann. They only became aware of his new status because one of his men, Sergeant Bill Fargo, was picked up in a refugee camp in Uganda on the DRC border. Fargo, like Ackermann, was until recently a prisoner of the URP. The two men escaped, but whilst Fargo made it to Uganda, Ackermann had been forced to remain, suffering from illness and fatigue. Fargo is being treated at the Royal Centre for Defence Medicine at Selly Oak Hospital, Birmingham, having been flown in from Uganda two days ago. The investigators are advised to interview him before they leave, but are warned that he's suffered terribly at the hands of URP torturers.

Mission Objective

The investigator's mission is relatively straightforward. First they fly to a United Nations (UN) managed refugee camp in Uganda under the guise of UN aid workers where Alice Tumbas will establish a command centre. From there they will be transported by helicopter into the DRC by a South African mercenary outfit trading under the name Executive Negotiations, registered in Durban. Once in the Congo rainforest the investigators will make contact with Captain Yves Kazumu who leads a small unit called the Kasai Liberation Front (KLF). This outfit is funded through third parties by the British Secret Intelligence Service (SIS)—PISCES has called in a few favours from SIS to utilise this group. The KLF have been ordered to take the investigators to Ackermann, who will in turn lead investigators to the URP base that he claims to have discovered.

The investigators' first objective is to verify that Ackermann is who he claims to be.

Handouts

The following handouts are summaries of much larger HUMINT reports issued to the investigators prior to the briefing. The three files written in English together take 6 hour to study/1hour to skim, provide +1% Cthulhu Mythos [provides no ranks in Cthulhu Mythos] and cost 1/1D2 Sanity Points.

Case File #1

Operation PARTY OVER
SUBJECT: Case File 33418/779 Mau Mau Insurgence, Kenya, 1953
DEPARTMENT: C3
STATUS: Closed
CLASSIFICATION: TOP SECRET
SUMMARY: Armed Kikuyu tribesmen operating as rebels during the Mau Mau rebellion attempted to create a dimensional rip in order to terrorise British colonial authorities. Cult organised as a paramilitary outfit calling themselves the BLOODY TONGUE or the BLACK WIND. Dimensional rip was intended to free their deity referred to locally as AHTU. SAS forces under PISCES command entered into a three-day gun battle with the Kikuyu tribesmen who were affiliated with the BLOODY TONGUE/BLACK WIND guerrillas operating in the Aberdare ranges. The fighting resulted in high casualties on both sides. Reports from surviving PISCES/SAS operatives suggest that if this dimensional rip occurred, the effects would have been catastrophic. Estimates place the potential damage as equivalent to a 30MT nuclear bomb.

Case File #2

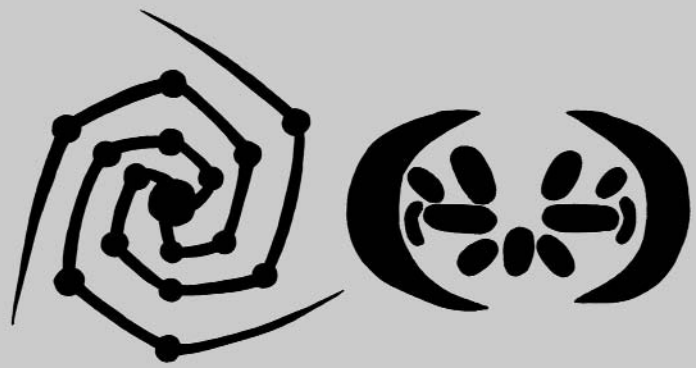
Operation KURTZ
SUBJECT: Case File 1456678ADS45 Simba-Mule'le' Insurgence, Belgian Congo, 1964
DEPARTMENT: Delta Green
STATUS: Closed
CLASSIFICATION: TOP SECRET
SUMMARY: Simba and Mule'le' soldiers turning away from Lenin-Marxist ideology reverted back to the worship of AL-HAZRAD Cycle deities, in this case their messenger god AHTU. Cult sometimes referred to as the BLOODY TONGUE or the SPIRALLING WORM attempted to create a portal/gateway to return AHTU to the earth. Delta Green led a successful operation against the BLOODY TONGUE/SPIRALLING WORM cult which succeeded in disbanding the group, eliminating their leaders and putting a permanent stop to their summoning of AHTU.

Case File #3

Operation MORNING LIGHT
SUBJECT: Case File 88897-889-0003 Ulamali Revolutionary Party, Democratic Republic of the Congo, 1998
DEPARTMENT: C3
STATUS: Closed
CLASSIFICATION: TOP SECRET
SUMMARY: Since the civil war in the Democratic Republic of Congo commenced in 1997, HUMINT reports suggested resurgence in the number of cult organisations aligning themselves with the various warring parties. Of particular interest is the ULAMALI REVOLUTIONARY PARTY (URP) (Ulamali is the Swahili word for Black Magic). Led by Kabila trained Tutsi soldier, Captain JONATHON MADZU, the URP is believed to have revived the AHTU worshipping cults of the BLOODY TONGUE and the SPIRALLING WORM. (See Case Files 33418/779 & 1456678ADS45).

In April 1998 a SAS team led by PISCES agent Major DANIEL ACKERMANN was inserted into Eastern DRC in an attempt to destroy the URP and assassinate MADZU. ACKERMANN'S troops conducted a series of raids which resulted in heavy casualties on both sides and the eventual death of MADZU. ACKERMANN and several of his men were captured by the URP, but ACKERMANN managed to call in an air strike on their position two days after his capture. ACKERMANN is believed to have sacrificed himself to eliminate the URP, and whilst the SAS team are still listed as Missing in Action, it is believed that the air strike eliminated all combatants on all sides.

CULT SYMBOLS
Central African Cults



Spiralling Worm Bloody Tongue

Handouts

Included with the reports are drawings of the symbols of both the **Spiralling Worm** and **Bloody Tongue** organisations (above) and a photograph of **Major Daniel Ackermann** in full military gear (right).

Once that is determined they are then to confirm the existence of the URP base and call in a FAE (Fuel Air Explosive) air strike to eliminate the Ahtu worshipping menace in the Congo. This strike will be undertaken by Executive Negotiations, under contract. The investigators will then be evacuated by helicopter, taking Ackermann with them if possible. Should the Major resist, he is to be 'retired'.

The codeword for the air strike is HOME DELIVERY, whilst the codeword for calling in the helicopter transport to get them out is PICNIC HAMPER. Each code will be accepted only if spoken over the registered satellite telephone and only if accompanied with Longitude and Latitude coordinates for both the FAE drop and agent retrieval pickup points. Investigators are expected to memorise all this; writing it down is not permissible.

Alice Tumbas will travel with the investigators to Uganda, but she will remain in the refugee camp as their point of contact and case officer.

Armoury and Outfitting

Each investigator will be provided with the following:

- Non-UK forces tropical camouflage fatigues
- Non-UK forces tropical boots
- Non-UK forces webbing, water bottle and backpack
- Poncho/half-shelter
- Water purification tablets and rations for 18 days
- Commercial short range radios (25km/16mile radius)
- Binoculars
- Detailed maps of central eastern Congo
- Camouflage netting
- Electric torches
- Machete (Base chance: 25%, 1D6+1+db damage, 15 HP) [*d20 Cthulhu* rules page 94]
- Glock 17 9x19mm semi-automatic pistol (for stats see BRP 5.5 edition rules, page 58) [*d20 Cthulhu* rules page 98] plus four spare magazines
- Commando Knife (for stats see BRP 5.5 edition rules, page 58) [*d20 Cthulhu* rules page 94]
- GPS tracker
- Investigators with military backgrounds can choose from the following packages of weapons:
  a) **M16A2** rifles and 10 magazines and one **FN Minimi** machine gun with 1,000 rounds
  (for stats see BRP 5.5 edition rules, page 59)
  [*d20 Cthulhu* rules page 99 / FN Minimi: Calibre: 5.56x45mm; Damage: 2d6; Crit: x3; Action: auto; Cap: 30 or 200; Loading: mag or belt; Range: 200; Rate: Autofire]
  b) **FN-FAL** or **G3** rifles and six magazines and one **FN-MAG** GPMG with 1,000 rounds
  (for stats see BRP 5.5 edition rules, page 59/FN-MAG: Base chance: 15%; Damage: 2D6+4; Range:110; Attacks: burst; Bullets: 100; HPs: 16; Mal: 98)
  [*d20 Cthulhu* rules page 99 / FN-MAG: Calibre: 7.62x51mm; Damage: 2d10; Crit: x3; Action: auto; Cap: 100; Loading: belt; Range: 200; Rate: Autofire]
  c) **AK-47/AKM** rifles and eight magazines and one **RPK** machine gun with 1,000 rounds
  (for stats see BRP 5.5 edition rules, page 59 / RPK: Base chance: 15%; Damage: 2D6+1; Range: 90; Attacks: 2 or burst; Bullets: 30 or 75; HPs: 12; Mal: 00)
  [*d20 Cthulhu* rules page 99 / RPK: Calibre: 7.62x39mm; Damage: 2d6; Crit: x3; Action: select; Cap: 30 or 75; Loading: mag; Range: 150; Rate: Autofire].
  If anyone requests one, a 12-bore automatic shotgun can also be

The Democratic Republic of the Congo

Area: 2.345,410 sq km
Population: 55.2 million
Ethnicity: Over 200 ethnic groups, mostly Bantu, whose four largest tribes are the Mongo, Luba, Kongo and Mangbetu-Azande, making up 45% of the population
Language: French (official), Lingala (trade language), Kingwana (Swahili), Kikongo and Tshiluba
Government: Dictatorship based in Kinshasa, President Joseph Kabila is both chief of state and head of government
Religion: Roman Catholic, Protestant, Kimbanguist, Muslim and indigenous beliefs
Imports: Foods, fuels, machinery, mining equipment, transportation equipment
Exports: Coffee, copper, cobalt, crude oil and diamonds
Currency: Congolese Franc (CDF), UK £1=510 CDF, US $1=300 CDF

The so-called Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) is the third largest country in Africa. The majority of the land is a vast tropical rainforest, hot and humid all year round. Heavy downpours occur almost every day and temperatures average around 25°C (77°F). To the east the land transforms into a mountain range where there are many active volcanoes, while the south is predominantly grasslands and savannah. Through the centre of the DRC runs Africa's second longest river, the Congo, but in terms of water output it is second only to the Amazon. Due to the rainforests, road transport is severely restricted to coastal and southern regions, available roads are often subject to landslides, flooding and erosion resulting in their impassability. The most common forms of transport are river steamers, aeroplanes and trains, all of which run on a sporadic basis and only link the more populated regions of the country.

The DRC is home to over 200 different tribal and ethnic groups distributed across the country. Major groups include the Kongo in the west and in the capital region of Kinshasa, the Mongo and Kuba in the central forest regions, the Luba in the south and the Mangbetu-Azande in the north. Such groups are also referred to as Bakongo, Bamongo, Bakuba and Baluba. Minority groups include pygmies, many of whom still live in indigenous communities mostly in the practically deserted northern jungles. Child infant mortality rate is high even for Africa, 1,000,000 people have AIDS, shantytowns are common, and 16 million people live in famine. Meanwhile the civil war that has plagued the country since 1997 has killed 3,000,000 people and created over 2,000,000 refugees. All these factors make the DRC one of the poorest countries in the world.

Soldiers are a common sight everywhere in the DRC. Often young men or boys, they don't hesitate to use their weapons at the slightest sign of trouble. Meanwhile law enforcement is ineffective as officers aren't paid enough money to care, even if presented with substantial bribes. Travel warnings issued by most the world's governments warn their citizens of civil war, crime, disease and Ebola. The DRC is not a nice place to visit; you don't go there unless you have to.

provided for the pointman/scout.

- Hand grenades (for stats see BRP 5.5 edition rules, page 59) [*d20 Cthulhu rules* page 113]
- Limited number of Claymore Mines (for stats see BRP 5.5 edition rules, page 59) [Blast Radius: 10ft.; Damage: 6d8].
- Coloured smoke grenades and marker panels for aerial identification.

Those who request it at are provided with a ruggedised laptop (a Panasonic Toughbook) designed to endure harsh treatment and environmental conditions.

One satellite telephone is issued to the entire group. The telephone is not encrypted, and the characters are assumed to be experienced enough to not talk about anything in plain speech. If they do, keepers should note what is said for possible ramifications in later scenarios if the characters survive—who knows who is listening? (See the Echelon article in issue 5 for further details).

Anyone whose vaccinations aren't up to date get jabs for Cholera, Hepatitis, Meningitis, Polio, Tetanus, Typhoid and Yellow Fever, an uncomfortable procedure which takes approximately one hour.

Research

Investigators may conduct some research before they depart. At Stirling Lines, their resources are limited to the Internet or any intelligence files they may have ready access to, such as PISCES case files accessible on the organisation's secure network. Each piece of information takes half an hour to find and a successful Library Use skill roll [Research check: DC15] to uncover.

- In the northeast of the Congo there is a legend of monster called Mokele-Mbembe that attacks hippos, overturns boats and kills people, although it does not eat them. Cryptozoologists have

attempted to establish the truth behind the legend, but so far no one has been able to prove the creature's existence. One report suggests that Ahtu and Mokele-Mbembe are one and the same creature.
Keeper Note: this is false. See the article 'Terra Occulta' in this issue for more information on Mokele-Mbembe.

- An academic Internet site written in French suggests that Ahtu translated in several Bantu languages means 'the spiralling snake' or 'the spiralling coil', and that it grows rapidly when it appears.
- An article on the civil war in the Belgian Congo in 1964 recounts a tale concerning the Simba (the Swahili word for lions) rebels who believed that they had magic that made them immune to bullets, and so were fearless in battle. **Keeper Note:** This article is only found if investigators are deliberately searching for information on the Simba and Mule'le' rebels.
- If investigators were successful in finding the previous piece of information, then a second successful Library Use roll [Research check: DC15] turns up that in 1964 there was a Belgian-American operation, codenamed DRAGON ROUGE (RED DRAGON) directed against the Simba rebels. The troops parachuted into Stanleyville (today known as Kisangani), killed the Simba rebels and freed scores of western hostages. As a result the Simba organisation was decimated, apparently not immune to bullets after all.
- A historical account from the 1930s reproduced on the Internet mentions a tale of a jungle monster called Ahtu. Written by Lady Clare Heatherington of Inverness, she says that Ahtu is a god of the Congolese people who have turned to the darkness and are without hope. **Keeper Note:** this information is only found if investigators are deliberately searching for information on the Congo from the 1930s or earlier.
- If another successful Library Use skill roll [Research check: DC15] is made after reading the previous find, a second article by Lady Clare Heatherington mentions that Ahtu fell to the earth as a seed, one of many, that if hatched will consume the earth. She has heard that such seeds require a powerful force to crack them open and allow them to germinate, but thankfully humans do not have the means to create such a destructive force.

Executive Negotiations

Investigators may also wish to conduct research on the mercenary outfit Executive Negotiations.

- An article written by a freelance Nigerian journalist Marcus Magbu discusses their previous contracts protecting diamond mines in Sierra Leone, suppressing militant groups in Namibia and South Africa, foiling a coup in Papua New Guinea, and aiding the Colombian government in their war against the FARC guerrillas. Calling them a mercenary outfit, or a private military company (PMC), Magbu is critical of the company as their actions tend to promote volatile situations rather than to control them.
- In an interview in the South African newspaper the Daily Dispatch online, CEO Jan Vargas talks out about his company. The interviewer suggests that Vargas' company is on the payroll of the intelligence agencies such as the CIA, SIS and Mossad, as well as international corporations such as Tiger Transit and NWI Inc. Vargas refuses to confirm or deny such rumours.

Sergeant Bill Fargo

The Royal Centre for Defence Medicine in Birmingham is an hour and 20 minutes from Credenhall. Investigators who wish to interview Fargo will be driven there. Alice Tumbas says she's seen enough of Fargo already and will leave the investigators to visit on their own.

On arrival, investigators who wish to interview Fargo are given strange looks by the military medical personnel, as if they would rather eat their own vomit than go anywhere near this strange patient. They try to talk investigators out of the interview, warning them that the man isn't sane anymore. If the investigators persist a doctor will lead them to an empty ward. The sergeant's bed is curtained off at the far end, although the patient's silhouette is plainly visible. First impressions suggest to the investigators that whatever is behind the curtain is not human. The doctor leaves before the investigators have crossed the room, and for good reason.

On the other side of the curtain is Bill Fargo, but he doesn't look like a man anymore. His hair is matted and seems to move of its own accord as if they are now tentacles capable of independent action. Most of his cheeks and lips have been cut away showing his filed teeth as if his face were a skull. The man's eyes are yellow and bloodshot and his nostrils have been cut away. His ears are stretched, grown into points and decorated with a thousand cuts. Most of Fargo's body is criss-crossed with scars, held together with stitches made from twine and vines, while the tattoos that decorate his entire body seem to bleed a reddish colour that isn't quite blood. On his hands, enough flesh has been permanently stripped free to expose the bones between the joints of his fingers, yet still they remain functional. Seeing Fargo for the first time costs 1/1D6+1 points of Sanity. When he sees the investigators, he smiles saying it's nice to have visitors again. Anyone who loses five or more Sanity points runs away dry retching.

Fargo is happy to talk, but not before he gets a cigarette. When he inhales, smoke escapes from holes in his face and chest. If asked how he came to be in his current condition his response is that Ackermann, himself and three other members of his outfit were captured by the URP in 1998. Initially, they were hung like meat while the URP tattooed and mutilated their bodies. This went on for months, which is how Fargo ended up looking like he does now. Then as the URP became hungry they started cutting away their flesh. Fargo holds up his bony fingers to show them what he means. Those that screamed or passed out were the first to be eaten, piece-by-piece. Fargo and Ackermann they never lost their composure, so they were left alone.

In time the two survivors became slaves to the URP. Their new tasks were cooking the flesh of other captured humans for to their masters to eat, cleaning away messes, or carrying heavy loads while they were on the move. This servitude continued for years, until the opportunity presented itself for escape. The URP chased them and Ackermann was wounded. Fargo made it into Uganda, but Ackermann is still in there. Fargo knows his commander is still alive, and he hopes the investigators can get him out.

Fargo says little more unless prompted by the investigators. If asked what important information Ackermann holds that justifies sending in a team to rescue him, Fargo says Ackermann knows the time and the place that the URP are going to attempt to open a dimensional rip freeing Ahtu.

Any attempts of Psychology or Psychoanalysis [Sense Motive check: DC15] made on Fargo suggests that the man is lying or protecting something concerning Ackermann, but considering what the man must have gone through he does he could just as easily be hiding his pain and loss.

The truth is that Fargo is the only survivor out of Ackermann's original squad, and the only one Ackermann could trust to return to England and betray their employer. Fargo knows the investigators are about to be sent to their death, but on no account will he let this information slip. The only mistake he makes is that he told Tumbas that Ackermann was taken ill with a fever, but tells the investigators that Ackermann was injured from a gun battle. If confronted with this slip, Fargo says he meant injured, and then becomes defensive and guarded. If the investigators take this information to their superiors it is dismissed as irrelevant.

Into Uganda

The investigators and Tumbas are woken at 0300 hours, driven to RAF Brize Norton, and are onboard the C-130 Hercules at 0545 hours. At 0600 hours it takes off and flies south into Africa. Amongst the cargo is a collection of UNHCR (United Nations High Commission for Refugees) food satchels. Before they land, investigators are told to wear their civilian clothes and false UN IDs.

The flight takes 12 hours, touching down in Uganda in the middle of the night. When the plane comes to a stop, UN soldiers at the camp commence unloading the food. Through the floodlights outside the investigators will spot a large refugee population in makeshift tents and shelters on the edge of the rainforest. These are the victims of civil war in the Congo, hundreds of thousands living in abject poverty and squalor. Many are missing various limbs, and the stench of death is everywhere. There are tents for aid workers while UN soldiers from Africa and Europe are stationed everywhere. The humid air is heavy with the smell of human waste and the smoke from the few cooking fires. Mosquitoes buzz everywhere at night, and are replaced by flies during the day.

The investigators are met by Captain Gary Reilly, who introduces himself as their Executive Negotiations contact while in Africa and their pilot. He wears a UN uniform. He takes a moment to size up the investigators, throws them a smug smile, and takes them to one of the prefabricated huts which have been assigned to them for the duration of their stay

Inside the tent there is a radio station, bunks for Tumbas and the investigators, and several detailed wall maps of the Congo and East Africa. Reilly stays in a neighbouring tent with his mercenaries. Several crates hold rations and bottles of purified water while a chemical toilet is situated in the far corner offers no provisions for modesty. If there are no questions, she suggests they sleep the rest of the night, because in the morning they are flying into the jungle to meet Captain Yves Kazumu of the Kasai Liberation Front (KLF).

Kasai Liberation Front

In the morning the investigators are woken at sunrise and are expected to depart immediately, this time on an old MIL Mi-8 helicopter. Reilly is the pilot and with him are three of his mercenaries, all of whom are uncommunicative. The investigators are in the back with five crates.

As they depart Tumbas gives one of the investigators a sealed paper package, instructing them to give it to Kazumu. The five crates of supplies are also intended for Kazumu.

The helicopter rises and heads west away from the vast refugee camp into the jungle. Climbing through the early morning mist they see the Ruwenzoris or 'Mountains of the Moon', huge snow-capped peaks on the equator that feed both the Nile and the Congo River. An hour after dawn they are obscured by cloud and not seen again.

If the players open the paper package on the helicopter, it contains an assortment of American edition Playboy, Penthouse and Hustler magazines; while the crates reveal second-hand M16A1 rifles, lots of spare ammunition, and some medical supplies.

The Mi-8 flies low. Any investigator who succeeds in a Know roll [INT check: DC15], or has a military background will be aware that the pilot is avoiding enemy radar. On the other side of the Ruwenzoris, Reilly says their drop point is Parc National de la Maiko, not that any tourists ever visit this place anymore. Gorillas are the guerrillas' favourite target practice here, he jokes. Keepers Note: On the map of the DRC, this park is near the Lindi River south of the equator halfway between Kisangani and Goma in the western region of the country.

Three hours after crossing the border the pilot finds a bai, a grassland clearing in the jungle, where the Mi-8 lands. He tells the investigators to debus, taking the crates with them. Once everything is off-loaded the helicopter takes off again, leaving the investigators alone in the jungle.

The KLF meanwhile, are already here, hidden in the jungle. Kazumu has decided to watch them for a while; if nothing seems out of the ordinary, Kazumu eventually leads his contingent of soldiers into the clearing, and makes introductions. Once done the Congolese man says he's glad to have the investigators on board, if for no other reason than to see for themselves just how much aid his outfit desperately needs.

Kazumu's soldiers are dressed sloppily, mostly in military fatigues but some wear bright T-shirts and bandanas. Half the men smoke cigarettes, dropping butts and litter wherever it suits them. They are disrespectful of their weapons, and worryingly in the way they keep poking each other with the barrels. Investigators will quickly start to see them as a liability: the rubbish they leave behind leaves a tell-tail trail, they argue and question orders constantly and their constant chatter allows no room for stealth. None of the soldiers speak English except for Kazumu and even his command of the language is poor. Investigators who speak French or an appropriate central African language will have more success, but otherwise they'll need to talk through Kazumu to his men.

Kazumu will ask for his package and refuse to do anything else until he gets it, including moving under cover. When he does, he tears open the paper package, thumbing through the glossy pages of naked women. Some of the magazines he holds up to show the men, who cheer and laugh in appreciation. Then he decides to look in the crates and starts counting the rifles. Once done, Kazumu says that he is disappointed that there are only 100 M16s, saying the deal was for 300 and several Stinger missiles. Until he receives them, he says, all deals are off. Whilst he acts pissed off, a successful Psychology skill roll [Sense Motive check: DC15] suggests that he's lying.

The investigators need to negotiate a solution without appearing too weak. If investigators check with Tumbas for clarification, Kazumu will see them as unable to make decision for themselves. Persuade and Bargain rolls [Diplomacy checks] against Kazumu always fail unless investigators start talking tough. Whenever the investigators want something from Kazumu, he starts negotiating for more ever more extravagant material benefits.

Investigators may notice that Kazumu lends out his girlie magazines to the men who are loyal to him and obey his commands, one titillating page at a time. Investigators who can somehow obtain glossy photographs of naked women will find that the same technique works for them. Alcohol has the same effect but as the men get drunk (and violent) rather quickly, this may not be advisable.

The Camp

The rest of the day is spent trekking with Kazumu through the jungle as he leads them along an elephant trail. By late afternoon the group arrives at the KLF camp, home to another 25 soldiers. No guards detect their approach, and the noise of their reggae music can be heard a mile off. Once in the camp investigators find a small collection of tents, burning fires, and masses litter scattered everywhere. The camp smells not too dissimilar to a public rubbish tip.

In the centre of the camp a Caucasian woman is bound and gagged and in need of medical attention. She flinches if any investigator approaches her, and is obviously terrified. A Psychology roll [Knowledge (psychology) check: DC12] shows that she has been traumatised by some kind of abuse or torture while bruises and cuts on her body suggest that she has been beaten regularly. Kazumu says this woman was formerly a captive of the URP, and that she is gagged and bound because she is crazy in the head. She knows about the URP however, and can take them to the enemy's camp in the morning. A successful Psychology skill roll [Sense Motive check: DC15] suggests that he is lying about this.

If the investigators request that she be freed he says it will cost them as he can make a lot of money ransoming her to her family. If the investigators start to question the morality of the situation, he looks surprised and says none of the British agents sent to work with him in the past ever had a problem with similar moneymaking exercises. He'll sell

the woman to the investigators for US $50,000, but can be bargained down to US $10,000, the handover taking place only when the money is delivered.

At some point during this conversation one of the soldiers swaggers forward, unzipping his trousers ready to rape the woman. Kazumu and his men have had the woman in their custody for a week now and they've all abused her many times. Unless the investigators stop the solider, they witness a rape costing them 1D4 points of Sanity if failed. If investigators are bold and verbally display their disgust to Kazumu (who is secretly disgusted at himself for being a rapist), he will back down and hand over the woman. If investigators are weak in their convictions however, Kazumu's respect for them will continue to decline. Alternatively of course, they could just slot the bastards…

Keepers are encouraged to build the tension in this encounter. As well as being a group of unprofessional, lazy soldiers, Kazumu and his men are morally bankrupt and investigators should feel uncomfortable relying upon their services, if not initially, then certainly now. If left unchecked the men continue to sexually assault the woman openly, each occasion costing the investigators 1 Sanity point each time they do nothing to stop the abuse...

TANGO TANGO!

An explanation of "Actions on"

Professional operators may just regard Kazumu and his lazy bunch of bullies as a liability too far and just eliminate them, there and then. Special Forces teams and teams of operators like the investigators should have a set of pre-described "Actions On": set drills for any given situation they are likely to encounter on their mission, whether it's Action on ambush, Action on withdrawal or Action on becoming separated.

Because all members of the team are familiar with what is expected of them in any given "Action on" the team can operate with little thought or necessity for individuals to communicate to achieve the goal. Normally "actions on" will be initiated with a simple keyword, the keyword may be something simple and in plain English like "retreat" or something more coded, but in all cases it must be unmistakable. Trained operators readily adapt to circumstances so that the Action on for assaulting the enemy position could just as easily be "Assaulting the KLF camp..."

If this happens the investigators will be without the 'supposed' aid of the KLF, but will have proved their professionalism to the URP watchers, who will report what they have seen back to Ackermann. This won't change Ackermann's planned ambush. Instead he will wait for the investigators to come to him, leaving a trail of clues for the investigators to follow and his men will be more alert to the more professional enemy they are facing.

Some Typical Actions On...:

- Drop Off point.
- Enemy: Pre Seen / Ambush
- Assault
- Halts
- Casualties
- (becoming) Separated
- (becoming) Lost
- Pick Up Point

The Captive Journalist

Deeply traumatised, the woman will be reluctant to speak and flinches away from investigators, particularly if they touch her in any way. If an investigator sits with her for 1D3 hours however, talks gently and succeeds in both a Psychology and a Persuade roll [Knowledge (psychology) and Diplomacy checks: DC15] she will start talking. Because of what happened to her, male investigators have a penalty of -30% [-6 penalty on checks] on both rolls. If the discussions are held while in the camp with the soldiers around, the rolls are penalised at an additional -20% [-4 penalty]. No amount of assistance will calm her enough to talk if the investigators allow her abuse to continue.

When the woman does start talking, it's obvious that she's in an extreme state of shock and needs medical attention quickly; otherwise she'll lose 1D3 Hit Points per day from aggravation to her wounds and related infections.

A successful Persuade roll [Diplomacy check: DC15] must be attempted every ten minutes or more to get each following piece of information from her:

- Her name is Tania Selby and she is from Australia.
- She is a foreign correspondent employed by the Australian Broadcasting Commission (ABC).
- Normally she is based in Nairobi, but is on a recent assignment to Kinshasa where she has been reporting on the war in the Congo.
- A couple of weeks ago she received a tip-off that a rebel faction in the jungle was practicing cannibalism. So she set out to confirm the story and perhaps secure an interview with their leader.
- There is a white man in the jungle; he always wears a hideous mask on his face, and he took her colleagues.
- Marcus Kibble her cameraman, and Ambrose Sembu their local guide are still out there in the jungle, possibly dead.

Although Tania has seen the URP base, she is unable to take them there since she does not know her way through the jungle. Just thinking about what she saw there gives her waking nightmares.

Kazumu's Plan

Kazumu knows that the URP base is situated somewhere nearby in the jungle, and although he doesn't know exactly where, he'll pretend that he does. He intends to force Tania to walk them to the URP camp, or beat her until she tells them where it is. Either course of action will probably kill her, yielding no results. After that he'll wander around for a few days pretending he's picked up the trail of URP soldiers, but a successful Track roll [Wilderness Lore check: DC15] by the investigators will see through this scam. In this event, Kazumu intends to kill the investigators, then reporting back to Britain that they died at the hands of the URP.

Unfortunately for Kazumu, this won't come to pass. The URP are already watching his camp closely, and the KLF and the investigators are about to walk into a trap…

Ulamali Revolutionary Party

In recent years the URP has grown into one of the most feared and loathed fighting forces in the Congo. Not because they are great combatants, not because they have any more courage than other soldiers fighting this un-winnable war, but because they worship a real god and are gifted with unnatural life, demonstrated by the mutilations and scarring that would kill most normal human beings.

Recruited from members of both the Spiralling Worm and Bloody Tongue cults, URP soldiers are solely male and all of them sport ritual scarring, mostly in the form of the Spiralling Worm and Bloody Tongue symbols. Other scarring is far more horrific: flesh sliced away so that bone is visible, slashes that never seem to heal and continually leak, missing eyes, tongues or jaws, and wooden and metal jewellery that pierces through the middle of limbs. Most of the men have had their teeth filled into sharp points to represent predatory animals. Just looking at these soldiers causes a Sanity loss of 1/1D3 points.

URP soldiers wear a mismatch of combat fatigues and Africanised western style clothing. Wooden and copper beads in the form of necklaces, armbands and earrings are popular, and a few wear lion and leopard skins and nothing else. Favourite weapons include iron-bladed knives, spears, and AK-47 and FN-FAL assault rifles.

Cult members worship Nyarlathotep in the form of Ahtu, but many also know him as the Howler in the Darkness or Black Wind. Rites to their gods involve frenzied dance rituals, drumming, human and animal sacrifice, and feasting on raw, preferably human, flesh.

Under Observation

The URP has been tracking the investigators since they touched down. Ackermann has, after all, been expecting them. He waits a day or two to observe and assess the investigators before he makes his move, during which time they have the chance to detect his surveillance. They'll need to scout into the jungle; if they succeed in Sneak, Hide and Spot Hidden skill rolls [Move Silently, Hide and Spot checks: DC15] they discover 1D3 URP soldiers watching the camp. If only some of these skill rolls are successful, then the two groups might run into each other and a fire fight is likely to break out. Investigators who botch all their rolls will have the URP see them, but they won't see the URP who remain hidden. If investigators manage to kill or otherwise dispose of the URP scouts, it will take Ackermann 1D6+6 hours to position new soldiers to watch the KLF, during which time anything that takes place inside the camp will not form part of Arkermann's intelligence. Captured scouts refuse to talk even under the most extreme forms of torture, which Kazumu will subject them to if left unchecked.

The Trap

After a couple of days of observation, Ackermann will make his move, using the captive Marcus Kibble and Ambrose Sembu from the ABC news crew as bait. When the KLF start to move out, Ackermann casts the spell Liquid Death on the two men, telling them what will happen if they move, then leaving them to be encountered by the investigators and their escorts.

When the investigators' group comes across the two men, standing motionless on a jungle trail, Tania Selby, if still alive, will recognise them immediately run to them unless restrained. Neither of the men will respond to any form of communication, and a successful Psychology skill roll [Sense Motive check: DC15] made by an investigator reveals that neither feels they can speak, as if under duress.

Meanwhile, if any investigator bothers to check the surroundings, have them make a Listen skill roll [Listen check: DC15]. If successful they realise that the jungle is unnaturally quiet: there are no sounds of animals or birds, only insects. A critical Spot Hidden roll [Spot check: DC25] reveals several armed enemy soldiers hidden in the jungle.

Ackermann has at least 20 URP soldiers hidden in the jungle with their weapons trained on the group. They are waiting for someone to disturb one of the captives, which will result in the unlucky journalist being dissolved into putrid goo. The stench is unbelievable, and the experience of seeing humans transformed into fleshy soup costs 1/1D6 points of Sanity. It is at this point that the URP soldiers start firing, picking off the KLF soldiers one by one. No one however, will shoot at the investigators.

Into the carnage steps Ackermann, wearing his hideous mask and carrying a spear in one hand and a knife in the other. In English he will order the investigators to surrender or die. The sight of Ackermann causes a Sanity loss of 1/1D6 points. If any of the investigators shoot Ackermann, they lose another 0/1D3 points as bubbling, black tar is seen erupting from his skin to heal the wound. Anyone who goes insane falls to the ground and starts screaming, and is quickly taken captive. URP soldiers will chase down investigators who run. Give each such investigator CON versus CON rolls [Fortitude saving throws: DC15] against their pursuer, and if successful three times consecutively they manage to flee far enough to lose their pursuers. If the URP soldiers succeed in three consecutive CON versus CON rolls, the investigator is run down and a fight ensures. The URP will use their guns if the alternative is an investigator escaping.

If Ackermann fails to snare at least half the investigators he'll start tracking the escapees through the jungle, requiring lots of Sneak, Hide and Track skill rolls [Move Silently, Hide, Wilderness Lore checks] from fleeing investigators to cover their trails. If Ackermann becomes desperate, he'll summon a Hunting Horror that night with orders to bring the investigators to him alive.

Ackermann also needs to capture the investigators' radios, GPS trackers, and their satellite telephone. If an investigator seems to be escaping with these items, particularly the latter, Ackermann won't hesitate to kill, or else use the Shrivelling spell to disable the telephone (if so, and if he is still in visual range, assume he succeeds). If the radio or satellite telephone is damaged but captured, Ackermann spends his night attempting to repair them using his Electronics skill (assume one successful roll each is all he needs to repair the damaged goods) [Repair check: DC15].

New Spell—Liquid Death

This particularly nasty spell costs 5 Magic Points and 6 points of Sanity to cast. The spell takes 3 rounds to cast and is directed at one individual target that must be in visible range of the caster. The victim then attempts a POW versus the POW of the spell caster to resist. If failed the victim has 1D4 rounds to cease movement, otherwise the integrity of their flesh and bones collapses and they dissolve into a puddle of congealed liquid flesh, dying instantly. If a victim doesn't move, they can remain solid, but any movement will cause them to liquefy as before. Victims must roll a Sanity roll every 10 minutes while in this state and if they succeed they lose 1D3 points, but if they fail the horror becomes too much and they give into the Liquid Death and die. Permanently insane characters must attempt a POW x5% roll [Will saving throw: DC15] every fifteen minutes or they too will dissolve. It is possible to speak whilst under the effects of the spell, so long as words are spoken slowly, softly and carefully.

The spell can be dispelled costing the same amount of Magic and Sanity points as before. Another way to combat the effects is to cool the victim to below 0°C, after which time they can operate normally, although if the temperature rises they will again dissolve. A successful Cthulhu Mythos skill roll [Cthulhu Mythos check: DC15] reveals this.

[**Components:** V, S; **Cost:** 5 Con damage and 6 Sanity points; **Casting Time:** 3 full rounds; **Range:** Medium Line of sight; **Target:** One living creature; **Duration:** Permanent (D); **Saving Throw:** Will negates]

PISCES Assistance—What Alice Tumbas Can and Can't Do

Up until the point where the investigators become victims of Ackermann's trap, they will have their GPS tracker and their satellite telephone which allows them to communicate with Alice Tumbas in Uganda. Tumbas' is best used as a source of intelligence on all matters African; political, cultural, economical and practical. Use her History skill of 80% to determine her chance of success in knowing the answer to any question investigators might have. If she doesn't know an answer straight off, she has a Library Use skill of 70% so can attempt this to search for an answer on the Internet finding it within 1D6 hours if successful.

Investigators may also be inclined to call in backup, particularly when they discover just how incompetent the KLF are. If they do Tumbas will decline their request in no uncertain terms. Air support will only be authorised when the URP base has been identified.

One important aspect of the mission that hasn't been explained to the investigators is that if half the investigators are captured or die, PISCES will take the decision to either bomb the investigators' last known location, or abort the mission and deny they ever existed. The only time a helicopter will be sent in to extract them or to provide combat assistance is when they can provide a clear target for the FAE strike and remain confident that such a line of attack will achieve their mission objectives. On no account will Tumbas send in support to airlift injured individuals, investigators or Tania Selby.

By the time Ackermann and the URP are located, it is likely that they will have captured the investigators, and their only means of communicating with Tumbas will have been removed from them. If the investigators manage to escape from Ackermann and remain in contact with Tumbas through the satellite telephone, she can send the helicopter, but only if they call in the FAE strike to take out the URP—resulting in the deaths of any captured investigators.

Prisoners

Captured investigators are stripped of all weapons and equipment. They will be left with their clothes, boots and a belt. Hands are then tied with vine at the front (STR 15) reducing their physical skills by 30% [-6 penalty] and their DEX by 6 points while bound. Smart investigators will count how many soldiers are in Ackermann's group: 20 minus any killed during the last battle.

Any surviving KLF soldiers—who should number at least three or more and may include Tania Selby and Kazumu—are brought forward, also bound. Visibly agitated, Ackermann singles out the most wounded KLF soldier, and then bites him with his teeth, attacking him as a lion would devour its prey. It takes at least 1D3 minutes before the victim dies of shock. Watching this experience costs 1/1D6 points of Sanity. Any investigator who remains sane through this experience and succeeds in a Psychology skill roll [Knowledge (psychology) check: DC15] realises that Ackermann has no control over his desire to feed. Once Ackermann has had his fill he calms down and the other soldiers take the body, using knives to cut away fresh flesh to eat. Investigators are offered human flesh by Ackermann. He tells them they need their strength as they have a long journey ahead of them. Any investigator who takes the offering loses 0/1D2 Sanity points.

Once the soldiers have had their fill, the group sets off towards the east. The group marches for the rest of the day until nightfall. During the arduous journey, investigators need to make CON x3 rolls [Fortitude saving throw: DC25] or lose 1D3 hit points from fatigue, cuts, bruises and other aliments.

Investigators who managed to flee can now track the group. Each day they do so requires both a successful Sneak and a Hide skill roll [Move Silently and Hide checks: DC15] to avoid being seen. If spotted, Ackermann sends 1D3 URP soldiers into the jungle to track them down. Outnumbered, investigators are better off attempting to kill each enemy soldier individually when one URP member lags behind the group, or while a sentry is looking the other way. Investigators tracking Ackermann also need to succeed in a Natural History or Survival skill roll [Wilderness Lore check: DC15] to find enough food to sustain themselves.

That night the captured investigators will have their feet bound and are left with the surviving KLF soldiers in the centre of the camp. Ackermann and the others do not speak with them. Any investigator who failed their CON x3 roll is too tired to take action. If surviving investigators are still in the wild and have been tracking Ackermann, he'll summon a hunting horror to retrieve them using a KLF soldier as a sacrifice. Witnessing the summoning and the sacrifice costs 1D10 points of Sanity if the roll is failed.

On the Trail

For the next two days, the captured investigators' routine is as follows: Ackermann wakes them at daybreak. He studies the KLF soldiers that didn't die during the night as if examining a menu and then selects the most wounded in the group. That man is dragged screaming and begging for mercy, only to have Ackermann descend upon him devouring him savagely, costing another 0/1D3 Sanity points to witness. Once Ackermann has finished eating the URP soldiers have their fill throwing the scraps to the investigators.

When the feeding is finished, the vines bound around the prisoners' feet, are cut free and the group again commences marching. Each investigator needs to make a CON x3 roll

African Jungle Survival

The jungles of Africa are one of the hardest environments on Earth in which to survive. Despite appearances food is scarce. Many plants contain deadly poisons in their sap, bark, roots, leaves and fruits to deter animals from feeding upon them. Elephants, dung beetles, primates, scorpions, spiders, poisonous snakes and every other conceivable African animal live in large numbers here, and if cornered by humans are vicious and deadly in their attacks.

Primitive pygmies and Bantu people still war regularly with spears and swords, intoxicated rebel armies roam freely raping and pillaging, whilst assault rifle-armed diamond smugglers and animal poachers can all be found surviving in the green hell and they don't take kindly to strangers.

The jungle itself is a foreboding place. Huge trees reaching heights of 50-70m (160-230ft) creating a canopy which less than two percent of the sunlight passes through. At ground level thick foliage competes everywhere for space often requiring machetes to cut a path. In between there are emergent trees battling to reach the canopy where there is sunlight in abundance. Alongside them are air plants that grow on trees, mosses, palms and strangler vines. It rains almost every day in the jungle, mostly in the afternoon, accumulating more than 2,000mm (6ft) of precipitation a year.

Due to the density of the undergrowth it is impossible to identify prominent landmarks, so without proper navigation equipment such as compasses and maps, it is almost impossible to find one's way out unless following a river to its source, with most waterways eventually ending up in the Congo River. The trouble with rivers, however, is that most of them are surrounded by miles of swamp.

The jungle is an unpleasant place to visit, as investigators are likely to discover. For more information on surviving in Third World environments, see the accompanying article *The Road Less Travelled: A Rough Guide to Fighting Evil in a Hot Country* which includes information on drinking water, tropical diseases, tropical heat, road conditions, and many more problems facing investigators who become stranded in the Congo.

[Fortitude saving throw: DC25] as before. Any investigator who refuses to obey Ackermann has his or her little finger cut off for 1D2-1 points of damage. This is quickly eaten by Ackermann. He'll keep cutting away fingers until he gets cooperation.

If Kazumu is still alive he will suggest they make a run for it. If the investigators agree, then ask for the investigator with the lowest Luck [investigator with the lowest WIS to make a Will saving throw: DC15] to test this statistic, as well as a Spot Hidden roll from the investigator with the highest Spot Hidden skill [highest Spot skill makes a Spot check: DC15]. If successful they have an opportunity to run unnoticed. Fleeing investigators then should roll a 1D3; this is the number of rounds it takes to reach the undergrowth safely. The keeper meanwhile, should roll a 1D6 to see how many rounds it takes for the URP to notice fleeing investigators. If the Luck and Spot Hidden were not successful, reverse the rolls on the 1D3 and 1D6. Ackermann will be diligent in tracking down investigators if any get away. It's important for his plan that they stay in his custody.

At the end of the day, Ackermann will establish a new camp. Once again, the investigators are placed in the centre of the camp with their hands and feet bound. Ackermann will generally be uncommunicative although he does enjoy the occasional gloat.

During the night investigators may attempt to escape past sleeping guards, or free investigators may attempt to sneak into the camp to rescue their comrades. Ackermann is meticulous in his protection of the GPS tracker and satellite telephone, guarding it personally, with two of his most trusted men by his side. Should any free investigators give him too much trouble, he'll summon another Hunting Horror to track them down. Should he run out of KLF soldiers to sacrifice, one of Ackermann's men will happily volunteer for the cause.

The Pit of the Dead

On the third day, after five hours of marching, the party eventually arrives at the remains of a village that has endured a massacre. Huts are burnt, clotheslines have been torn down and the stench of decaying flesh and burnt wood fill the air. A quick glance reveals that this village was attacked a couple of weeks ago, but there are no signs of any bodies.

The group pushes on for another half an hour until they reach a pit in the earth. Perhaps 50 rotting corpses fill a wide waterlogged pit to two metres (6ft) below ground level. The stench is unbelievable, requiring a CON x3 roll [Fortitude saving throw: DC25] or the investigators affected start vomiting uncontrollably for 1D10 rounds. Regardless, the pit requires a SAN check for a loss of 0/1D4 points. Any investigator who retains their composure can make a Spot Hidden roll [Spot check: DC15] to notice that every body in the pit has had flesh, limbs and other body parts removed (to feed the URP soldiers when they attacked this village two weeks ago).

"A pit of dead, rotting men, women and children is the best place to hide something you never want to be found" says Ackermann. He then nods to the URP soldiers, who cut the investigators' bindings and push them into the pit.

In the pit, investigators will find that they are up to their waists in putrid water. Ackermann looks down and says "There is only one way out of there; recover the object I hid at the bottom of it. You have five minutes."

Each minute searching through the corpses and muddy water requires an investigator to make a Spot Hidden roll [Search check: DC15], and if successful they discover a large, spherical object reminiscent of a meteorite with an organic texture. It is very heavy, weighing over 50kg (110lb or SIZ 8) and disturbing to gaze on or touch (0/1 Sanity point). This is a seed of Ahtu. Ackermann throws down ropes and orders the investigators to climb out, telling them to "Leave the seed where it is." He gives a single order and several of the soldiers fire their assault rifles at the seed, but it is undamaged. Ackermann gloats "The seed of Ahtu is so powerful almost nothing on Earth has the power to hatch it. Almost…" If the investigators fail to find the seed after five minutes, Ackermann has one of his men shoot an investigator once, aiming for a limb. After they stop screaming, he tells them to "Keep looking!"

Taking a GPS reading Ackermann orders the group to march again.

Fire from Above

Another hour of marching takes the group to a rise where they can look down into the valley at the village and the pit. If the satellite telephone is still broken, Ackermann now takes the time to repair it. If any of the investigators are still free in the jungle and causing him difficulties, he sends a large contingent of men out to deal with them. This is make-or-break time for captured investigators.

Assuming that the GPS tracker and the satellite telephone are still in Ackermann's possession and working, he will point down to the valley, explaining to the investigators the history of the seed they just saw. Two seeds, he explains, have already hatched; both in the last couple of centuries, but unfortunately both were destroyed. Legend has it that if one of these seeds takes root on the Earth, Ahtu will grow, consuming and then becoming the planet. This is his revenge on his former (and the investigators' current) masters, the irony being that they will bring about the hatching of the seed themselves.

Ackermann turns on the satellite telephone and tells the investigators that he knows they have a code word to call in an air strike. He wants the investigators to do just that, and gives them the GPS longitude and latitude for the pit of dead bodies as their target. "The bomb," he says, "has enough destructive force to crack open the seed and set Ahtu free. Make the call."

At first Ackermann will order investigators to call in the strike. If they refuse he casts the spell Liquid Death on one investigator, refusing to reverse the spell until they do what they're told. If the first investigator fails and dies, he moves onto the next one and so on until there is only one left. This last investigator does not have the luxury of a quick death. Instead Ackermann has one of his men slowly cut extremity by extremity from the investigator until they have no fingers, eyelids, sexual organs or skin left, prompting a Sanity loss of 1/1D4 points and 1D2-1 Hit Points damage for each piece of flesh cut away. Ackermann will keep the investigators eyes, ears and mouth functioning perfectly. If this investigator also dies, then Ackermann fails to hatch Ahtu, but this will be of little consolation to the players.

The investigators might suggest that the bombing will only take place if the pickup codeword is simultaneously given (which is the truth but the investigators may not know this). Ackermann will automatically believe investigators if they say this, because this is standard operating procedure. He will provide the investigators with the GPS point for their current position, planning to attack and destroy the helicopter when it arrives. Investigators might also attempt to trick Ackermann by swapping the codewords around, calling in the FAE strike on their current position and their pickup point at the pit.

Alternatively the investigators who are working the GPS tracker and satellite telephone to place the call, who also succeed in an Electronics skill roll [Knowledge (electronics) check: DC15], or a Spot Hidden and DEX x3 roll [Spot check, Reflex saving throw: DC15, DC25], can covertly change the GPS position given when they call in the attack.

Once the attack is called in, Tumbas says the operation is authorised and that they have 10+1D10 minutes to clear the blast zone, advising that they should be least 500 metres (1700ft) from the target. Meanwhile transport will collect them in 30+2D10 minutes from their pickup point. Once the call is made, there is no retraction. Then clock is ticking.

If Ackermann learns that he and his men are about to become the target of the FAE strike, he abandons the bound investigators to their death in the blast zone, and flees with whatever's left of his URP

Fuel Air Explosives (FAEs)

Russian Vacuum Bombs

These weapons were used to devastating effect by the Russian military in Chechnya in 1999. Fuel Air Explosives (FAEs) were developed by the US who used them against the Vietnamese in the 1960s, and were also used by the Chinese in a border conflict with Afghanistan in 1969. FAEs are more powerful than conventional high-explosives of comparable size, and destroy everything in their blast radius, buildings, vegetation, minefields and defensive fortifications. The blast wave destroys everything in its path, while the preceding vacuum and intense heat then creates victims burnt from both inside and out.

The Russian made FAE dropped into the Congo does 250D10 points of detonation damage, reduced by 1D10 damage every metre from the blast centre. Anyone who survives a FAE bomb must make a Luck roll [Will saving throw: DC15] or be engulfed in flames taking 1D6 Hit Points per round. Only by smothering oneself can the flames be put out, requiring a successful DEX x3 roll [Reflex saving throw: DC25] attempted each round. Any surviving victim also permanently loses 2D6 points of STR, CON, DEX and APP and is also required to make two half Luck rolls [Will saving throw: DC28], and if they fail are permanently deafened or blinded.

contingent. If the investigators have successfully fooled Ackermann, they need to make their escape while the jubilant URP are distracted, awaiting the birth of their god.

Investigators need to make DEX x3 rolls [Escape Artist check: DC15 or Reflex saving throw: DC25] or match their STR against the STR 15 bonds to break free [STR check: DC15], attempted once every minute. They then have to run as fast as they can. Allow the investigators CON rolls [Fortitude saving throws] with penalties at the Keeper's discretion. If they are still held captive and the CON roll is below the result required for a successful Sneak roll, the investigator has crept away unnoticed. If not they are noticed escaping—and Ackermann will send a number of men equal to the party after the escapees. Each minute, investigators who succeed their CON roll cover 100m (330ft), while those that fail only cover 50m (170ft).

If the FAE hits the pit, the seed cracks and Ahtu hatches. As the Outer God's massive tentacles spiral into the sky with destructive fury, investigators lose 1D10/1D100 Sanity Points. Gary Reilly, who will be piloting the Executive Negotiations retrieval helicopter must also make a Sanity roll, and if he fails he loses control of the craft and crashes into the jungle.

Once Ahtu is free the situation in the Congo descends into further doom and gloom. The URP gain control of large tracts of land and perhaps even attempt a coup taking control the country and forming another military dictatorship. If Ahtu is freed, PISCES officials in London decide to abandon the investigators, closing their files and hoping that the agents never come home.

Conclusion

The investigators' main objective will be to stop the Seed of Ahtu hatching. If they achieve this and survive reward them each 1D10 Sanity points. Investigators who get back home in more or less one piece gain another 1D6 Sanity points. Ackermann however will be difficult to kill since he is protected by the Mask of Ahtu. If they can stop Ackermann eating human flesh for 24 hours however, the Mask will kill the Major by eating his face away. Then the monster comes after one of the investigators. If Ackermann is dead, award 1D3 Sanity points and another 1D3 points if the URP was also destroyed. Investigators that manage to destroy the Mask of Ahtu gain another 1D6 Sanity points.

Meanwhile there are a few loose ends, mostly in relation to Sergeant Fargo. By the time investigators return home he has disappeared. Perhaps he's gone underground to establish a new cult of the Spiralling Worm, this time in Britain. Back in the Congo, the cults of the Spiralling Worm and the Bloody Tongue live on, and Nyarlathotep's plans for his followers are many.

NPC Statistics

Major Daniel Ackermann

Renegade Agent, Age 33

Race: Caucasian (British)

STR 18	CON 15	SIZ 15	INT 13	POW 20
DEX 16	APP 0	EDU 13	SAN 00	HP 15

Damage Bonus: +1D6

Education: Bachelor of Engineering (Mechanical), Military College

Occupation: URP Leader and High Priest

Skills: Anthropology 25%, Bargain 40%, Cthulhu Mythos 30%, Demolitions 55%, Dodge 60%, Drive Auto 60%, Electrical Repair 75%, Electronics 75%, Hide 70%, History 30%, Jump 70%, Law 15%, Listen 80%, Martial Arts 70%, Mechanical Repair 70%, Military Science 50%, Natural History 40%, Navigation/Land 50%, Occult 40%, Operate Heavy Machinery 50%, Parachuting 60%, Persuade 60%, Physics 30%, Psychology 40%, Sneak 50%, Spot Hidden 70%, Swim 40%, Throw 50%

Languages: English 65%, French 50%, Lingala 50%, Swahili (Kingwana) 50%

Attacks: Fist 70%, 2D3+db
Grapple 70%, special
Commando Knife 65%, 1D4+2+db
Spear 45%, 1D10+1+db
AK-47 assault rifle 50%, 2D6+1

Armour: None, but regenerates 3 Hit Points per round even if brought to zero Hit Points. Regenerating from zero or less Hit Points costs him a permanent point of POW.

Spells: Call/Dismiss Ahtu, Contact Nyarlathotep, Dread Curse of Azathoth, Food of Life, Liquid Death, Power of Nyambe, Shrivelling, Summon/Bind Hunting Horror, Voorish Sign

Permanent Insanity: Cannibalism, Megalomania, Psychopath

Physical Description: A tall man with a body like an athlete, Ackermann would have been a regular looking guy with short dark hair, a square face and deep, penetrating black eyes, except for the horrific mask attached to his face and the numerous black, bubbly tar coloured wounds that cover his body. Normally he only wears pants and boots but no shirt.

Major Daniel Ackermann, 10th-Level Male Offence Option; hp 61; Init +7 (Dex, Feat); AC 13 (+2 Def); Spd 30 ft.; Atk. +12/+7 melee (1d3+4 punch) or +11/+6 ranged (2d6 AK-47); SV Fort +17, Ref +14, Will +16; SZ M; Str 18, Con 15, Wis 20, Dex 16, Int 13, Cha 0, San. 0.
Special Qualities: Fast Healing (Ex) 7
Languages: English (own), French +6, Lingala +6, Swahili (Kingwana) +6.
Skills: Concentration +6, Cthulhu Mythos +3, Demolitions +6, Disable Device +5, Drive +6, Hide +7, Intimidate +3, Intuit Direction +7, Jump +7, Knowledge (anthropology) +3, Knowledge (electronics) +7, Knowledge (history) +1, Knowledge (law) +1, Knowledge (military) +5, Knowledge (natural history) +3, Knowledge (occult) +4, Knowledge (physics) +3, Knowledge (psychology) +4, Listen +9, Move Silently +6, Operate Heavy Machinery +6, Parachuting +6, Repair +7, Search +4, Sense Motive +7, Swim +5, Tumble +5.
Feats: Combat Casting, Improved Initiative, Martial Artist, Weapon Proficiency (melee weapons), Weapon Proficiency (rifle).
Spells: Call/Dismiss Ahtu, Contact Nyarlathotep, Dread Curse of Azathoth, Food of Life (see BRP 5.5 rules p.208), Liquid Death, Power of Nyambe, Shrivelling, Summon/Bind Hunting Horror, Voorish Sign.
Weapons: Spear, AK-47.

Sergeant Bill Fargo
Mutilated Soldier, Age 41
Race: Caucasian

STR 14	CON 07	SIZ 13	INT 10	POW 11
DEX 12	APP 01	EDU 09	SAN 00	HP 10

Damage Bonus: +1D6
Education: High School, Military College
Occupation: URP Soldier
Skills: Cthulhu Mythos 20%, Demolitions 25%, Dodge 40%, Drive Auto 40%, Electrical Repair 55%, Hide 60%, Jump 40%, Listen 30%, Martial Arts 60%, Natural History 30%, Navigation/Land 30%, Occult 30%, Parachuting 50%, Persuade 40%, Sneak 30%, Spot Hidden 40%, Swim 30%, Throw 30%
Languages: English 50%, French 30%, Lingala 20%, Swahili (Kingwana) 20%
Attacks: Fist 60%, 2D3+db
Grapple 60%, special
Permanent Insanity: Stockholm Syndrome, Cannibalism
Physical Description: Once a beefy drill sergeant with a crew cut, a neck thicker than his skull and the muscles of a weightlifter, today Fargo is a deformed, mutilated and scarred victim of the URP and the Spiralling Worm cult. He looks as if his body was a tapestry of scars depicting pain and mutilation. Just looking at Fargo causes a Sanity loss of 1/1D6+1 points.

Sgt. Bill Fargo, 7th-Level Male Offence Option; hp 22; Init +1 (Dex); AC 11 (+1 Def); Spd 30 ft.; Atk. +8/+3 melee (1d3+2 punch) or +7/+2 ranged; SV Fort +9, Ref +9, Will +11; SZ M; Str 14, Con 7, Wis 11, Dex 12, Int 10, Cha 1, San. 0.
Languages: English (own), French +2, Lingala +2, Swahili (Kingwana) +3.
Skills: Cthulhu Mythos +4, Demolitions +3, Drive +3, Hide +6, Intimidate +7, Intuit Direction +2, Jump +4, Knowledge (natural history) +2, Knowledge (occult) +5, Listen +5, Move Silently +7, Parachuting +6, Repair +5, Search +1, Swim +3, Tumble +3.
Feats: Endurance, Martial Artist, Weapon Focus (grapple), Toughness.
Weapons: none.
Sanity Loss: Just looking at Fargo causes a Sanity loss of 1/1d6+1 points.

Captain Yves Kazumu
Lazy Revolutionary, Age 30
Race: African (Mongo)

STR 13	CON 11	SIZ 14	INT 10	POW 08
DEX 14	APP 13	EDU 08	SAN 40	HP 13

Damage Bonus: +1D4
Education: Missionary School
Occupation: KLF Leader
Skills: Bargain 50%, Demolitions 25%, Dodge 50%, Drive Auto 40%, Hide 60%, Jump 40%, Listen 40%, Mechanical Repair 30%, Natural History 50%, Navigation/Land 30%, Occult 30%, Persuade 30%, Psychology 20%, Sneak 40%, Spot Hidden 30%
Languages: English 30%, French 50%, Kikongo 30%, Lingala 50%, Swahili (Kingwana) 30%
Attacks: Fist 60%, 1D3+db
Grapple 50%, special
Commando Knife 45%, 1D4+2+db
.45 M1911A1 automatic pistol 40%, 1D10+2
Machete 35%, 1D6+1+db
M16A1 assault rifle 40%, 2D8
Physical Description: Yves Kazumu would be an attractive man except that he is really unhealthy, sweats constantly and reeks of body odour. He rarely shaves and wears his uniform sloppily. His hair is thick and curly, growing close to his skull. Kazumu is fond of

smoking cheap cigarettes, and when the opportunity presents itself, cigars as well.

'Captain' Yves Kazamu, 5th-Level Male Defence Option; hp 30; Init +2 (Dex); AC 12 (+3 Def); Spd 30 ft.; Atk. +3 melee (1d3+1 punch) or +4 ranged (2d6 M16A1); SV Fort +5, Ref +5, Will +4; SZ M; Str 13, Con 11, Wis 8, Dex 14, Int 9, Cha 13, San. 40.
Languages: Lingala (own), French +4, English +2, Kikongo +2, Swahili (Kingwana) +2.
Skills: Demolitions +2, Diplomacy +3, Drive +3, Hide +5, Intuit Direction +1, Jump +3, Knowledge (natural history) +3, Knowledge (occult) +2, Knowledge (psychology) +1, Listen +1, Move Silently +5, Repair +1, Sense Motive +4, Spot +1, Tumble +2.
Feats: Quick Draw, Weapon Proficiency (handgun), Weapon Proficiency (melee weapons), Weapon Proficiency (rifle).
Weapons: machete, commando knife, M1911A1 pistol, M16A1 assault rifle.

Captain Gary Reilly
Executive Negotiations Mercenary, Age 32
Race: Caucasian (South African)

STR 14	CON 15	SIZ 15	INT 11	POW 12
DEX 15	APP 09	EDU 11	SAN 55	HP 15

Damage Bonus: +1D4
Education: South African Air Force
Occupation: Mercenary Leader
Skills: Bargain 40%, Drive Auto 60%, Hide 60%, Jump 45%. Law 15%, Listen 60%, Martial Arts 70%, Military Science 40%, Natural History 20%, Navigate (Land) 60%, Navigate (Sea/Air) 50%, Persuade 35%, Pilot Helicopter 65%, Psychology 30%, Spot Hidden 60%, Swim 40%, Track 70%
Languages: Afrikaans 60%, Dutch 30%, English 70%, Zulu 30%
Attacks: Fist 70%, damage 2D3+db
Head Butt 40%, 1D4+db
Grapple 60%, special
Commando Knife 65%, 1D4+2+db
Walther P38 9mm automatic pistol 70%, 1D10
Uzi Submachine Gun 9mm 65%, 1D10
Armour: Flak jackets offer 50% cover for 8 points of armour
Physical Description: Reilly is a bulky, bronze-skinned man with a thick South African accent and very thick blonde hair. His jaw is square, with a little dimple and he appears a little puffy around the cheeks. He is cocky and sleazy, always cracking tasteless jokes about women and 'black fellows' and never passing up an opportunity to make a pass at attractive females. Reilly just sees his life as a mercenary as a job, and can't wait to get back to Daphne, a prostitute he sees regularly in Durban when on R&R breaks.

Captain Gary Reilly, 8th-Level Male Offence Option; hp 51; Init +2 (Dex); AC 16 (+1 Def); Spd 30 ft.; Atk. +8/+3 melee (1d3+2 punch) or +8/+3 ranged (1d10 Uzi); SV Fort +10, Ref +14, Will +9; SZ M; Str 14, Con 15, Wis 12, Dex 15, Int 11, Cha 9, San. 55.
Languages: Afrikaans (own), Dutch +3, English +7, Zulu +3.
Skills: Diplomacy +3, Drive +6, Hide +7, Intuit Direction +9, Jump +4, Knowledge (biology) +6, Knowledge (law) +1, Knowledge (military) +5, Knowledge (natural history) +2, Knowledge (psychology) +3, Listen +5, Pilot (helicopter) +9, Sense Motive +5, Spot +4, Swim +4, Wilderness Lore +8.
Feats: Martial Artist, Track, Weapon Proficiency (handgun), Weapon Proficiency (melee weapons), Weapon Proficiency (sub-machinegun).
Weapons: commando knife, P38 pistol, Uzi SMG.
Armour: bullet resistant vest +4.

Tania Selby
ABC Foreign Correspondent, Age 29
Race: Caucasian

STR 07 (12)	CON 09 (14)	SIZ 10	INT 15	POW 13
DEX 10 (13)	APP 07 (15)	EDU 17	SAN 38	HP 10 (12)*

Characteristics in parentheses are when Tania is healthy
Damage Bonus: None
Education: Bachelor of Journalism, Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology (RMIT)
Occupation: Foreign Correspondent
Skills: Art (Journalist Writing) 70%, Bargain 50%, Cthulhu Mythos 04%, Drive Auto 70%, History 60%, Law 25%, Listen 50%, Natural History 20%, Persuade 70%, Psychology 60%, Spot Hidden 40%
Languages: English 85%, French 75%, Lingala 10%, Spanish 30%, Swahili 10%
Attacks: Fist 40%, 1D3+db
Indefinite Insanity: Anxiety, Catatonia, Depression
Physical Description: Normally an attractive woman with shoulder length red hair, pale freckled skin and a healthy body, Tania is a physical wreck battered and bruised everywhere. All she wears is the torn remains of her shirt and her shorts. Everything else has been taken from her, while her skin is covered in mud and dried blood. She is in desperate need of medical attention.

Tania Selby, 3rd-Level Female Defence Option; hp 15; Init +0 (+1) (Dex); AC 10 (11) (+2 Def); Spd 30 ft.; Atk. -1 (+2) melee (1d3-2 punch) or +1 (+2) ranged; SV Fort +3 (+4), Ref +2 (+3), Will +7; SZ M; Str 7 (12), Con 9 (14), Wis 13, Dex 10 (13), Int 16, Cha 7 (15), San. 38. *Additional stats in brackets when Tania is healthy*
Languages: English (own), French +11, Lingala +4, Spanish +6, Swahili +4.
Skills: Craft (journalism) +8, Diplomacy +6 (+10), Drive +4 (+5), Gather Information +0 (+4), Knowledge (history) +6, Knowledge (law) +5, Knowledge (natural history) +4, Knowledge (psychology) +7, Listen +4, Sense Motive +6, Spot +3 (+5).
Feats: Endurance, Iron Will, Trustworthy.
Weapons: none.

Alice Tumbas
PISCES Intelligence Analyst, Age 36
Race: African (Kikuyu)
STR 13 CON 16 SIZ 12 INT 17 POW 10
DEX 12 APP 15 EDU 21 SAN 50 HP 14
Damage Bonus: +1D4
Education: Bachelor of Arts (Languages), Nairobi University, and Masters Degree (Political Science), Brichester University
Occupation: PISCES Intelligence Analyst
Skills: Bargain 50%, Cthulhu Mythos 05%, Drive Auto 50%, Electronics 20%, Hide 50%, History 80%, Law 65%, Library Use 70%, Listen 40%, Martial Arts 50%, Military Science 30%, Natural History 30%, Occult 30%, Persuade 55%, Psychology 60%, Spot Hidden 50%
Languages: Arabic 40%, English 80%, French 80%, Kikuyu 80%, Masai 50%, Russian 50%, Swahili 70%, Zulu 40%
Attacks: Fist 50%, 2D3+db
Grapple 50%, special
Fighting Knife 35%, 1D4+1+db
Glock 17 9mm automatic pistol 60%, 1D10
Physical Description: Alice is a tall thin African woman with short-cropped hair and a long, angular face. She often appears serious even though she wears large, bright jewellery and fashionable clothing in which she looks stunning. Alice still looks comfortable when she 'dresses down' for field assignments in loose pants and light shirts.

Alice Tumbas, 6th-Level Female Defence Option; hp 49; Init +1 (Dex); AC 11 (+3 Def); Spd 30 ft.; Atk. +4 melee (1d3+1 punch) or +4 ranged (1d10 Glock 17); SV Fort +11, Ref +9, Will +5; SZ M; Str 13, Con 16, Wis 10, Dex 12, Int 19, Cha 15, San. 50.
Languages: Kikuyu (own), English +11, French +11, Swahili +10, Masai +8, Russian +8, Arabic +7, Zulu +7.
Skills: Cthulhu Mythos +1, Diplomacy +6, Drive +4, Gather Information +4, Hide +5, Knowledge (electronics) +5, Knowledge (history) +9, Knowledge (law) +9, Knowledge (military) +7, Knowledge (occult) +7, Knowledge (psychology) +6, Listen +2, Research +8, Sense Motive +5, Spot +6, Wilderness Lore +6.
Feats: Innate Linguist, Martial Artist, Trustworthy, Weapon Proficiency (handgun).
Weapons: Glock 17.

Executive Negotiation Mercenaries
These soldiers are a mixture of blacks and whites, mostly from South Africa but a few recruited from Namibia, Zimbabwe, Zambia and Botswana. White mercenaries speak either only English or English and Afrikaans, while black soldiers speak English and their tribal language. Reuse as necessary when the investigators need help getting out of the Congo jungle.

	#1	#2	#3	#4	#5	#6	#7	#8
STR	14	12	13	17	14	15	14	13
CON	14	13	15	16	13	13	18	14
SIZ	15	10	11	12	14	13	14	15
INT	13	10	11	13	14	12	10	10
POW	09	18	16	17	12	12	10	11
DEX	17	14	13	15	16	12	12	18
APP	10	11	15	16	11	13	14	12
EDU	15	16	10	11	14	12	13	11
SAN	45	90	80	85	60	60	50	55
HP	15	12	13	14	14	13	16	15
DB	+1D4	0	0	+1D4	+1D4	+1D4	+1D4	+1D4

Skills: Demolitions 50%, Dodge 40%, Drive Auto 60%, Hide 50%, Jump 40%, Listen 60%, Martial Arts 60%, Military Science 20%, Natural History 20%, Navigation/Land 40%, Parachuting 60%, Persuade 30%, Sneak 60%, Spot Hidden 60%, Swim 30%, Throw 50%
Soldiers #7 and #8 are pilots and have the following additional skills: Electronics 50%, Navigation Air/Sea 60%, Pilot Civilian Propeller Aircraft 70%, Pilot Helicopter 70%
Languages: English 65% plus one of the following languages: Afrikaans 65%, Bemba 50%, Ndebele 65%, Shona 60%, Xhosa 50%, Wambo 60% or Zulu 55%
Attacks: Fist 60%, 2D3+db
Grapple 60%, special
Commando Knife 45%, 1D4+2+db
M16A1 rifle 40%, 2D8
FN-FAL rifle 40%, 2D6+3
Fragmentary Grenades 50%, 5D6 damage, decreases by 1D6 for every metre (3ft) from blast centre.
Armour: Flak jackets offer 50% cover for 8 points of armour

d20 Cthulhu stat block

	#1	#2	#3	#4	#5	#6	#7	#8
Lvl	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4
Str	14	12	13	17	14	15	14	13
Dex	17	14	13	15	16	12	12	18
Con	14	13	15	16	13	13	18	14
Int	14	13	11	12	14	12	12	11
Wis	9	18	16	17	12	12	10	11
Cha	10	11	15	16	11	13	14	12
San	45	90	80	85	60	60	50	55
HP	27	15	25	22	27	24	34	24
AC	19	18	17	18	19	17	17	20
Init	+3	+2	+1	+2	+3	+1	+1	+4
SV Fort	+6	+5	+6	+7	+5	+5	+8	+6
SV Ref	+4	+3	+2	+3	+4	+2	+2	+5
SV Wil	+0	+5	+4	+4	+2	+2	+1	+1
Melee	+5	+4	+4	+6	+5	+5	+5	+4
Ranged	+6	+5	+4	+5	+6	+4	+4	+7

Languages: English plus one of the following: Afrikaans +8, Bemba +6, Ndebele+8, Shona +7, Xhosa +6, Wambo +7 or Zulu +6.
Skills: Demolitions +6, Intimidate +3, Drive +6, Hide +6, Intuit Direction +4, Jump +4, Knowledge (military) +3, Listen +5, Move Silently +7, Parachuting +8, Spot +5, Swim +3, Tumble +5, Wilderness Lore +2. *Numbers 7 & 8 only: Intuit Direction +6, Knowledge (electronics) +6, Pilot (aircraft) +9, Pilot (helicopter) +9.*
Feats: Weapon Proficiency (melee weapon), Weapon Proficiency (rifle), Weapon Proficiency (thrown weapon)
Weapons: frag grenade (3d6), commando knife (1d4) and M16A1 (2d6) or FN-FAL (2d10).
Armour: flak jackets +6 AC.

KLF Soldiers

Even though these soldiers are the worst of their kind, they are also a product of poverty and lack of motivation, and are the victims of the little real support obtained from their western masters who fund them only when it suits their purposes. They are more likely to flee than fight when faced with battle, particularly against the supernatural. Reuse as necessary.

	#1	#2	#3	#4	#5	#6	#7	#8
STR	12	10	09	11	13	15	13	11
CON	13	14	11	10	13	15	12	13
SIZ	11	10	09	11	14	13	13	12
INT	14	11	12	11	11	17	14	13
POW	10	17	16	11	13	13	12	12
DEX	15	16	11	10	10	11	12	14
APP	15	11	10	09	11	17	13	12
EDU	03	10	04	05	04	14	13	11
SAN	50	85	80	55	65	65	60	60
HP	12	12	10	11	14	14	13	13
DB-	0	0	0	0	+1D4	+1D4	+1D4	0

Skills: Dodge 30%, Hide 30%, Jump 40%, Listen 40%, Natural History 40%, Navigation/Land 20%, Occult 20%, Operate Heavy Machinery 30%, Sneak 40%, Spot Hidden 30%, Swim 40%, Throw 30%

Languages: French 30%, Kikongo 20%, Lingala 55%, Swahili (Kingwana) 20%

Attacks: Fist 50%, 1D3+db
Grapple 30%, special
Knife 35%, 1D4+1+db
M16A1 rifle 30%, 2D8

d20 Cthulhu stat block

	#1	#2	#3	#4	#5	#6	#7	#8
Lvl	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3
Str	12	10	9	11	13	15	13	11
Dex	15	16	11	10	10	11	12	14
Con	13	14	11	10	13	15	12	13
Int	9	11	8	8	8	16	14	12
Wis	10	17	16	11	13	13	12	12
Cha	15	11	10	9	11	17	13	12
San	50	85	80	55	65	65	60	60
HP	16	21	12	10	19	17	13	16
AC	18	19	16	16	16	16	17	18
Init	+2	+3	+0	+0	+0	+0	+1	+2
SV Fort	+4	+5	+3	+3	+4	+5	+4	+4
SV Ref	+3	+4	+1	+1	+1	+1	+2	+3
SV Wil	+1	+4	+4	+1	+2	+2	+2	+2
Melee	+4	+3	+2	+3	+4	+5	+4	+3
Ranged	+5	+6	+3	+3	+3	+3	+4	+5

Languages: French +2, Kikongo +2, Lingala +3, Swahili +6.
Skills: Hide +3, Intuit Direction +2, Jump +3, Knowledge (occult) +2, Listen +3, Tumble +3, Wilderness Lore +3.
Weapons: knife (1d4), M16A1 (2d6).

URP Spiralling Worm/Bloody Tongue Cultists

The most striking feature of these soldiers is their horrific scarring and tattooing commonly with the Spiralling Worm and Bloody Tongue cult symbols. They are loyal to their masters fighting to the death. Often they take pleasure from their wounds. Reuse as necessary.

	#1	#2	#3	#4	#5	#6	#7	#8
STR	14	15	16	14	14	13	18	12
CON	13	10	11	17	11	11	12	13
SIZ	13	10	11	11	12	14	12	12
INT	10	11	13	12	11	09	10	10
POW	13	10	11	11	17	11	10	14
DEX	13	12	11	10	15	14	14	13
APP	01	01	01	02	03	01	01	01
EDU	03	03	01	04	04	05	03	02
SAN	00	00	00	00	00	00	00	00
HP	13	10	11	14	12	13	12	13
DB	+1D4	+1D4	+1D4	+1D4	+1D4	+1D4	+1D4	0

Skills: Art (Tribal Drumming) 40%, Art (Tribal Dancing) 50%, Cthulhu Mythos 15%, Dodge 40%, Hide 50%, Jump 60%, Listen 60%, Natural History 50%, Navigation/Land 40%, Occult 50%, Sneak 60%, Spot Hidden 50%, Swim 50%, Throw 60%

Languages: Kikongo 30%, Lingala 50%, Swahili (Kingwana) 30%

Attacks: Fist 50%, 1D3+db
Grapple 30%, special
Knife 35%, 1D4+1+db
Spear 40%, 1D10+1+db
FN-FAL rifle 40%, 2D6+3
AK-47 rifle 40%, 2D6+1

Sanity Loss: Costs 1/1D3 Sanity points to see a mutilated cultist for the first time.

d20 Cthulhu stat block

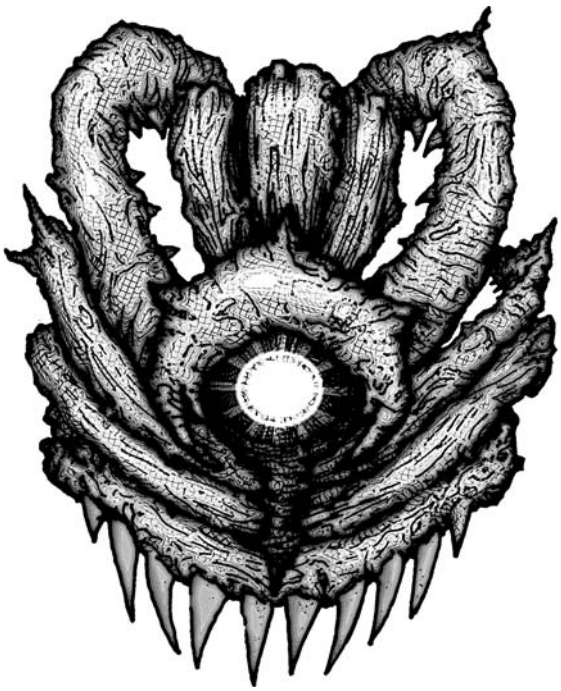
	#1	#2	#3	#4	#5	#6	#7	#8
Lvl	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4
Str	14	15	16	14	14	13	18	12
Dex	13	12	11	10	15	14	14	13
Con	13	10	11	17	11	11	12	13
Int	7	7	7	8	8	7	7	6
Wis	13	10	11	11	17	11	10	14
Cha	0	1	1	2	3	0	0	0
San	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
HP	16	19	18	27	21	10	25	19
AC	17	17	16	16	18	18	18	17
Init	+1	+1	+0	+0	+2	+2	+2	+1
SV Fort	+5	+4	+4	+7	+4	+4	+5	+5
SV Ref	+2	+2	+1	+1	+3	+3	+3	+2
SV Wil	+2	+1	+1	+1	+4	+1	+1	+3
Melee	+5	+5	+6	+5	+5	+4	+7	+4
Ranged	+4	+4	+3	+3	+5	+5	+5	+4

Languages: Kikongo +1, Swahili +1, Lingala +3.
Skills: Cthulhu Mythos +2, Hide +5, Intuit Direction +4, Jump +6, Knowledge (occult) +3, Listen +5, Move Silently +6, Spot +1, Swim +5, Tribal Drumming +2, Tribal Dancing +3, Tumble +4, Wilderness Lore +5.
Feats: Weapon Proficiency (melee weapon), Weapon Proficiency (rifle), Weapon Proficiency (thrown weapon).
Weapons: knife (1d4) and spear (1d8) or FN-FAL (2d10) or AK-47 (2d6).
Sanity Loss: Costs 1/1d3 Sanity points to see a mutilated cultist for the first time.

New Creatures/Items

Mask of Ahtu, Gift of the Crawling Chaos

They are the Spiralling Worm cult. Their members are many and found all across the lands of the great forest. If you cross them their vengeance is terrible, and their vengeance comes from beyond.—David Conyers, 'Screaming Crawler'



The Mask of Ahtu is a horrific appearing headpiece seemingly constructed of alien wood, carved or grown into the shape of a monster. Large teeth decorate both where the monster's mouth should be as well as inside the mask where it attaches itself to the wearer. A single black opal-textured eye commands the front of the mask while wooden tentacles wrap themselves around the wearer's head.

The Mask is a living entity that strives to attach itself to a human's head. In doing so the mask cannot be removed without the teeth on the inside eating away the wearer's face to the bone killing them, although if the attempt to remove the mask stops, so does the eating. Attached to a human's face it moves little of its own accord, but when free seeking a host these tentacles propel it quickly through most terrains. The teeth on the front of the mask can attack of its own accord either while the mask is attached or free.

Those who wear the mask suffer terrible dreams whose subject matter includes Nyarlathotep, his servitor species and cannibalistic rituals resulting in a loss of 1/1D6 Sanity points per night until the wearer is driven completely insane. The latter dreams are a mockery from the Outer God, who also forces the wearer to eat human flesh at least once a day; otherwise the interior of the mask will eat away at the wearer's face as a punishment.

There are advantages to wearing such a mask. Black tar-like blood soon runs through the veins of the wearer regenerating any non-magical wounds. If the wearer is brought to zero Hit Points, they still regenerate but at the loss of a permanent point of CON and APP [Cha]. The downside is that such wounds never heal properly except as black, bubbly sores. Anyone who wears a Mask of Ahtu automatically learns the spell Contact Nyarlathotep and casting it only requires the expenditure of 10 Magic Points, not the single point of POW as described in the spell.

Masks of Ahtu are known amongst the Spiralling Worm cult in the Congo, the Floating Horror cult in Haiti, the Death Herald cult in South East Asia, and perhaps other places. Those who wear the masks are guided by Nyarlathotep and are generally quickly promoted as the head priests of such cults.

Mask of Evil, Cannibalistic Parasite

Characteristic	*rolls*	*averages*
STR	2D6	7
CON	3D6+6	16-17
SIZ	2	2
INT	1D6+6	9-10
POW	5D6	17-18
DEX	4D6+6	20
Move 16		HP: 9-10

Av. Damage Bonus: N/A
Weapons: Bite Front 35%, 1D6
Bite Inside 95%, 1D4 plus permanent loss of 1D4 points of APP which can only be made against the wearer of the mask
Armour: Mask has 10 points of wooden protection. The wearer regenerates 3 Hit Points per round from non-magical attacks, even if brought to zero or less Hit Points
Spells: Contact Nyarlathotep
Sanity Loss: 1/1D6 Sanity points to see the mask. 0/1D3 Sanity points to see a wearer regenerating wounds while wearing the mask.

Ahtu's Mask of Evil

Tiny Aberration (Lesser Servitor Race)
Hit Dice: d8+5 (10hp)
Initiative: +5 (Dex)
Speed: 40ft.
Armour Class: 20 (+5 Dex, +2 size, +3 natural armour)
Attacks: Bite +1
Damage: Bite 1d4
Face/Reach: 2½ ft. by 2½ ft./0 ft.
Special Attacks: Bite host automatic
Spells: Contact Nyarlathotep
Special Qualities: Regeneration (Ex) 3
Saves: Fort +4, Ref +6, Will +3
Abilities: Str 7, Dex 20, Con 16, Int 9, Wis 17, Cha 15
Skills: Intimidate +3, Knowledge (psychology) +1
Feats: Sensitive, Mind Reading, Mind Probe
CR: 1
Climate/Terrain: Any where Ahtu is worshipped
Advancement: None
Sanity Loss: 1/1d6 Sanity points to see the mask. 0/1d3 Sanity points to see a wearer regenerating wounds while wearing the mask.

Acknowledgements

Thanks to Tim Joyner, Mike Robinson, Philip Ward, David Witteveen, and Lynn Willis.

Giles Hill contributed to Actions On..., general kit suggestions and Russian vacuum bombs.

'The Spiralling' is a preview of Chaosium's planned *Call of Cthulhu* campaign *The Hand That Feeds*, an expedition of terror into the heart of the unknown Belgian Congo set during the game's classic 1920s/1930s era. Some of the background, creatures and locations in this scenario feature in the forthcoming campaign.

The British Museum

London's Centres Of Knowledge, Part One

written by David Conyers

***Among such "forbidden" books, I had read the unsuppressed sections of the British Museum's photostat Pnakotic Manuscript, allegedly a fragmentary record of a lost "Great Race," prehistoric even in prehistory; similarly reproduced pages from the R'lyeh Text, supposedly written by certain minions of Great Cthulhu himself. —* Brian Lumley, The Burrowers Beneath**

Any investigators worth their weight in essential saltes and compounds know that when cosmic horrors threaten, the best chance of saving their skins is not at the local gun shop but in old books in libraries and the back catalogues of museums. Investigators who can't conduct decent research are a bit like hunting horrors without teeth: They soon become extinct.

But good researchers need more than information-gathering skills; they also require good sources of information. In this regard, British investigators have an advantage over most other Mythos researchers, for they have access to one of the largest and most diverse collections of antiquities in the world: the British Museum.

Overview

The British Museum holds in trust for the people of Great Britain one of the world's largest and oldest public collections of art and antiquities, with over seven million objects spanning two million years of human existence. Every day an estimated 15,000 people explore the exhibits, and more than 5.4 million visitors pass through its doors every year.

The collection itself is housed in one of Britain's architectural landmarks, an imposing structure with towering columns overlooked by magnificent statues reminiscent of the treasures held within. With over 94 galleries covering four square kilometres (2.5 square miles) of rooms, the museum is continually growing. It may take a visitor many days to explore all 85,000 square metres (940,000 square feet) of public displays.

Since its inception, the British Museum has been guided by three principles: that by law the collections are held in perpetuity in their entirety; that they are widely available to all who seek to enjoy and learn from them; and that they are curated by full-time specialists. It is funded by aid allocated by the Department of Culture, Media, and Sport (DCMS) and through sponsorship income. A trust enterprise, The British Museum Company (BMCo), manages the funding.

The museum consists of three floors. The main displays are: Africa, Americas, Asia, Ancient Near East, Egypt, Europe, Greece and Rome, Japan, Money and Medals, Pacific, Prehistory, Prints and Drawings, and Roman Britain. Other galleries are utilised for temporary exhibits, several of which are always open to the public. Many of the ethnographic displays were removed in 1970 for lack of space, but many returned as a result of expanding gallery floor made possible by millennium celebration funding.

In the year 2000, as part of Britain's millennial celebrations, Queen Elizabeth II opened the Great Court for public use for the first time since 1857. The 0.8-hectare (2-acre) court has undergone significant refurbishment, including the construction of a glass and steel lattice roof creating Europe's largest covered public square. The Great Court houses the Reading Room, containing the Paul Hamlyn Library, which holds approximately 25,000 books focusing on all cultures represented in the museum. The museum's other written collection, the Kings Library, has recently been reopened to the public, as an exhibit dedicated to the Enlightenment. (The books previously held here have been moved to the British Library.). In all, the British Museum still retains some 300,000 volumes—mostly in their central and departmental libraries—but these books are accessible only to staff and specially approved visitors.

The museum's object database, COMPASS (Collections Multimedia Public Access System), is available to all visitors. COMPASS contains information and images on over 5,000 artefacts held in the collection. Each object is described in a short article, with high-quality images of each item so it can be studied in detail. The database can be accessed through the Reading Room via touch-screen terminals or through the Internet at www.thebritishmuseum.ac.uk/compass.

The British Museum's collection of ancient Egyptian artefacts is one of the largest outside Egypt. Displays include massive stone statues of pharaohs, such as the black granite statue of King Mentuhotpe II (2060-2010 BC), the red granite figure of King Amenophis III (1417-1379 BC) taken from Karnak, and the huge head of King Rameses II (1304-1237 BC). Central to the display is the Rosetta Stone, discovered in the Nile Delta by Napoleon's soldiers in 1799. Dating from the Ptolemaic period, it was engraved in three scripts—Egyptian hieroglyphs, Egyptian demotic script, and Greek—allowing for the first time a means of translating the writings found in the tomes and monuments of ancient Egypt. Other Egyptian collections include a large number of human, cat, and ibis mummies, sarcophagi, canopic jars, and funeral offerings for the afterlife.

Important Information for Visitors

Address:	Great Russell Street, Bloomsbury, London WC1B 3DG, United Kingdom.
Web Page:	www.thebritishmuseum.ac.uk.
Hours:	Saturday to Wednesday 10:00-17:30 and Thursday to Friday 10:00-20:30. The museum is open every day of the year except Christmas (24-26 December), New Year's Day (1 January), and Good Friday (date varies).
Photography:	Flash and video photography using hand-held equipment is permitted in most galleries for private purposes only.
Admission	Costs: Free to all visitors; fees may be charged for temporary exhibits.

The Ancient Near East collection includes two massive human-headed winged bulls from Khorsabad, of the Assyrian Empire, dating from 710 BC. Numerous bas reliefs depict Assyrian kings, battles, chariot racing, and lion hunts.

The British Museum's most famous displays are probably the sculptures taken from the Parthenon in Athens, the most important being the Elgin Marbles, named after the seventh Earl of Elgin, who sold the sculptures to the museum in the early 19th century. These life-sized statues of Greek men and women date from the 5th century B.C. Completing this collection are numerous bas reliefs recounting the history and culture of the ancient Greeks. Today's Greek government continually campaigns for the Elgin Marbles' return to Athens, but such demands have been consistently denied, despite domestic support for the Greeks from organisations such as Marbles Reunited.

Amongst the artefacts in the Roman Britain gallery there is a huge mosaic measuring nearly 50 square metres (550 square feet), occupying the whole central space immediately before the entrance. Dating from the 4th century A.D., this mosaic was unearthed in Dorset in 1963 in the ruins of a rich Roman villa. The central roundel includes one of the earliest known depictions of Jesus Christ. Also in the Roman Britain gallery is Lindow Man, the preserved remains of a man unearthed in a Cheshire peat bog in 1984. He dates from the Iron Age (circa 300 B.C.), but his skin, hair, and features are still discernable. Forensic and medical investigations indicate that Lindow Man was the victim of a ritual killing, first stunned with a blow to the head, then garrotted before his throat was cut with a knife.

One of Britain's richest archaeological finds within its borders was the Sutton Hoo ship burial. Excavated in July 1939, this Anglo-Saxon ship, dating from 625 A.D., served as the last resting place of a king. Objects buried with the ruler included silver bowls, gold jewellery, ornate belts, and his helmet and shield. Surprisingly, all of these items were made in different European nations.

The Basement

Beneath the serene, well-lit, easily navigable public displays, the basement of the British Museum is a darker, claustrophobic world. Only staff and the infrequent privileged academic visitor or service technician are allowed access to the basement, affectionately known as "the tunnels" because people regularly lose their way in the numerous, poorly lit passages. Outside windows are almost non-existent, ceilings are overpopulated with heating and water pipes, and an eerie breeze can be felt constantly. Granite statues of massive Egyptian gods such as Anubis, Horus, or Ra occasionally threaten to block the path forward, or a black stoned bust of a pharaoh's head might dominate the already cramped corridors. In recent times some of these tunnels and adjoining rooms have been refurbished, but even staff who have worked at the museum for most of their adult lives still manage to become lost on a regular basis.

Dim lighting, cramped access, musty smells, and strange unexplained noises are the norm. For the majority of the staff, the basement's most common feature is also its most disturbing: the hundreds of doors, some of which are marked but many of which are not. What lies beyond these portals is often a mystery. A few are known to be offices or janitor rooms, and some are sporadically signed male, female, and disabled toilets, and dusty records rooms with ancient card catalogue indexes. But behind many more of these doors are artefacts, some of which have remained untouched and uncatalogued since the museum's founding. There are doors down here that have not been opened in decades, some not even for a hundred years, and perhaps with good reason.

The Warehouses

So vast is the museum's collection that most artefacts are not actually stored on site; they are collected in three vast warehouses located across London. The first is just a ten minute walk from the museum; situated on New Oxford Street, it is the oldest and smallest of the three warehouses. Like the basement, many of the artefacts housed here haven't seen the light of day for over a century.

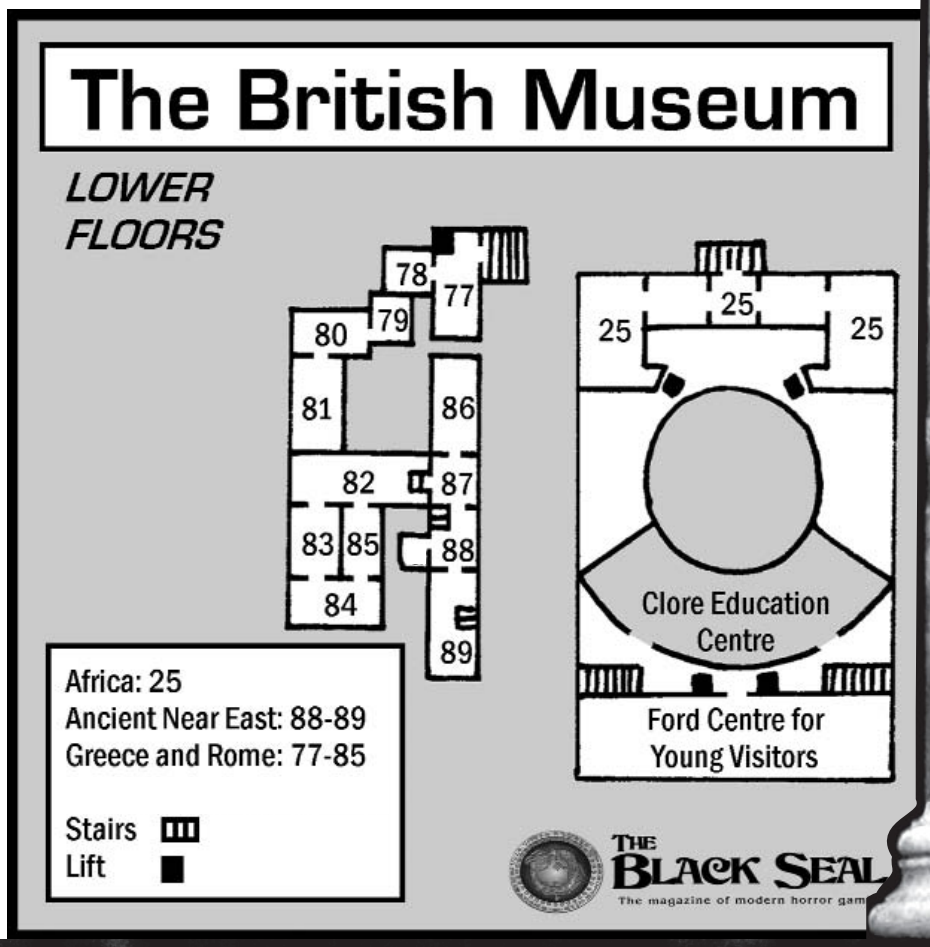
A second, far larger warehouse is located in Olympia near Kensington, five kilometres (three miles) west of the museum, in a building named Blyth House. The final warehouse is Franks House, overlooking the Regents Canal in Hoxton near Islington. Franks House is three kilometres (two miles) northeast of the museum. Both the Olympia and Hoxton warehouses are crowded with crates stacked four or five stories high and marked with little more than serial numbers, donation dates, and their last inspection dates. Some crates are so old their markings are now illegible.

Between them the Olympia and Hoxton warehouses hold the majority of the museum's seven million artefacts. Some of these catalogued items are used regularly as teaching items, but many more are not and remain forgotten. A few of the museum staff even suggest that the total number of artefacts is closer to nine million, because many of the non-catalogued artefacts were donated by archaeologists and collectors decades or centuries ago. Archaeologists don't need to scour the world searching for ancient treasures; there are plenty to be discovered right here in London.

Security

The level of security inside the museum and in its warehouses is extremely high. All doors have keypad locks with a -30% modifier to any Electronics skill roll [Open Locks check: DC35] to override them. Secured doors have a uniform STR of 80, as well as 10 points of armour and 20 hit points [Hardness: 10; HP: 80; Break DC: 40]. They also double as fire doors and take minimum possible damage from flame attacks.

All entrances and exits and several major interior doors are alarmed, and if tripped they



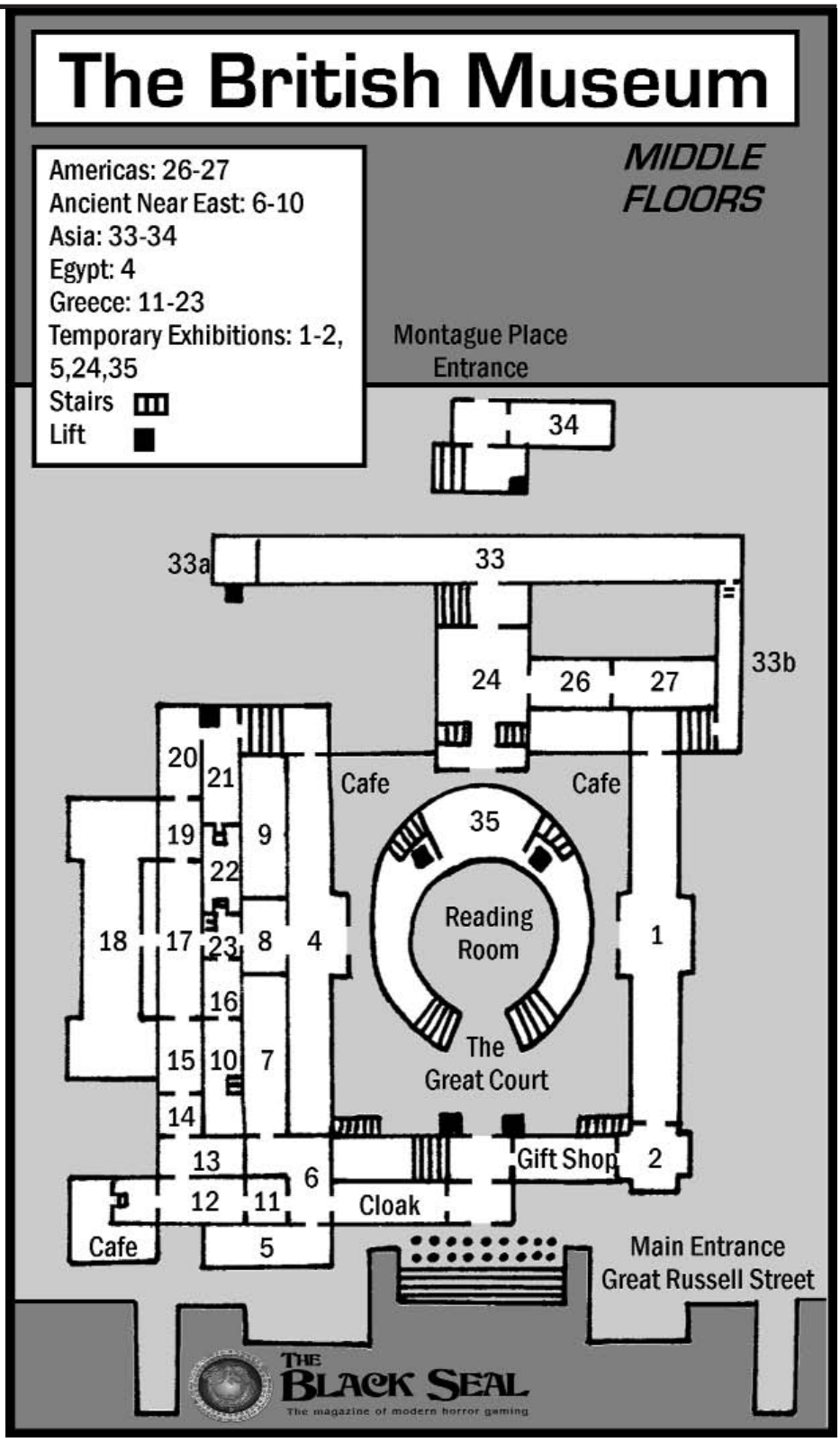
set off numerous klaxons throughout the buildings. Scotland Yard is alerted immediately and will scramble a dozen or so police officers to investigate, who will usually be on scene in less than three minutes. A less well documented fact is that PISCES' London Headquarters are also automatically alerted to any break-in, although they will only respond if they deem it in their interest to do so.

Potential thieves will find that if they do manage to get inside, stealing artefacts is far more complicated than simply getting in and out without setting off the alarms. Most display cases are touch sensitive, requiring a DEX x1 roll [Reflex saving throw: DC30] to open without tripping an alarm, and a Lockpicking or Electronics skill roll [Open Locks or Knowledge (electronics) check] to override the locking mechanism, depending on the type of lock. Security cameras watch everything; thieves need Sneak or Hide rolls [Hide or Move Silently checks DC: 15] every few minutes to avoid detection. Light sensors are also designed to trip up even the most experienced cat burglar, requiring a successful Craft (Acrobatics) or Dodge roll to avoid [Reflex saving throw: DC20]—but only if they are seen first, which requires a successful Spot Hidden skill roll [Search check: DC15].

The basement and warehouses are less secure, but since artefacts stored here generally aren't all that well catalogued or well known to the public, it is much harder for thieves to find what they're after.

Security guards patrol all properties owned by the British Museum around the clock, every day of the year. Normally they are single unarmed patrol guards, but they are equipped with radios and panic buttons.

Smart investigators would be advised to hire professional cat burglars if they wish to obtain artefacts illegally, as only a professional would stand any chance of success getting in and out again with the goods. Their price would be high—often more than the street-value of the artefacts investigators wish to steal—but they might be worth it. Art thieves successfully stole small objects from the British Museum in 2002 and 2001.



Private Access to the Collections

It's one thing to walk into the British Museum as a tourist and stand with the throngs of visitors goggling at display cases and reading the minimalist description plaques. It's quite another to actually access collections in order to study them in detail.

To examine an artefact or artefacts in detail requires a formal application to the appropriate museum curator. It takes 1D6 weeks to obtain a response, half this time if a referral from someone known to the museum is included with the application or if the investigator succeeds in a Credit Rating roll [Diplomacy check: DC15]. Applications need to state clearly in advance which artefact or artefacts the applicant wishes to study, and they must demonstrate that they have the appropriate knowledge and qualifications specific to their request. References never hurt; investigators who know people working in the museum or associated organisations have a far better chance of getting a look in than those that don't. As a general rule, investigators who aren't archaeologists, anthropologists, or historians with the appropriate specialist knowledge (skills with rankings of 50% or more [8+ ranks]) and who don't have a degree or degrees in their area of expertise (an EDU of 16 or more [Int 16+]), won't stand a chance. Even if they meet these criteria, applications require successful English and Persuade rolls [Diplomacy check: DC15] to secure an appointment.

If an application is successful it can take 1D10 weeks before an investigator is provided with dates and times to study the selected artefacts; the waiting list is long. Another successful Credit Rating roll [Diplomacy check: DC15] halves this time.

When investigators are finally be invited into the museum, their access will almost certainly be

restricted to certain hours of the day. For public displays, access will more often than not only be granted in the evenings while the museum is closed. The museum is generally much more accommodating regarding collections in the basement or in the warehouses, as there are no tourists to get in the way. Museum staff will always be on hand to assist—and to provide a watchful eye ensuring that nothing is damaged. If a mishap does occur, the responsible investigator will immediately be ejected with no chance of ever returning for further study. Such an investigator should also make a Luck roll [Reflex saving throw: DC15]; if it fails, he or she will be hit with a bill a few weeks later for £100 x 1D10 in damages (US $175 x 1D10). Malicious damage, such as smashing to pieces the stone amulet that was just about to summon forth Azathoth in all his terrible fury, will always result in criminal charges.

Artefacts may be photographed provided they are used only for study; copyright permission can be quickly obtained when such images are reproduced in academic articles. Permission to photocopy old and rare books—a few of which are still held in special collections—is rarely allowed, and almost certainly not if the book in question was published before 1930, as books of this age or older have a tendency to fall apart.

PISCES Involvement

PISCES' relationship with the British Museum began almost immediately after the organisation's official sanction in 1940. At the time, PISCES agents were at war with the Karotechia in Europe and were doing their best to conduct their own research into the magical powers that Nazi occultists seemed to wield with ease. Naturally PISCES turned to the British Museum, and were subsequently alarmed at what they found: dozens of occult tomes describing pre-human history, medieval metaphysics and sorcery in mind-shattering detail.

When World War II began, all of the museum's objects of importance were transferred to an unused stretch of the London Underground. This collection included thousands of rare books. Objects too heavy to move were sandbagged and surrounded by blast walls to protect them from structural damage. It wasn't the latter items that interested PISCES, though; they ventured underground to study the written word.

For three years, up to eight PISCES researchers at any one time lived in the unused track section, reading volume after volume, finally identifying 12 tomes of particular interest, including the Latin *Necronomicon* and *The Pnakotic Manuscripts*. (For more details see *Delta Green: Countdown,* pages 26-28.). During this time five researchers went insane from what they read, one committed suicide, and one simply vanished into the lower depths of the Underground, never to be seen again. Other researchers replaced those that were lost, some not so willingly after they learnt the fate of their predecessors.

In 1943 PISCES obtained intelligence that the 10 May 1941 incendiary bomb attack on the museum—which destroyed 250,000 books in the King's Library—was a deliberate attempt by the Karotechia to stall PISCES' occult researches. PISCES' director, R, ordered that the 12 tomes identified by the research team be relocated to Kilmaur Manor in Scotland, a location beyond the range of German bomber planes and where PISCES was no longer constantly questioned by curious museum staff. PISCES adjusted and backdated the museum's catalogues of these tomes, stating that they were amongst the quarter million books lost during the 1941 bombing.

The protected artefacts and books were restored to the museum when it opened again to the public in 1946. At the time none of the staff questioned the loss of the 12 tomes, or that they had disappeared some two years after the date listed.

PISCES continued its relationship with the museum by permanently assigning their own staff to the institution. These agents took on the roles of curator and staff in the newly created Department of Myth-Pattern Studies. The ambiguously named department accomplished nothing while allowing PISCES the latitude to stick their nose into anything and everything else that went on inside the museum. Word went round the museum that the Board of Trusts had set up the Department of Myth-Pattern Studies as 'jobs for incompetent boys from the old school,' and PISCES did nothing to suppress this rumour— in fact, they encouraged it. They had no intention of producing results; at least, not for the museum.

Section H and the Headless Horse

Today the Department of Myth-Pattern Studies is managed through PISCES Section H, the historical intelligence department (see *The Black Seal* issue 1, pages 10-13). Normally working under the cover of archaeologists assigned to the British Archaeological Review Board (BARB), Section H agents operate in the guise of museum employees in the Department of Myth-Pattern Studies, today headed by Curator Emily Denison. Only the more senior staff members are aware of the department's affiliation with PISCES; the uninformed see a transfer to the department as the death of their academic careers—which probably isn't too far from the truth.

The department's main task is to identify any dangerous artefacts that show up, remove them from the collection as soon as possible, and then fake the appropriate documentation so that they never existed in the first place—at least on paper. This mission also extends to tomes held at the British Library, but as tomes of interest tend to turn up much less frequently there, the department's presence at the library is correspondingly less than at the museum (for more information on the British Library see part 2 of this article, to be published in *The Black Seal,* issue 5.)

The department's office is, naturally, in the basement of the museum—behind an unmarked door lost amongst the tunnels, identified only by a Roman Empire-era life-sized statue of a horse whose head is missing. Jokes about the department and the Headless Horse are many.

Timeline of the British Museum

1753 On 7 June, King George II approves the British Museum Act, purchasing the collections of Sir Hans Sloane, the manuscripts of the Harleian collection, and the library of Sir Robert Cotton, which included the Necronomicon and a number of other infamous texts.

1757 Museum opened to the public.

1802 A number of Egyptian antiquities, including the Rosetta Stone, were presented to the museum by George III following the defeat of Napoleon.

1808 Opening of the Townley Gallery.

1816 Sculptures acquired by Lord Elgin from the Parthenon in Athens are presented to the museum.

1828 The King George III library is transferred to the museum, including several notorious occult tomes.

1880 Natural History section transferred to new premises at South Kensington.

1891 Professor James Moriarty arranges for the theft of Olaus Wormius' Latin *Necronomicon* from the museum.

1896 Sherlock Holmes and Doctor John Watson return the *Necronomicon* to the British Museum after defeating Moriarty's schemes to use it for his own ends.

1898 The only known copy of *Monstres and Their Kynde* is stolen from the British Museum.

1906 A unique and extensive collection of newspapers and journals in the museum are housed in a separate but associated building.

1913 Museum acquires a copy of the English translation of *The Eltdown Shards*.

1914 The start of World War I saw valuable art objects transferred to the newly completed Postal Tube Railway for protection from bombing.

1922 The original stone tablets of *The G'harne Fragments* and Sir Amery Wendy-Smith's translations are deposited at the museum.

1933 Both copies of *De Vermis Mysteriis* held at the British

Museum are mistakenly catalogued as *Declamatio Vermiculus* by an incompetent researcher.

1939 The start of World War II sees all objects of importance transferred to an unused stretch of the London Underground, while larger objects were sandbagged for protection.

1940 PISCES commences its research into the occult tomes collected in the King's Library.

1941 A cluster of incendiary bombs hits the museum on 10th May, causing serious fires that destroy over 250,000 books.

1943 PISCES relocate 12 occult tomes to Kilmaur Manor in Scotland, far beyond the range of German bomber aeroplanes.

1945 Department of Myth-Pattern Studies established as a front for PISCES operatives permanently assigned to the museum.

1946 After extensive repairs, the museum again opens to the public.

1953 Maurice Lacombe, curator of the Department of Myth-Pattern Studies, asks Henrietta Montague to translates the Latin version of the *Necronomicon* into English (see part 2 of this article, to be published in *The Black Seal* issue 5, for details).

1956 Henrietta Montague completes her translation and dies of a wasting disease shortly afterwards; but not before both copies of the *Necronomicon* disappear back to Kilmaur Manor.

1963 Revised British Museum Act passes, allowing the Natural History Museum to become completely independent and self-administered.

1970 The Department of Ethnography is transferred to Burlington Gardens, Piccadilly, and named the Museum of Mankind.

1973 King's Library is administered under the separate authority of the British Library Board and transferred to the control of the newly created British Library.

1984 Lindow Man, an Iron Age sacrificial victim found preserved in a peat bog, is brought to the museum for study and display.

1985 A new suite of galleries open to display the Townley Collection.

1990 Opening of the Japanese Gallery.

1994 Opening of the Mexican Gallery.

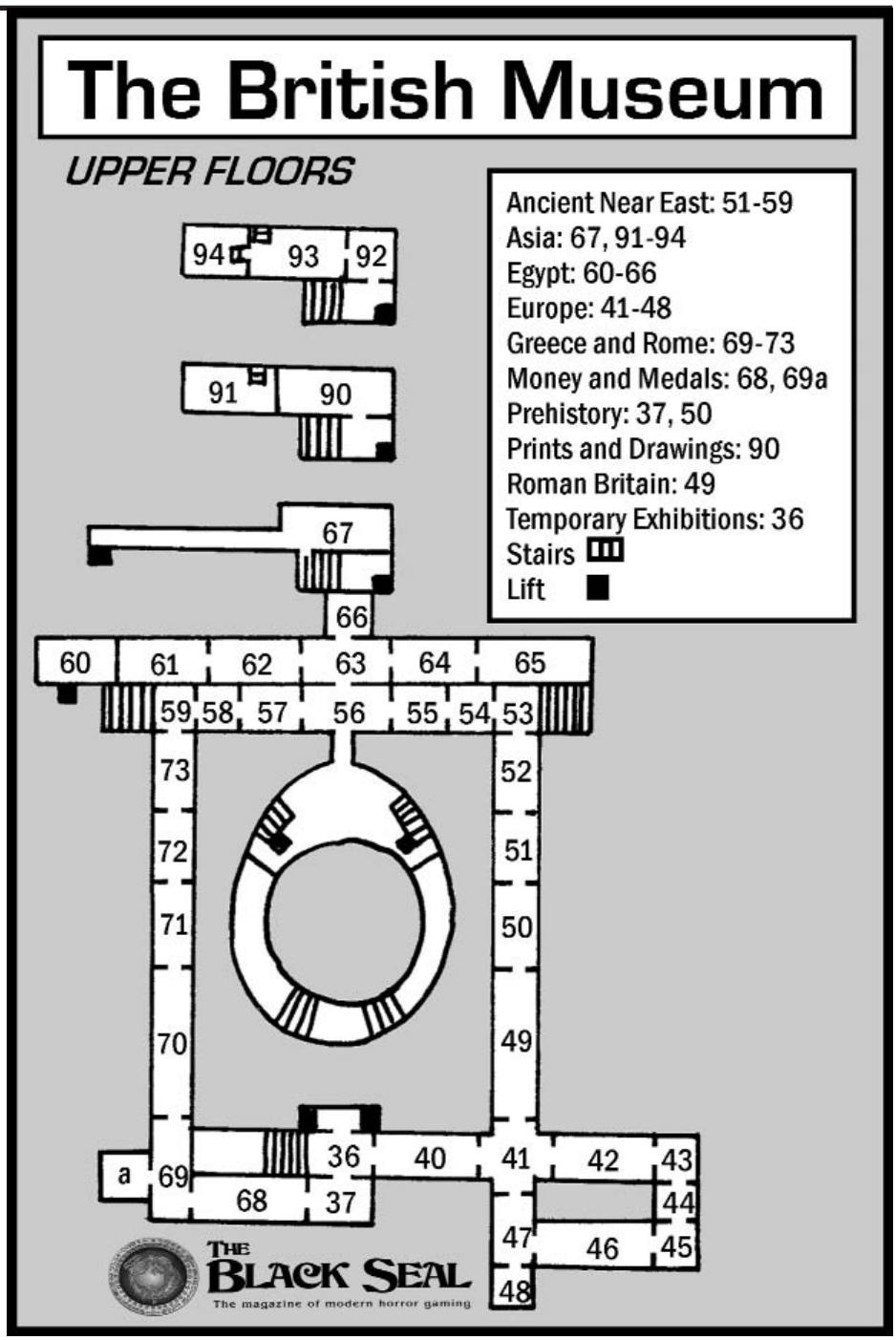
1998 Emily Denison becomes Curator of the Department of Myth-Pattern Studies.

1999 Roxie Walker Galleries of Egyptian Funerary Archaeology opened to re-display the museum's collection of mummies and sarcophagi.

2000 The museum's Great Court becomes London's first covered square when it is opened to the public; the Korean Foundation Gallery opens.

2001 Sainsbury African Gallery opens, displaying past and contemporary objects.

2003 Celebrations of the British Museum's 250th anniversary.



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Online: www.thebritishmuseum.ac.uk

Special thanks to Ben Counter, Adam Crossingham, Paul Maclean, Chloe Summerfield, and Kate Witteveen for their expert advice and assistance.

Doctor Emily Denison

Emily Denison was recruited into PISCES far later in her career than many of her peers, after years spent studying classical Greek and Roman mythology. Her research included several field trips to the Mediterranean, many of those on archaeological digs. Back in England she wrote several well received articles, lectured at various universities, and established three trust funds for separate digs in Greece and Tunisia. Today she is considered a minor expert in her field.

Denison's first exposure to the Mythos occurred in the mid-1980s on a dig in Crete. Her investigations uncovered evidence of a 'Cult of the Bull' which on the surface appeared to worship the Minotaur of Greek legend; Denison, however, correctly identified the object of their worship as an abhorrent deity known only as the Keeper of the Moon Lens. Later the dig uncovered a number of horribly deformed skeletons that only superficially resembled human remains. The evidence suggested that they were originally human and had somehow been transformed by their god. Quite possibly they were the source of the Minotaur legend.

Intrigued, Denison traced evidence of the cult across Europe and back to England and the town of Goatswood in the Severn Valley—only to find that the town and everyone in it had been 'relocated' to places unknown some years previously. The whole area was now owned by the Ministry of Defence, and access was heavily restricted. Her inquiries at this point brought her to the attention of PISCES for the first time, who briefly considered 'sanctioning' her. Fortunately, this proved unnecessary; her amateur investigations went nowhere. Denison continued her researches, though, interviewing cultists and academics around the world and raiding the restricted collections of several prestigious universities and museums, including the Egyptian Museum in Cairo.

In 1995 Denison wrote a paper entitled *The Al-Azif Myth Cycle*, but before it could be published it landed on the desk of Doctor John W.S. Hennessey, the head of Section H. Impressed with Denison's findings, Hennessey hired her immediately as a PISCES researcher, offering her hitherto unknown resources but suppressing the paper in the process. Three years later Denison was made curator of the British Museum's Department of Myth-Pattern Studies.

A driven, passionate woman, Denison is committed to uncovering the secret history of the world—a mission that has left her unbalanced and neurotic as a result of extensive researches into the Mythos. She works obsessively, desperately searching for a pattern, an answer to her questions, which in all likelihood she'll never find; at least not with her sanity intact.

Mythos Documents: The Al-Azif Myth Cycle

This academic paper is a brief overview of the Al-Azif, as studied in the Egyptian Museum's restricted collection in Cairo, and draws references to the author of that cursed tome's detailed knowledge and understanding of cults and mythology across the Old World. This paper can be used as a kind of index to the Al-Azif, halving the time it takes to find specific references in the original work. Sanity loss 1/1D2; Cthulhu Mythos +1 percentiles [no ranks]; average 3 days to study and comprehend/1 hour to skim. No spells.

Physical Description: Emily Denison is thin to the point of being unhealthy; she never eats meals anymore, only nibbling on bits of food left lying around her office and her home. Her hair is always tied back in a bun, and her glasses are usually in good need of a clean. She'd probably be quite attractive if she spent some time looking after herself, but she doesn't; almost all her time is spent cross-referencing passages from one ancient tome to another, working long hours either at the museum or at Kilmaur Manor. Her fingers are stained black by ink. Anyone who shows any interest in her rather outré theories immediately grabs her attention, and she happily discusses them for hours on end at the drop of a hat.

Doctor Emily Denison
Curator of Myth Pattern-Studies, age 41
Race: Caucasian (Scottish)

STR 12	CON 14	SIZ 11	INT 14	POW 12
DEX 12	APP 14	EDU 20	SAN 48	HP 13

Damage Bonus: None.
Education: BA Archaeology (Edinburgh), PhD Ancient History (Edinburgh).
Occupation: PISCES Section H Researcher, Curator of the Department of Myth-Pattern Studies.
Skills: Anthropology 45%, Archaeology 87%, Chemistry 25%, Computer Use 33%, Credit Rating 60%, Cthulhu Mythos 28%, Drive Auto 50%, History 45%, Library Use 86%, Natural History 30%, Occult 43%, Persuade 65%, Photography 42%, Psychology 46%, Spot Hidden 79%.
Languages: Arabic 70%, English 99%, Greek 86%, Italian 62%, Latin 67%.
Attacks: Fist 55%, 1D3.
Walther P990 (9mm automatic) 46%, 1D10 (in the top drawer of her office desk, unloaded).
Spells: Call/Dismiss Shub-Niggurath, Call/Dismiss Yog-Sothoth, Candle Communication, Chant of Thoth, Dust of Suleiman, Elder Sign, Enchant Sacrificial Dagger, Powder of Ibn-Ghazi, Seal of Isis, Shrivelling.
Indefinite Insanities: Obsessive Compulsive, Insomnia.

Emily Denison; 8th-Level Female Defence Option; hp 52; Init +1 (Dex); AC 11 (+3 Def); Spd 30 ft.; Atk. +5 melee (1d3+1 punch) or +5 ranged (1d10 P990); SV Fort +8, Ref +3, Will +7; SZ M; Str 12, Con 14, Wis 12, Dex 12, Int 17, Cha 14, San. 48.
Languages: English (own), Ancient Greek +12, Arabic +10, Latin +10, Italian +9.
Skills: Computer Use +5, Concentration +3, Craft (photography) +4, Cthulhu Mythos +3, Diplomacy +7, Drive +4, Knowledge (anthropology) +10, Knowledge (archaeology) +12, Knowledge (chemistry) +5, Knowledge (history) +6, Knowledge (natural history) +4, Knowledge (occult) +7, Knowledge (psychology) +5, Research +12, Spellcraft +4, Spot +6.
Feats: Endurance, Research Frenzy, Skill Emphasis (research), Wealth, Weapon Proficiency (handgun).
Weapons: Walther P990 9mm semi-automatic pistol.
Spells: Call Shub-Niggurath, Call Yog-Sothoth, Candle Communication, Chant of Thoth, Dismiss Shub-Niggurath, Dismiss Yog-Sothoth, Elder Sign, Enchant Item (dedicate sacrificial dagger), Enchant Item (create Dust of Suleiman; see page 204 of BRP 5.5 edition rules), Enchant Item (create Powder of Ibn-Ghazi), Seal of Isis, Shrivelling
Indefinite Insanities: Obsessive Compulsive, Insomnia.

Rare and Unusual:

Paranormal Artefacts at the British Museum

By David Conyers and William Jones, with Philip Ward

It is hard not to imagine that in the British Museum's mammoth collection there are perhaps a few antiquities with dark secrets, deeply rooted in unspeakable practices and worship of the Old Ones.

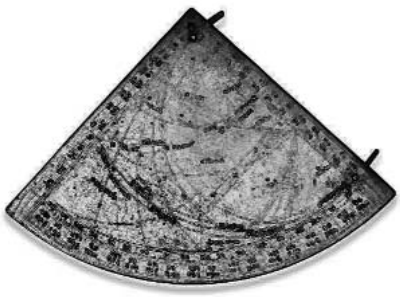
Unfortunately, there are.

Many of these items can be found amongst the museum's public displays, while others are stored in the archives. Most have yet to be identified for what they really are: keys to cosmic horrors humans were never meant to know.

Artefacts on Display

The following artefacts are real and are listed on COMPASS, the British Museum's online catalogue. More information can be found by entering an artefact's Museum Number into the COMPASS search engine. Lovecraft always blended fiction with reality; why should our games be any different?

Astrolabe Quadrant



Europe, 14th Century A.D.
Museum Number: M&ME 1995, 4-3, 1
Museum Location: Room 42, Medieval, case 12
Radius: 136 mm (5")
Description: The astrolabe quadrant bears the markings of a full astrolabe, except the markings are folded twice across the faceplate. This type of astrolabe first appeared in Europe in the 14th century, although its principles and use are documented as early as 150 B.C.

This incomplete astrolabe is made of brass, and has a permanent tympanum, or front 'plate', bearing the azimuth and altitude markings for use in England. While the astrolabe quadrant has the usual markings of astrolabes of this type, the its engraving is not precise. The rotating disc, or 'lunar volvelle,' is incomplete, and the calendrical scales on the reverse side are missing, rendering it useless.

Keepers' Information: The astrolabe quadrant is an unfinished reconstruction of a device once owned by Pharazyn the Enchanter, an elder magus of Hyperborea. If its incomplete markings were completed using Pharazyn's astronomical scales, it would be capable of providing far more extraordinary information than any mundane astrolabe. A competent user would be able to determine the location of Vhoorl and Xoth, worlds visited by Cthulhu before descending upon Earth, as well as the exact latitude and longitude of Mhu Thulan, Pharazyn's Hyperborean homeland. More importantly, it also allows an experienced user to determine the date and time when 'the stars are right.'

Anyone who has studied the Hyperborean, Atlantean, or Egyptian versions of the *Book of Eibon* in depth will realise that they contain detailed plans for the construction of the Astrolabe of Pharazyn. Later editions of the text omitted them, presumably due to translation difficulties.

Several skills are required to complete and use Pharazyn's astrolabe. A copy of the *Book of Eibon* that contains the construction plans is essential. Investigators attempting to complete the astrolabe must use Craft (Metalworking) or a related skill, and make successful skill rolls in Astronomy, Cthulhu Mythos, and Mathematics [Knowledge (astronomy) and (mathematics) checks: DC15]. A completed astrolabe that is studied and used for 14 weeks increases Astronomy +7% [+2 ranks] and Cthulhu Mythos +5% [+1 rank] at a cost of 1D6/1D10 Sanity points. Keepers may wish to vary the Sanity loss based upon the use of the astrolabe and the secrets revealed.

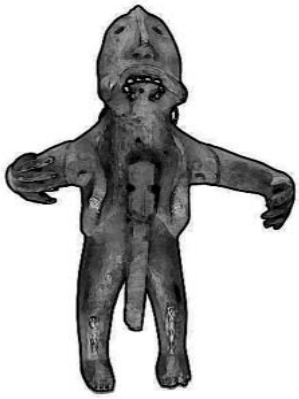
Doctor Dee's Mirror

Aztec, 15th-16th century A.D.
Museum Number: M&ME 1966, 10-1, 1
Museum Location: Room 46, Europe: 15th-18th centuries, case 6
Diameter: 18.4cm (7.3")
Description: This mirror of obsidian glass was used by the Elizabethan mathematician, astrologer, and magician John Dee (1527-1608/9). Called a 'shew-stone,' the mirror was kept in Dee's collection of reflective objects and used in his occult researches. Brought to Europe from Mexico by Cortés between 1527 and 1530, it was associated with Tezcatlipoca, the Aztec god of rulers, warriors, and sorcerers whose name translates as the "Smoking Mirror". Dee and his associate Edward Kelley (1555-1597) were interested in using the shew-stone to speak with spirits and angels.

Keepers' Information: Tezcatlipoca is another name for the Outer God Nyarlathotep. If the mirror is smeared with fresh human blood (taken and applied within an hour), with a successful Cthulhu Mythos roll to determine the right chants and gestures, it reveals horribly disturbing scenes associated with Azathoth and his Great Court. Seeing such visions is mind-shattering, resulting in a Sanity loss of 1D10/1D100 yet providing the viewer with 1D10 points of Cthulhu Mythos [+1d2 ranks]. Call/Dismiss, Contact, and Summon/Bind spells associated with any Outer God or associated servitor

species cast while the mirror is held by the caster, and while it is bathed in blood, have a +25% chance of succeeding.

Figure of a Shaman's Spirit Helper



Yup'ik, 19th century A.D., from Alaska, United States of America
Museum Number: Ethno 1855, 11-26.169
Museum Location: Department of Ethnography (study collection)
Diameter: 30cm (12")
Description: This ritual figure is constructed of wood and sinew, with a circle of fox teeth forming a feral maw. This Alaskan Yup'ik Spirit Helper was used in rituals to aid in expelling animal and otherworldly spirits thought to be able to possess a human. Similar fetishes have been found throughout Alaska; traditionally such artefacts are a warning for those who consider breaking tribal taboos. When wielded by a shaman, they become mystical tools to heal, protect, and ward against evil spirits.

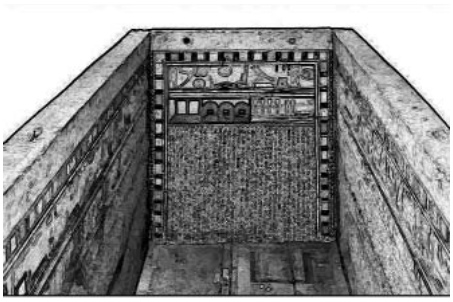
Keeper's Information: This particular fetish once was once used by a worshiper of Ithaqua to extract and store life energy from sacrificial victims. Using it first requires an understanding of its true nature, which can only be accomplished with 2D6 weeks of study. Investigators undertaking this study must have knowledge in Cthulhu Mythos, Folklore, Anthropology, or Archaeology [Knowledge (Folklore, Anthropology, or Archaeology)] (Keepers may deem other skills as related). However in order to use the Spirit Helper, the user must also know or have used the spell Steal Life.

The Spirit Helper holds 1D6 POW [Wis]. This energy can be sensed by anyone who touches it and makes a Spot Hidden roll [Spellcraft check: DC15]: A successful roll conveys tingling, warmth, and euphoria. The amount of POW stored in the fetish determines the intensity of the sensation.

The Spirit Helper can drain POW [Wis] or restore POW [Wis] to a living being. The user must wave it over a living target for 1 minute per POW extracted or restored. The victim must remain completely immobile; physical movement immediately halts the process. The user decides the direction the POW [Wis] flows. A target reduced to zero POW [Wis] is dead. POW cannot be imbued into a non-living being or object.

The few Ithaqua worshippers that exist will covet this treasure if they learn of it and willingly risk their lives or the lives of others to possess it.

Inner Coffin of Gua



Tomb of Gua, Deir el-Bersha, Egypt, 12th Dynasty, 1985-1795 B.C.
Museum Number: EA 30840
Museum Location: Room 63, Egyptian Funerary Archaeology, case 4
Length: 224.9cm (88.6")
Description: This wooden inner coffin is decorated mainly with hieroglyphic texts. The lid is inscribed with an address to Anubis, while the exterior sides address Osiris, Isis, Nyarlat, and Nephthys, all gods associated with the dead. All the inscriptions are incised and filled with pigment, as are the wedjat eyes, which allow the mummy to see outside the coffin towards the rising sun. The coffin interior is similarly decorated with spells and complemented by pictures that assist the deceased in passing through the dangers of the Underworld before being reborn. On the base of the coffin black lines form a map of the Underworld.

The rich decorations of the coffin, the associated outer coffin, and other items on display suggest that its occupant would have been quite a wealthy and influential man in his day.

Keepers' Information: Nyarlat is another name for the Outer God Nyarlathotep, and Gua was a member of an ancient brotherhood who worshipped him in his guise of the Black Pharaoh, Nephren-Ka. The map is not of the Underworld; rather it shows the location of Nephren-Ka's temple in Egypt. In addition there are five spells written on the coffin: Speak with Mighty Messenger (Contact Nyarlathotep), Return from the Afterlife (Resurrection), Parting of the Way (Dread Curse of Azathoth), Seer of Unannounced Enemies (Powder of Ibn-Gazi), and The Black Curse (Shrivelling). Each spell can be learnt in a week of dedicated study [1d3 weeks to learn], with a successful Other Language (Egyptian Hieroglyphics) skill roll [Speak Egyptian Hieroglyphics check: DC15] and an Idea roll on INT x3 [Int check: DC20].

Investigators who know the truth about the map require 1D3 weeks study, combined with successful Archaeology and Navigation/Land skill rolls [Knowledge (archaeology) and Intuit Direction checks: DC15] to pinpoint the location on a modern map. For more information on what can be found in the tomb, refer to 'The Penhew-Carlyle Foundation,' *The Black Seal #2*, pages 52-57. If the foundation learns the truth behind this coffin they will be extremely interested in recovering it.

The Pitney Brooch

Anglo-Scandinavia, second half of the 11th century A.D.
Museum Number: M&ME 1979, 11- 1, 1
Museum Location: Sutton Hoo display in Early Medieval, case 32, no. 37
Diameter: 39mm (1.7")
Description: This ornate brooch, depicting a round-eyed snake biting the underbelly of a four-legged animal, was cast in bronze and likely considered a prestigious symbol of wealth or position. The brooch exemplifies the combined English and Scandinavian (Viking) art styles of its period, known as the Urnes Style.

The four-legged animal, which is also represented as biting itself, has a length of beads running along its underside that stretches into a ribbon on the brooch.

Keeper's Information: The design on the brooch symbolizes humanity's struggle against the animal-like Wendol. While the true nature of the Wendol is unknown, scholars have suggested that the Wendol were a pre-human race of dwarf-like humanoids, or perhaps even the ancient Voormis.

Careful observation of the 'beads' running along the underside of the four-legged animal uncovers intricate variations in each bead. Discovery of

these variations requires the use of a magnifying glass and several hours of study. Once found, however, an investigator can make a halved Idea roll or Cryptography roll [INT check: DC25 or Decipher Text check: DC20] to discern that the variation in the beads is a coded message.

The message is written in Hyperborean and encoded, and consequently extremely difficult to decipher. Any investigator attempting to decode the message must make rolls in both Cryptography and Hyperborean [Decipher Text and Speak Hyperborean check: DC15]. Investigators making successful rolls discover the spell Alter Weather.

Pointed Flint Hand Axe

Lower Palaeolithic, about 350,000 years old, from Gray's Inn Road, London, England
Museum Number: P&EE 246
Museum Location: Department of Prehistory and Early Europe (study collection)
Length: 16.5cm (7")
Description: In 1696, farmer John Conyers discovered this flint hand axe in gravel, near the bones of an elephant. After his death, the discovery was published by John Bagford, who postulated that the flint hand axe had been used by Ancient Britons resisting the Roman invasion of AD 43. The elephant was assumed to have accompanied the Roman army.

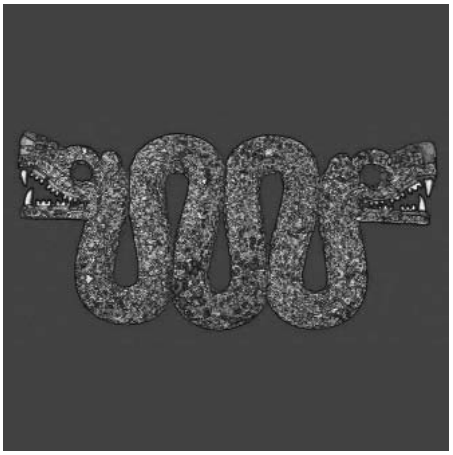
Modern research, however, has shown that the hand axe likely belonged to humanity's ancestors, and dates from around 350,000 years ago, during the last Ice Age (a point in time when elephants actually lived in Britain).

Keepers' Information: The hand axe is much more unusual than modern scholars realise. It was created by a primitive shaman to remind humanity of its ancient foes the serpent people, and the many great victories his tribe had recorded against them. The axe possesses the power to hurl a person into the past to the day it was created.

Unfortunately, the mechanism through which the hand axe's enchantment is activated is primitive to say the least: the target needs to be hit over the head with it, knocking the target unconscious, at which point it will send him or her backward in time to the day of the hand axe's creation.

The axe uses the spell Look to the Past, which is similar to the Look to the Future spell found in the *Call of Cthulhu* rulebook except that it does not require POW [Str] to activate and the destination time cannot be altered. Once unconscious, the target stays in the past physically for a period equal in hours to his or her POW [Str], after which consciousness is regained and the target returns to the present with full memory of what occurred. The hand axe does 1D6+db [1d4]. Travelling into the past causes 1D4/2D6 Sanity loss.

Turquoise Mosaic of a Double-Headed Serpent



Aztec/Mixtec, 15th-16th century A.D. from Mexico
Museum Number: Ethno 1894-634
Museum Location: Room 27, Mexico
Dimensions: Height 20.5cm (8.1"), Width 43.3cm (17.1")
Description: This Aztec icon was carved from wood and then covered with a turquoise mosaic in the shape of a coiled two-headed serpent. Iron pyrites and shells create the effect of eyes while red and white shells add detail to the noses and mouths of the two serpent heads. The object was most likely a ceremonial decoration worn as a pectoral—an ornament worn on the chest.

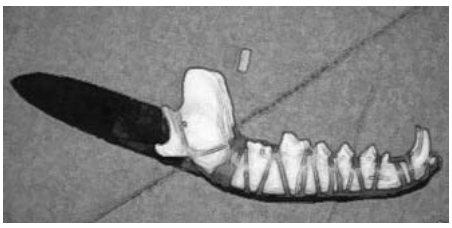
Keeper's Information: The Aztecs associated serpents with the god Quetzalcoatl—their name for the Great Old One Yig. This double-headed serpent represents Yig and his brother Rokon, who still dwells on their home world of Zandanua.

This item is a sacred object to Yig. Anyone who wears it can command any snake with a POW versus POW contest [the snake must make a Will saving throw: DC15]. Casting the spell Summon/Bind Child of Yig causes a large lancehead snake with two heads, one at each end of its body, to appear from one of the pectoral's eyes. Seeing this unnatural animal costs 0/1D3 Sanity. The lancehead is automatically bound to the pectoral wearer and, unless commanded to do otherwise, attacks all other individuals present. Each head has an attack chance of 30% [Bite +5]. A successful attack (unless dodged) injects a poison that kills instantly; there is no antivenom. This Child of Yig has 4 hit points, but due to its small size, firearms only have a half chance of hitting the creature [AC 17].

The spell Call/Dismiss Yig cast while holding the pectoral succeeds automatically, provided that the caster is somewhere in the world where snakes are naturally found. When Yig appears, he is furious that the investigators have the pectoral in their possession and demands its immediate return—but unless the investigators behave as if they were worshippers of Yig, he will kill them regardless. If investigators display sufficient reverence, he will have a task for them: Travel to Peru and obtain the brother to this pectoral, currently in possession of the Mi-Go at one of their mining colonies in the Andes. Yig will implant the location of the mines inside the minds of the investigators and then disappear. If the investigators have not acted inside of three months, Yig may send his children to finish them once and for all as punishment.

Archived Artefacts

Bone and Flint Knife



Republic of Vietnam, Montagnard, circa 1900 A.D.
Museum Number: 56978-561-AV1
Museum Location: Blyth House, Olympia, Isle 25, Row 10, Crate 2134324
Dimensions: Overall: 26.7cm (10.5") Blade Length: 12.7cm (5")
Description: A flint knife, the grip of which is made of the jawbone of a small native predator and held on by sinew. A note with the artefact states that it is a religious item used in the preparation of the sacred brews by Northern Vietnamese mountain folk and that the artefact was donated to the museum in 1985 by a private collector. The knife is clearly not a fighting weapon, as the teeth on the jawbone would cut the fingers or palm of

the person using it; more likely it is ceremonial in nature.

The jawbone is that of a coyote, an animal not native to Vietnam; whilst the sinews can be identified as belonging to a buffalo in a lab. The flint is actually from North America, probably North Dakota, a source much favoured by Native American toolmakers. The Native American Indians of the Plains often used such knives, claiming that they received them in trade from the forest gods, or Manitou.

Keepers Information: Knives like these have been recovered before, notably after contact with the Sasquatch of North America and the Yeti of Tibet. The knives are used in ritual worship of these creatures, and sometimes in 'blood brother' ceremonies to seal alliances.

This particular item was donated to the museum in 1985 by a former member of the Australian Special Air Service Regiment (SASR) working for Australia House as a diplomatic bodyguard, who found it on a mission to relieve a stranded American Long Range Reconnaissance Patrol (LRRP). He believed it to be the possession of the unit's Montagnard liaison, hence the misidentification by the museum.

It was carried into Vietnam by a soldier of Native American descent as a 'lucky charm.' Serving in a LRRP, his unit was eventually overrun by North Vietnam Army regulars, and the knife passed into the hands of the Australian unit sent to relieve them.

With a successful Library Use roll and an American Indian Language skill such as Navajo, Apache, or Hopi [Research and Speak appropriate American Indian language check: DC15] to discover the correct rituals, this knife allows the user to cast the spells Contact Voormis and Call of the Wild Woods. At the Keeper's discretion it could also be the recipient of a Blessed Blade spell found in the *Call of Cthulhu* rulebook. If used as a weapon, it counts as a small knife.

Celtic Warrior Helmet

Caledonia, Great Britain, Celtic after Roman Design, 200-220 A.D.
Catalogue Number: 22714-990-FXG
Location: Franks House, Hoxton, Isle 19, Row 40, Crate 334167B9
Dimensions: 34cm (13.5")
Description: A bronze helmet of Celtic origin covered in panels of tinned-bronze sheeting stamped with depictions of half-serpent, half-human creatures devouring hordes of Roman legions. The helmet is tagged with only its Catalogue Number, which tied on with string.

The helmet was probably used as a symbolic crown rather than actual protection, although it is based on Roman designs common to the era. Based on its exquisite workmanship, the helmet probably belonged to an important Celtic king. On the inside of the helmet a name has been inscribed which can be translated as Bran Mak Morn.

Keepers' Information: Bran Mak Morn was the King of the Caledonian Picts, who died in battle defending his land from Roman invaders; he also at one time formed a pact with the serpent people—'The Worms of the Earth' of Pictish legend—requesting that they help in his fight against the Romans.

The helmet has no supernatural or sanity-shattering powers of its own, but if an investigator encounters serpent people in Great Britain whilst wearing the helmet, they have a POW x2% chance [Will saving throw: DC25] of honouring their pact with Bran Mak Morn, performing one simple task for that investigator. That task might be as simple as letting them live. This time.

In Great Britain today there is an active cult centred on Bran Mak Morn (see pages 12-13 in *The Black Seal #2*). Comprised of the Pictish descendants of Bran, their duty is to keep his memory alive until he awakens to govern the world again. If this cult learns of the existence of Bran's helmet, they will do all that they can to obtain it. With the helmet in hand the cult will travel to their secret cave on an island where a statue of Bran waits to be awakened. They hope that placing the helmet on the statue's head will achieve this end.

Jivaro Shrunken Head

Oriente Province, Amazon Basin, Ecuador, circa 1910 A.D.
Catalogue Number: Uncategorised
Location: Franks House, Hoxton, Isle 89, Row 20, Crate 445199A0
Dimensions: 11cm (4")
Description: A shrunken head of an Indian man, about the size of a fist. The skin is almost black, and the eyes, mouth, and neck have been sewn together with cotton cords. Long black hair typical of Amazonian Indians still decorates the scalp. An old yellow label tied by string to the head states that it is a "Shrunken Head of the Jivaro

People, Circa 1910 A.D.," purchased from 'Victor Montain's Trading Post, Huancucho, Peru, 1928.' (See Chaosium's *Day of the Beast*.)

The Jivaro are a tribal people of the Amazon who live in the jungle on the border between Peru and Ecuador. While many tribes across the globe practice headhunting, only the Jivaro shrink heads, which they call tsanlsu, a practice outlawed by the Spanish and then the Ecuadorian government. The Jivaro shrank the heads of both human and sloth and collected them as war trophies. They never shrank the heads of white men, however, whom they believed to be too inferior to be worth the effort.

Close observation shows that the cotton cords holding the mouth together have almost come undone, and careful handling is required to prevent further damage. Careful handling means a successful DEX x5 roll [Reflex saving throw: DC15] each time the head is studied, or it is slightly damaged in some way.

Keepers' Information: This particular shrunken head contains the soul of a spectral hunter, a guardian species created from a willing human who undergoes a particularly gruesome transformation (see the *'Spectral Hunter of the Head'*). In this case the human was killed before the transformation was fully completed, and so was able to be fashioned into a shrunken head. However, even in death the human became the supernatural guardian he set out to become. Each spectral hunter has an artefact or ceremonial device which contains its soul, but because the human was killed during the transformation, his artefact became his own head. The spell Enchant Tsanlsu (see *'New Spells'*) was cast upon this head, not only binding the spectral hunter to it, but inside it as well, where it has remained dormant for almost 100 years.

If the cotton threads across its mouth come loose, the spectral hunter is freed from its confinement and will do everything in its power to protect itself. First it will reclaim the shrunken head itself and hide it somewhere safe. After that it will hunt down and kill anyone with knowledge of its existence. If successful in both these tasks it will probably go into hiding, haunting Franks House for decades to come. Destroying the head is the most effective means that investigators have of defeating the spectral hunter, preferably before they accidentally set it free.

New Spells:

Contact Voormis/Sasquatch

This spell attracts the attention of any Voormis in a 32-kilometre (20-mile) radius, who will probably send a small group to investigate. This group may or may not be hostile to the caster, depending on exactly what they find and whether the caster can speak their language or not. The spell works with both Western Voormis (Sasquatch) and the Eastern variety (Yeti). See the *Call of Cthulhu* rulebook for more information on contact spells.

[**Components:** V, S; Cost: 2 Wis damage; **Casting Time:** 1d4+5 full rounds; **Range:** 5 miles/level; **Target:** 1 HD worth of creature/level; **Duration:** Instantaneous; **Saving Throw:** None]

Call of the Wild Woods (Tribal Magic)

This spell can only be cast in thick woodlands, far from human habitation. If the user first cuts himself for 1 hit point of damage and then successfully performs the correct chant and dance (POW x5 and DEX x5 rolls to succeed) [Will saving throw and Perform checks: DC15], they gain +25% to the Track, Climb, Sneak, Hide, and Jump skills at a cost of 1 magic point per hour [+5 ranks to Climb, Hide, Jump, Move Silently and Wilderness Lore for 1 Str damage an hour]. With the spell's completion, the caster is exhausted and sleeps for 3D6 hours. Whilst the spell is in effect, there is a 1% chance per hour of drawing the attention of any Voormis tribe within an 80 kilometre (50 miles) radius. What happens when they find the knife's possessor is at the Keeper's discretion.

[**Components:** V, S (Perform check: DC15); **Cost:** 1 Str damage per hour; **Casting Time:** 10 minutes; **Range:** Personal; **Target:** You; **Duration:** Concentration; **Saving Throw:** None]

Enchant Tsanlsu (Tribal Magic)

This spell is used by the Jivaro people of the Amazon to trap the soul of a victim inside a shrunken head (tsanlsu). The spell requires the caster to kill the victim. During the slaying, the caster must intone the first part of the spell and perform a POW versus POW resistance roll against the newly deceased [victim must make Will saving throw to resist: DC20]. If successful, the dead person's mind is trapped inside their body, still aware of the world around them but unable to do anything about it. The caster then skins, preserves, and shrinks the head, a process which takes several days. The rest of spell is then cast and the caster loses 5 Magic Points [Wis] and 1 Sanity point (there may additional Sanity loss for the actual killing). The lips are sewn together on the head, and the mind of the deceased is forever trapped inside. The victim can only escape if the twine across the mouth comes undone.

[**Components:** V, S; **Cost:** 5 Wis damage and 1 Sanity point; **Casting Time:** 3 days; **Range:** Touch; **Target:** One victim; **Duration:** Permanent; **Saving Throw:** Will negates]

Spectral Hunter of the Head

This hideous humanoid vaguely resembles a demon crossed with a dog and a lobster with the dentition of a shark. Once freed of the shrunken head, it can become invisible at will. Certain types of magical lens will reveal this creature, examples of which may be found amongst other stored artefacts held at the British Museum. If the shrunken head is destroyed, the spectral hunter dies with it, for the head still holds its soul even if it is free to move away from it. Similarly, the hunter cannot move more than 1.6 kilometres (1 mile) from the head.

SPECTRAL HUNTER, freed and mad

STR 25	CON 10	SIZ 20	INT 14	POW 14
DEX 11	Move 8			HP 15

Damage Bonus: +2D6

Weapons: Pincer 50%, damage 3D6

Bite 30%, damage 3D6

Armour: 1 point of hide. While invisible attacks against it are reduced by 70% and it can only be harmed by enchanted weapons.

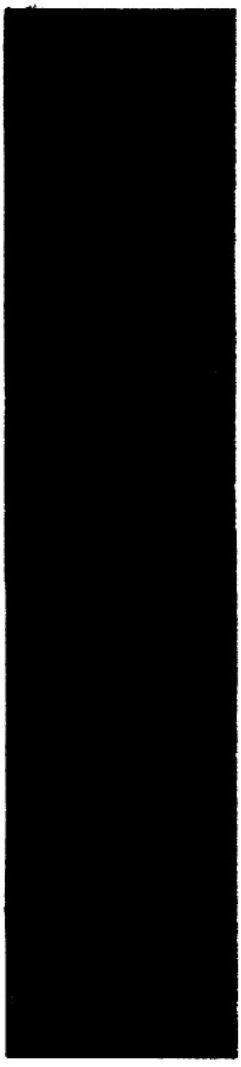
Spells: none

Sanity Loss: 1/1D6+2 Sanity points to see the spectral hunter.

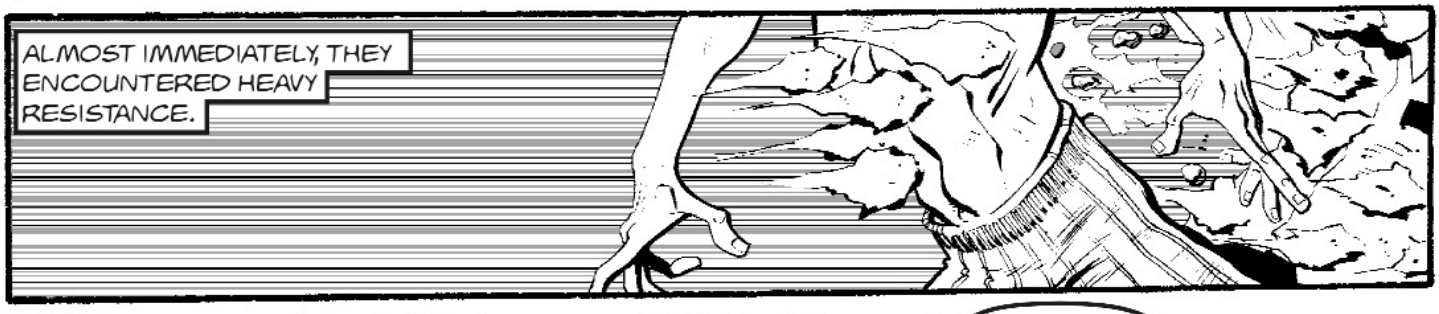
[See stats for spectral hunter, *d20 Call of Cthulhu* rules, page 183.]

CAGES

SCRIPT: *NICK BROWNLOW* ART: *PJ HOLDEN*



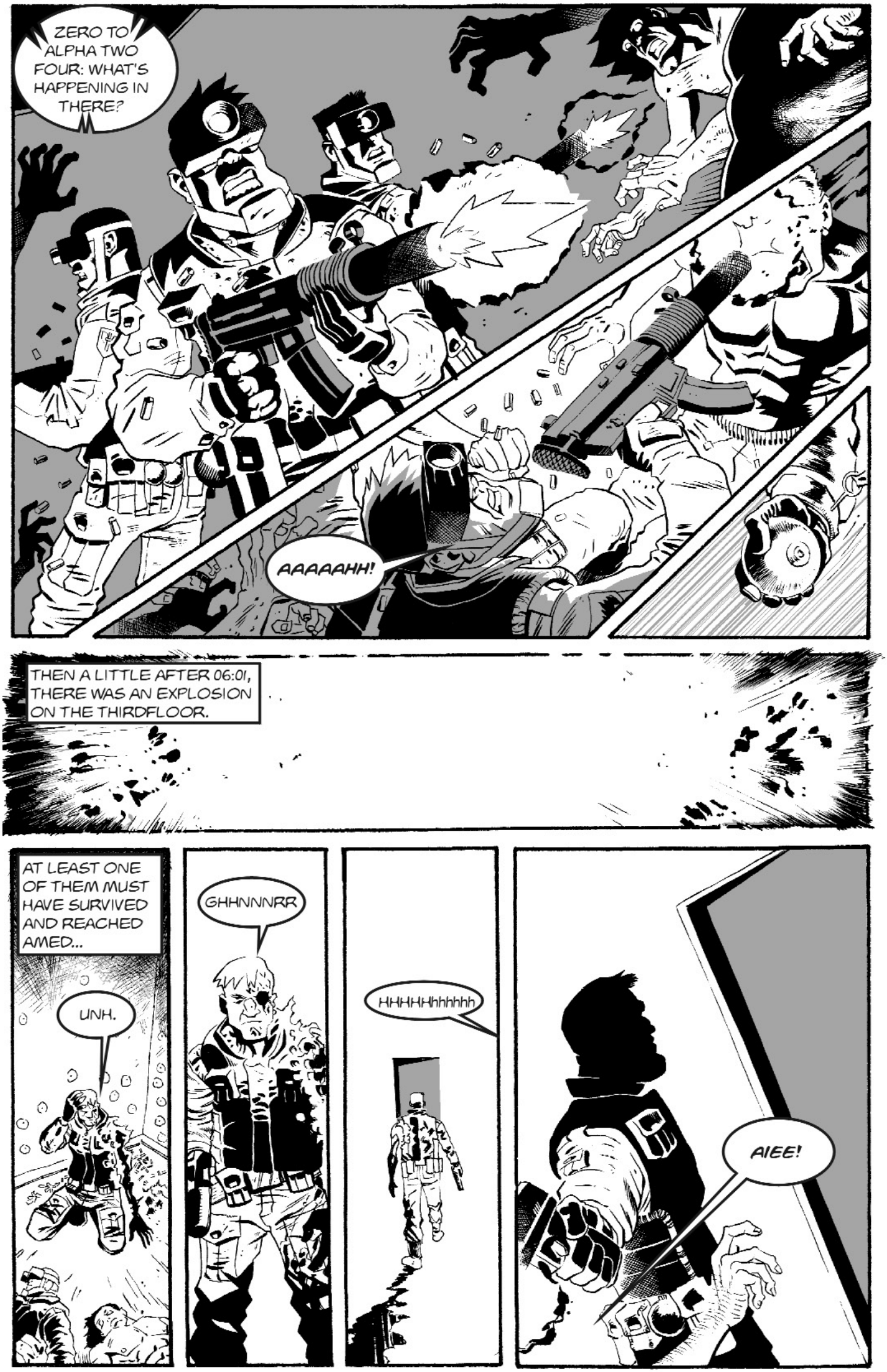

ON OUR RECOMMENDATION, 22 SAS BREACHED THE FACILITY AT 05:53HOURS.
ZERO TO ALPHA TWO FOUR: GREEN LIGHT.

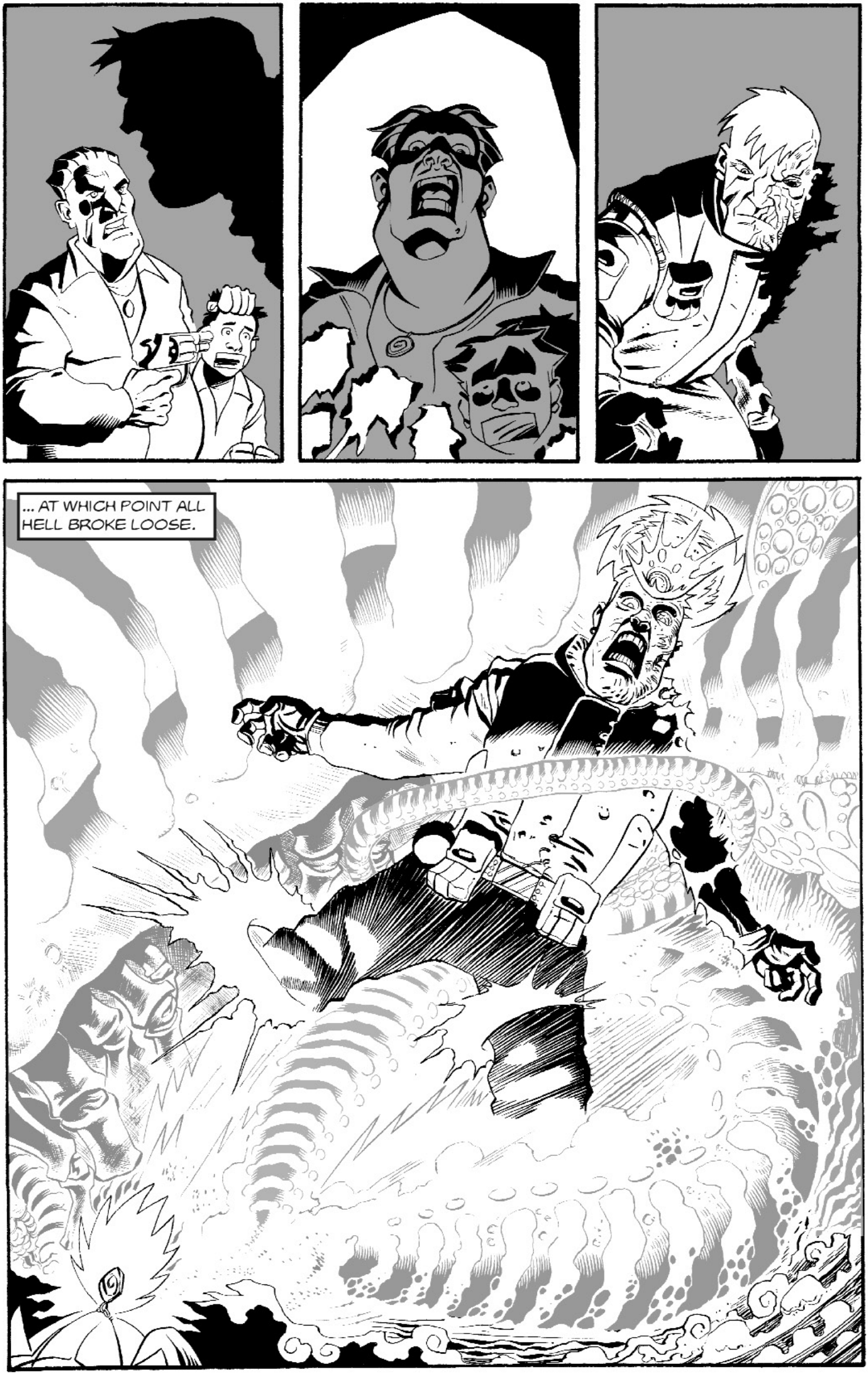

ALMOST IMMEDIATELY, THEY ENCOUNTERED HEAVY RESISTANCE.


AMED! WE'VE GOT TO GET OUT OF HERE! THEY'VE ALL GONE CRAZY!


Oh.


AND YOU'RE UNAFFECTED?
INTERESTING.


ZERO TO ALPHA TWO FOUR: WHAT'S HAPPENING IN THERE?
AAAAAHH!
THEN A LITTLE AFTER 06:01, THERE WAS AN EXPLOSION ON THE THIRDFLOOR.
AT LEAST ONE OF THEM MUST HAVE SURVIVED AND REACHED AMED...
UNH.
GHHNNNRR
HHHHHHhhhhhh
AIEE!


... AT WHICH POINT ALL HELL BROKE LOOSE.


BBC NEWS24
... A FIRE AT THE LANGWOOD DETENTION CENTRE FOR ASYLUM SEEKERS IN BERKSHIRE HAS CLAIMED THE LIVES OF OVER A HUNDRED INMATES...
I KNEW THE LITTLE BASTARD WAS DANGEROUS, BUT JESUS WEPT...
IT WAS A LLOIGOR - A KIND OF n-DIMENSIONAL VAMPIRE THAT FEEDS ON HUMAN SUFFERING AND PAIN.
I HAVE MAJOR WHALEN FROM CREDENHILL ON THE LINE SIR
HE WANTS TO KNOW WHAT'S HAPPENED TO HIS MEN...
CHRIST.
DO YOU STILL NEED ME HERE?
AMED MUST HAVE SMUGGLED IT INTO THE COUNTRY IN ITS DORMANT STATE, AND THEN ORCHESTRATED THIS WHOLE SITUATION IN ORDER TO WAKE IT UP.

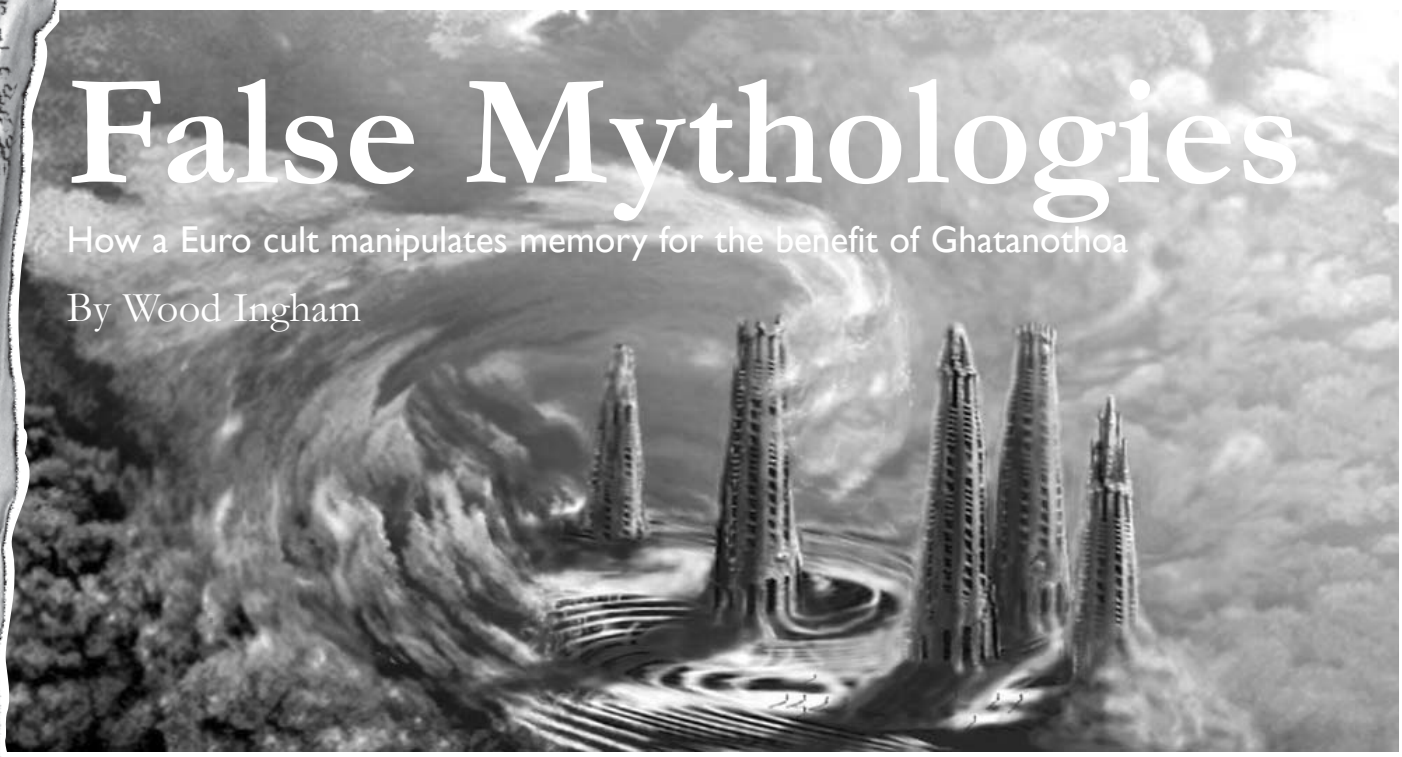

NO, GET YOURSELF BACK TO PLANNING.
I NEED TO KNOW HOW I'M GOING TO PASS OFF A HUNDRED BULLET RIDDEN CORPSES AS BURN VICTIMS INSIDE THE NEXT HOUR.


... ADMINISTRATORS, GROUP 4, PROMISED TO LAUNCH AN IMMEDIATEINVESTIGATION...
Yes Major, I'm aware how much it costs to train these men...

False Mythologies

How a Euro cult manipulates memory for the benefit of Ghatanothoa

By Wood Ingham



A Guide to SIEA/ISAS

La Société Internationale des Études Atlantologiques, known in France by its acronym SIEA, and in the United Kingdom as the International Society for Atlantological Studies (ISAS), works, in the words of its 1993 mission statement, "organiser la connaissance de l'évolution et de la destinée humaine, pour l'amélioration des individus et de la société" ("to promote understanding of human evolution and human destiny, for the betterment of the individual and society").

Like most enthusiastic Atlantological groups, ISAS considers the people of the long-sunken continent of Atlantis to have been highly advanced, technologically and spiritually. By the reclamation of Atlantean society and science through scientific, archaeological, and occult means, the human race will achieve the means to evolve to a higher state. Evolved humans, ISAS says, will then be able to inhabit a newly risen Atlantis, and will benefit from the secrets uncovered there. ISAS's literature—there are over 150 books and pamphlets in print, produced in 19 languages by Presse SIEA, ISAS's publishing house—keeps in print many of the original books on Atlantis and its history by writers such as Ignatius Donelly, William Scott-Elliott, Lewis Spence, and Otto Muck, and adds a half-dozen or so new books each year.

ISAS is by no means the only Atlantological group, nor it is it the only New Age group that promotes rituals and regressions which purport to enable contact with the spirits of Atlantis. It isn't even the only New Age group that has interests in businesses that reflect its philosophy. But it's one of the most successful. The rituals it teaches to the New Age community are potent, its literature is detailed, and its resources seem limitless.

People who have joined ISAS talk of how they found themselves haunted by the ghosts of Atlantis. A television snows over; the picture clears and suddenly shows a group of Rmoahals striding across long-sunken mountains, airships soaring above the clean Atlantean canals, Atlantean priests engaging in unknowable rituals for the evolution of their race. The phone rings, and the voice at the end of the line is crackly, inhuman, shares a few of your secrets, and tells you the Masters are watching over you. You get 100 text messages all saying the same thing in classical Greek, Hebrew, or languages nobody seems to recognise. If you're followed around by these things, you'll nearly always somehow find your way to ISAS.

There's always a New Age book abandoned by its reader nearby, or a flyer for a training course. Or a poster for a seminar about Atlantis at the local Spiritualist Church is posted on a lamp post across the street. And you find them, and they help you make sense of it. ISAS explains the hauntings, shows you how to learn from what the Masters are trying to tell you, encourages you to develop the potential you've shown, gives you meaning. Of course you were going to find ISAS. It was meant to be. The Masters intended it that way all along.

History

ISAS was founded as La Société Belge des Études Atlantologiques in 1962 by Etienne Tremper, the twenty-something beatnik son of a minister in the Belgian Government. It began as just another New Age society, with a few members in Brussels who met together for 'contact sessions'. SBEA saw very little growth until 1971.

In a 1985 interview with *Fate* magazine, Tremper traced SBEA's success back to one event in that year, a group trip to the Dolmens at St. Juste, Brittany, France. "We spent the Vernal Equinox there. As the sun set, and we began to chant the words, we were all suddenly—how do I say it?—struck by a presence of tremendous power. I asked him if he was one of the Ones from Below the Ocean. The Old Ones. And he said yes."

Tremper maintained that he had—after years of trying to reach the Old Ones—finally made contact with an Atlantean High Priest named Kthan-thah, who had taught him the rituals necessary for all those who would contact the Masters.

By the end of 1971 SBEA had taken off, seeing a massive leap in membership. It gained an office in Paris and an administrative structure by the end of 1972, and continued to grow until 1975, when, with offices in Munich, Milan, and London, the society changed its name to SIEA, or ISAS. Also in the mid-'70s, Tremper began investing (his father's money) with stunning acumen, buying into a number of companies whose stock shot up. Since then ISAS has become richer and richer, while still appearing to be a relatively small society. ISAS exploited the fall of the Soviet Union, and its Russian branch is still its fastest growing area.

Although ISAS suffered with Tremper's suicide in 1992, his assistant, Alain Ghirmeyn, took over and the organisation continued to grow. To the surprise of many, ISAS opened its most recent office in Sarajevo in September 2002.

Assets

Based in Brussels, ISAS has small offices in Milan, London, Moscow, Amsterdam, Sarajevo, Luxembourg, and Munich. The Brussels office has 17 administrative staff, including the general director, Alain Ghirmeyn, and his assistant, Christophe Dell. Most of the other offices only have four or five staff. ISAS also owns an estate near Leuven, where its residential training courses are held, and at which Presse SIEA is based.

As of last year, ISAS had 3,313 members

on its books. Members of ISAS pay a premium of □120 each year, which gets them discounts on Presse SIEA's new releases, a bi-monthly magazine and newsletter, and regular updates about events and seminars. This accounts for the barest fraction of ISAS's revenue; in fact, it's financially unnecessary. While ISAS will, if asked, cite overheads, the real reason there's a subscription charge at all is simply that the kind of people at whom ISAS's literature is aimed at are not generally the kind who'd join a society that offered free membership.

ISAS funds between five and ten 'appropriate' archaeological projects every year. Recent digs have centred around dolmens and standing stones in the British Isles and in Northern France; several of these are ongoing. ISAS currently has nine archaeologists working under its aegis. The fringe nature of ISAS's archaeological research generally means that while there's very rarely a shortage of volunteers, any findings they make tend not to be treated seriously by mainstream academia. Nevertheless, ISAS maintains good relations with the ancient monument protection agencies of the British Isles and France with generous funding, the following of agency guidelines to the letter, and a consistently good record of publishing their excavations.

Apart from its office administrators, ISAS supports, trains, and funds 62 full-time workers across Europe. Thirty of these men and women are seminar workers; they travel around their respective countries in pairs, leading seminars on Atlantis, open psychic reading meetings, and past-life regression workshops. Sixteen of these are genuine mediums and seem to have a real contact with a spirit world—although *which* spirit world is open to question.

These meetings and seminars are the first point of contact with ISAS for most people, and ISAS mainly recruits new members through information given in these meetings, although ads often run in the occult and New Age press. (Prediction has run adverts for ISAS every month for the last three years.)

Although only in existence for some 40 years, ISAS has a frightening array of resources and a seemingly limitless bank account. ISAS owns a significant share (10% or more) in about 20 European companies, all of which perform at least some research in medical science, artificial intelligence, or genetic engineering. ISAS has controlling interest in three of these companies: Weide Gmbh, a Munich-based pharmaceuticals firm; Peregrine Implant Technologies (PIT) Ltd, a medical research laboratory in Essex; and Barthes Cybernetics, a Brussels-based company that specialises in medical technology. Alain Ghirmeyn, ISAS's current director, has been the managing director of Barthes since 1998 and has been instrumental in the company's recent push toward research in nanotechnology and human/computer interfacing.

While ISAS doesn't advertise its business interests, preferring to appear to the general public as no more than another benevolent (if idiosyncratic) New Age organisation, it makes no effort to hide its investments. It claims that the companies it invests in are in line with its philosophies—and if challenged on this point, Alain Ghirmeyn points to the presence of its 30 ethical advisors, who work in the head office of every ISAS-related company.

However, few people who work for ISAS-related companies have much of an idea what the ethical advisors are supposed to do, exactly. The job of these impeccably dressed and icy assessors from ISAS seems to have little to do with advice, or for that matter ethics.

Recruitment

Two or three times a year, ISAS runs residential training courses at its Leuven estate. These usually last between three days and a fortnight, and are advertised in the occult press and through mail-outs to ISAS members about a year before they happen, although they're very rarely booked up completely until the very last minute. They're usually held in English and/or French, depending on the languages spoken by the majority of people, and attract 20 to 30 people at a time.

The courses tend to be fairly laid-back, leaving a lot of free time for the guests, with morning seminars and evening meditations. ISAS recruits its staff from people who have taken part in these sessions. Jeanne-Marie Laurent, ISAS's human resources manager, vets those who would make ideal employees in the organisation. Mlle. Laurent tends to look for real enthusiasm and—even better—equally real psychic talents in those she would consider training as seminar workers. Meanwhile, the only criteria for ethical advisors seems to be a willingness to move around at a moment's notice.

Those earmarked as potential employees get taken to one side during the course and offered the job on the spot. If the offer is accepted, they are invited for further training. Seminar workers get to go to another, more in-depth fortnight-long course at Leuven, all expenses paid; potential ethical advisors are taken to a small facility in Brussels rented out to ISAS by Barthes Cybernetics for a month of 'intensive training.'

ISAS didn't take on any new employees between 1998 and 2002, but it has recently begun to hire again, having trained four new seminar workers and six new ethical advisors in the last year.

The Truth About ISAS

Up to this point, the information about ISAS has been what any fairly conscientious investigator could find with a bit of dedicated spadework. But, let's face it: There's going to be an awful truth, isn't there? This is it. The Atlantis myths perpetuated by ISAS are lies. ISAS is a means for the human race to be cattle—complacent, healthy, happy cattle, sure, but cattle nonetheless, food for beings that exist at the edge of our imagination.

Atlantis and the Great Old Ones

ISAS's Atlantis myths are dangerously inaccurate. True, there are continents beneath the sea, and, when the stars are right, they will rise again. But the secrets they hold will not be the salvation of humanity.

Blavatsky's theory of root races is completely untrue. There were no Chhayas, no Lemurian beast-people, no Rmoahals. The truth of Atlantis can be found in part in Von Junzt's *Unaussprechlichen Kulten*, in the works of Harold H. Copeland, and by reading between the lines in the *Book of Dzyan*. What follows is extrapolated from those texts.

Humankind was, we are told, was developed by the Elder Things of Antarctica from ape ancestors. The race was soon allowed to run free, and quickly developed into the form paleo-anthropologists now know as Homo Heidelbergensis. A number of these evolved over the millennia into Homo Sapiens. After developing civilisations in Hyperborea, Zobna, and Lomar, humankind finally settled about 500,000 years ago on the newly risen isle of Lemuria. Whether through a mistake in the Elder Things' design or through the influence of forces from Outside, humanity began to worship the Great Old Ones, and continued to do so for around 100,000 years.

When Lemuria sank due to natural upheaval, the survivors moved to Mu in the Pacific and started yet again. Here, too, the human race gave itself fully over to the worship of Shub-Niggurath, Nug and Yeb, Cthulhu and Ghatanothoa. And here the first cases of interbreeding with the Deep Ones occurred. Conflict between the worshippers of Shub-Niggurath and of Ghatanothoa eventually culminated in magics unleashed to such a scale that Mu, like Lemuria before it, sank. Although there were few survivors, the priesthoods of the Great Old Ones numbered large among them. Through the instigation of these priests, the civilisation of Atlantis was founded.

Atlantis was in many ways the pinnacle of human scientific achievement: The Atlanteans had harnessed life-force energy to make vehicles, weapons, and thinking machines which were far beyond anything that could be imagined as possible even today. A few of the sorcerer-scientist priests of Atlantis are even reputed to have found the secret of immortality. The air was clean, the people were healthy and well fed—almost exactly as described in the works of Scott-

What ISAS Tells You

ISAS's literature reflects pretty accurately the work of writers such as Edgar Cayce, W. Scott-Elliott, Mme Blavatsky, and Rudolf Steiner. What follows is a brief overview of the Atlantean myth-cycle. Everything mentioned here appears in real-world books. The enterprising Keeper is advised to check out some of the original sources; a list of e-texts freely available on the web can be found at the end of this article.

The Atlantis myth began with Plato's *Critias* and *Timaeus*, written around the beginning of the fourth century B.C. Both give (slightly contradictory) accounts of a war between Athens and the corrupt and enormous island of Atlantis, which, according to Plato's text, happened in about 10,500 B.C. The people of Atlantis, he said, were the children of the god Poseidon. A disaster overtook the island and it sank beneath the sea, destroying all of its people.

Atlantis was treated as an allegory by most writers (with a couple of exceptions) until 1882, when Ignatius Donnelly wrote the first of two books on Atlantis (*Atlantis: The Antediluvian Age* and *Ragnarok: The Age of Fire and Gravel*, respectively). Donnelly speculated that the Atlanteans were in fact the basis of all civilisations—writing, religion, architecture, the lot. All were gifts of the Atlanteans. Evidence, said Donnelly, is all over the world, ranging from pyramids to hieroglyphs to evidence of sun-worship.

The sunken-continent theories of the 19th century were further complicated by lemurs. Yes, that's right, lemurs—the little monkeys with the big eyes. The little ring-tailed animals proved a puzzle for the early Darwinists, as they existed both in Madagascar and around the Indian Ocean. Did they swim? In the 1860s it was posited by several prominent Darwinists that there was once a continent in the Indian Ocean, across which the lemurs travelled, before it sank. Paul Sclater designated it "Lemuria," and in the 1870s Ernst Haeckel suggested that in the absence of a missing link, maybe this was where humankind first evolved.

Donnelly, Sclater, and Haeckel inspired a whole host of the then-burgeoning New Religious Movements (such as Steiner's theosophists) to present their own theories about the origins of humanity. Enter Mme. Helena Petrovna Blavatsky, who in *Isis Unveiled* and *The Secret Doctrine* (published in several volumes throughout the 1880s) claimed to have been shown the origins of man in a mysterious book of palm leaves called the *Stanzas of Dzyan*.

Mankind was, said Mme. Blavatsky, the fifth of seven root races. Each root race had a number of sub-races. The first root race of humanity, said Blavatsky, were the Chhayas, who lived some 18 million years ago. They were boneless, mindless creatures who reproduced by budding, much like the aquatic hydra. They were followed by the 'Fathers of the Sweat-Born,' who reproduced by exuding secretions which became egg-like substances, which hatched into the 'Sweat-Born.' The Sweat-Born eventually laid eggs, evolving into the 'Egg Born,' the huge, ungainly inhabitants of Lemuria. The Lemurians, who were the third root race, eventually divided up into male and female genders and were, according to Blavatsky, the immediate antecedents of the "lower races of Africa and Australia."

When Lemuria sank beneath the sea, the first properly human root race, according to Blavatsky, evolved on Atlantis. Sub-races included the Rmoahals (colossal black-skinned barbarians), the Tlavatlis, the Olmecs, the Turanians, and the Atlanteans proper. The Rmoahals and the earlier Atlantean sub-races were almost wholly right-brained, having amazing powers of memory and imagination but next to no problem-solving ability, but the later Atlanteans developed amazing scientific acumen to complement their psychic abilities.

When Atlantis fell, its inhabitants escaped and taught civilisation to modern humankind, the so-called "Aryans"—the fifth root race. According to Blavatsky, the sixth and seventh root races haven't evolved yet, but many occultists believe that the more highly evolved sixth race will appear when Atlantis rises again from the ocean.

W. Scott-Elliot's *Story of Atlantis* added a whole new dimension to this. He wrote about the Atlanteans having airships powered by 'Vril' (supposedly a beneficial and all-purpose energy force), apocalyptic doomsday weapons, sorcery, and flying ships. Apparently, Scott-Elliot got the idea of 'Vril' from Lord Lytton's novel *The Coming Race*.

Rudolf Steiner also wrote at length about the inhabitants of Atlantis and Lemuria in his collection of lectures entitled *Cosmic Memory: Prehistory of the Earth and Man* (1909), giving details on how a left-brained people coped with the world.

In 1926 James Churchward added another element into the mix, with his mostly channelled account of Mu, a third lost continent, this time in the Pacific. Its inhabitants escaped its end and went to Atlantis. According to Churchward, they were tall, blonde, blue-eyed Aryans. Then there was 1940s U.S. psychic Edgar Cayce, who wrote of Atlantis rising again, declaring that a secret chamber under the Sphinx would be opened, revealing all the world's mysteries and precipitating the rise of Atlantis.

By the 1960s, orthodox opinion had shifted from "Atlantis might have existed" to "Atlantis probably didn't exist, but we're still open to the possibility" to "Atlantis definitely didn't exist." Notwithstanding the work of people like Graham Hancock and Robert Bauval, that's where orthodox historians stand today.

But occult Atlantology is alive and well. British mystic Murry Hope claims to be a reincarnated Atlantean priestess, and, following Nazi rocket scientist Otto Muck's work in the 1950s and 1960s, identifies Lemuria and Mu as one and the same place, settling for the Pacific and not the Indian Ocean as its location. She refers to Steiner and Cayce as "reliable mystics." Like Blavatsky and many others before her, Hope claim that among the symbols given to mankind with the invention of the first world religion was the four-sided cross, a variation of this being the crooked cross of India, as in the swastika adopted by the Nazis (they believed it to be an ancient Aryan symbol, after all). While Hope is at pains to disavow racist interpretations of Atlantean prehistory, the ethnology of Atlantis is mentioned in her work in some detail.

For a *Call of Cthulhu* keeper, Steiner and Scott-Elliot are the most immediately readable sources, although the second volume of Blavatsky's *Secret Doctrine* gives a great deal of information, and the adoption of its idiosyncratic prose style in 'found documents' can offer a great deal of flavour to a game.

Elliott. And every man, woman and child was given over, body and soul, to the worship of the Great Old Ones and the Outer Gods. The well-ordered utopia of Atlantis hid a terrible evil—the Crawling Chaos nestling at the heart of humanity.

The Atlanteans, at the instigation of Nyarlathotep, began, after several thousand years, to wage wars of conquest against those remnants of Hyperborea and Lomar who yet survived in Europe and the Americas, and who had at least partly given up the worship of the Great Old Ones. Although they never managed to completely extinguish the 'heretics,' they did succeed in finally destroying the last vestiges of the Neanderthal civilisation of Northern Europe. The Neanderthals were the last offshoot of humanity to have never had anything to do with the Great Old Ones.

Over the millennia, a number of earthquakes and floods reduced the size of the island. The sorcerer-priests of Atlantis used magic to keep the land stable, but their power was finite, and in about 10,500 B.C., shortly after fighting a disastrous war against the people of Southern Europe which depleted the powers of the priests, Atlantis succumbed to natural forces and sank beneath the sea. Many escaped—including the priests of the Old Ones, who attempted to re-establish the civilisation of Atlantis in other lands.

On the whole, they failed. Although they were able to infiltrate the emerging pagan religions of Europe and the Americas, they had far less effect on the rise of civilisations than the Atlantologists would have us believe. It seems that in this, at least, the orthodox archaeologists are correct: the civilisations of the ancient world did indeed develop—for the

most part—independently, albeit tainted by the influence of the last of Atlantis' sorcerer-scientists. A few colonies of the Atlantean civilisation were founded, and although most were destroyed, one or two yet survive—including blue-lit K'n-Yan, which still exists under the western United States.

In the mid-sixth century B.C., one of the last immortal survivors of Atlantis, posing as an Egyptian priest, told a version of the story of Atlantis to the Greek Lawgiver Solon in an attempt to induct him into a cult of Nyarlathotep which still existed in Heliopolis. Solon, although impressed by the story, was unable to learn more, as the priest vanished shortly after their conversation, exterminated in a purge of his cult by the vengeful Sun-Priests of Heliopolis. Unaware of this, Solon returned to Greece, telling his story many years later to a young friend, who decades later still told it to his grandson, who would, in later decades of the fifth century, eventually tell it to the philosopher Socrates.

Socrates' biographer, Plato, was so taken by the story that he used it as an allegorical figure for the duty of man to the state and the courage of a just war in two separate dialogues, again heavily modified. Plato's version of Atlantis portrays a great and perfect civilisation brought down by circumstances and its own pride—and this is what those Atlantean cults which survived through the ages would have us believe: That the state of the people of Atlantis was a blessed one, and that we should return to it. In their opinion, this is wholly true.

This is the ultimate secret of Atlantis: Through Atlantis, the human race has been tainted by the Mythos. If we are destined to one day "become as the Great Old Ones, free and wild and beyond good and evil, with laws and morals thrown aside and with all men shouting and killing and revelling in joy," it is because we still carry the taint of Atlantis in us. When R'lyeh rises, humanity is doomed to be cattle once more, willing followers of the Old Ones, just as we were before the ancient lands sank.

The Survivors of Atlantis

While many of the cults which existed in Atlantis and Lemuria still exist, most have developed new mythologies over time. While the words used to worship Shub-Niggurath, Nyarlathotep, and Cthulhu have not changed, many of the myths which their cults propagate have developed, the better to ensnare new believers. The two exceptions are the cults of Ghatanothoa and Zoth-Ommog, which, even up to the present, still maintain the true histories of Atlantis, Lemuria, and Mu. Of all those who would use the legends of Atlantis to the benefit of the Old Ones, the cult of Ghatanothoa is most aggressive.

Ghatanothoa and the Lloigor

Beneath the ocean, the illimitable horror Ghatanothoa still sleeps, and, like his brother Great Old Ones, seeks to be freed.

Ghatanothoa exists in six dimensions, and the peculiar mathematics of its form, which extend beyond any easily understandable human notion of 'shape' and 'size,' have a lethal effect on organic matter, petrifying anything in open view within seconds. Accurate depictions of Ghatanothoa have a slightly less swift but equally lethal effect. And it goes without saying that the presence of a colossal creature with a six-dimensional form will drive all but the strongest of wills permanently insane. Ghatanothoa has always fed and extorted worship from the fragile four-dimensional beings that surrounded it via the lloigor, sentient vortices of energy formed from its subconscious personality.

Through the lloigor, Ghatanothoa is able to affect its devices upon the world despite having been imprisoned beneath the Pacific for some 164,000 years. The mathematics of lloigor existence are difficult to grasp: Essentially, each of the lloigor is the same being existing in numerous spaces at the same time; further, each of them is also Ghatanothoa. The minds of the lloigor are not divided into layers. They do not forget, they do not dream, they do not lie; they do not understand humour, subtext, or sarcasm. They have in the past been known to touch the minds of their human cultists under certain circumstances. The effect of direct contact is often traumatic for humans: the lloigors' directness, dispassion and attitude of utter pessimism often drive people mad.

The strain of contact manifests itself in physical pain, nausea, and sometimes even bleeding from the nose, ears and eyes. Moreover, the size and malice of the physical forms that the lloigor sometimes adopt induce a primitive flight reaction that is extremely difficult to consciously override.

While the lloigor have no subconscious, the reason they have no id is because they *are* id, albeit the id of something immeasurably ancient, appallingly evil, and utterly alien; they draw their nourishment from the subconscious energies of humans partly in order to perpetuate themselves, partly in order to energise Ghatanothoa. A lloigor's feeding gives no direct benefit to its co-extant selves, but when a lloigor feeds on the energy of a human, Ghatanothoa feeds also. Each feeding brings Ghatanothoa closer to its eventual escape.

Therefore, of all the Great Old Ones, it's in the interests of Ghatanothoa alone to keep human beings around, and to keep them in at least some sort of health. Ghatanothoa doesn't really need its cattle, but they make its escape easier. The cults of Ghatanothoa traditionally know rites for attracting the lloigor so that they may feed. While the lloigor have no real interest into why the kine are doing this, they appear, feed on the souls of the humans sacrificed to them, and vanish, leaving the cultists exultant and the kine drained of spirit. The cultists get one important benefit: By offering others to be fed on, the lloigor don't take them, and don't destroy them out of hand.

Although the cult of Ghatanothoa has survived, it has dwindled over the last 2,000 years and has all but died out in its native Polynesia. However, in the early 1960s, Ghatanothoa's worship was introduced into France when an immigrant started his own branch of the cult. Although only a few joined this branch of the cult, and the priest himself was murdered by persons unknown in the 1970s, it was directly through the agency of a member of this small cult that ISAS became an agent for the feeding of the lloigor. Now, while the cults that so terrified von Junzt are nearly all gone, ISAS has taken over.

In the last century, the lloigor have dwindled. It has certainly been well over 30 years since one of them last manifested in its physical form. No one knows for sure why this should be. It could be that they find the dreams of a humanity sold out to so many other powers harder to consume. Or, conversely, it may be because, with their human agents in ISAS, they don't need to make an effort to seek out sources of food. Or maybe it's because they've fed enough, the End Times are nearly here, and Ghatanothoa and its brothers are soon to rise.

The Lloigor and ISAS

ISAS has been betrayed to the lloigor since Etienne Tremper's trip to St. Juste in 1971. One of Tremper's associates, a recent member named Françoise Harel, turned out to be a genuine psychic talent; another, Jeanne-Marie Laurent, had been connected to a short-lived cult of Ghatanothoa which had arisen in Paris a few years before.

Rather than communing with the Ancient Masters, Harel channelled a nearby lloigor, which shredded Harel's mind before entering Tremper and his companions. Two other members were quickly rendered unconscious by the presence. Tremper, staying conscious, went quite mad. Mlle. Laurent, realising that her only option if she wanted to keep her soul in one piece was to placate the creature, began the rite of sacrifice as taught to her by the Parisian cult. The two unconscious men died to satisfy the hunger of the lloigor.

Tremper, believing that he had made contact with one of the very Masters he had claimed to be seeking, willingly allowed the lloigor to feed on him. When the lloigor had left, Laurent confirmed that they had contacted one of the Atlantean Masters, and that communion with the masters was demanded, for with the meeting of souls the

Masters could help the human race evolve to a state ready to inhabit Atlantis when it rose again.

Tremper agreed. He wanted badly to gain the Masters' favour, wanted to feed it, wanted to see Atlantis rise to the surface, and would do all that was necessary to ensure it. He convinced himself that feeding of the lloigor was for the good of humanity. The Masters had to be given precisely what they asked for.

Laurent convinced Tremper that he should propagate the rite. Falling into the comfort of delusion, Tremper swallowed whole every idea that Laurent fed him. Believing that his own failures as a human being had distorted his view of the truth, Tremper wanted his followers to see the Masters clearly, to understand the Masters as they truly were, rather than through his own blurred vision.

Laurent had been taught two specific rites by the leader of the Parisian cult. The first of these was the 'Open Rite,' the standard sacrificial contact ritual which had been used by the cult of Ghatanothoa for thousands of years. The second was the 'Hidden Rite.' This ritual, developed in eras when the cult of Ghatanothoa faced persecution, was designed to be used by a priest who had not informed his victims of the powers to which they were being offered. The Hidden Rite does essentially the same thing as the Open Rite, except that it alters the perceptions of those involved, creating in their minds the impression of contact with whatever gods or spirits they want to contact.

The Hidden Rite remains the ritual performed regularly by ISAS members across Europe. The Unseen Masters are a sham, a phantom, a hallucination. They are simply the reflected desire-forms of a century of Atlantologists. While creating these vivid hallucinations, those performing the ritual unwittingly contact any lloigor within 1,000 miles. The hallucinatory Masters show wonderful, life-affirming visions to ISAS's dupes, lulling them into a docile receptivity in which their souls are ripe to be harvested by the lloigor, bit by bit.

In using Tremper to promote the feeding of her own Master, Laurent reinvented the cult of Ghatanothoa. Rising to a position of responsibility within ISAS, Laurent slyly revived Ghatanothoa's worship, recruiting, as Tremper's business interests grew, a corps of ISAS members she called ethical advisors. These men and women ostensibly were posted in ISAS-related companies to promote ISAS's mission and to "aid in the ethical direction of research." Every one of them was a cultist of some Great Old One, either known to Laurent from her many connections or identified at training symposia and indoctrinated into the true mysteries of ISAS, being easier to convert to the cause. This disparate group, although erratic, were effective both in keeping the true nature of the various companies' research quiet and in dealing with any leaks which occurred. The Open Rite of Ghatanothoa was reinstituted and performed monthly at ISAS's Belgian headquarters, without Tremper's knowledge.

Alain Ghirmeyn

Françoise Harel spent 22 years following her contact with the lloigor in a permanent vegetative state in a private hospital partly owned by Tremper. In 1993 she died of natural causes. For reasons which have never been clear, Tremper was Harel's most regular visitor. Her death caused the shell that had been Etienne Tremper to crack for good. On 25th April 1993, a few hours after having heard about Harel's death, Tremper threw himself from the top of the 17-storey building in which ISAS was based.

In his later years, Tremper's tastes had become increasingly bizarre, his personality increasingly erratic. Alain Ghirmeyn, Tremper's assistant director, had, along with Mlle. Laurent, spent a lot of time covering up after his employer's behaviour. Even the normally unflappable Ghirmeyn began to balk at some of the things he found himself doing, and he greeted Tremper's death with some relief. In fact, he watched Tremper jump and made no effort to stop him, only calling the ambulance when he was sure that Tremper was dead.

Ghirmeyn had worked alongside Mlle. Laurent for 22 years, and, it transpired, had been aware of the monthly rituals in ISAS headquarters for some time, even bugging the room and listening on one occasion. Not a stupid man, Ghirmeyn had read Von Junzt and Copeland and had long suspected what was going on. Ghirmeyn is also discreet; reasoning that "devil-worshipping cult in New Age Group H.Q." headlines would prove detrimental to his lifestyle and social standing, he kept quiet. Laurent, a good judge of character, was therefore not surprised when Ghirmeyn confronted her with what he knew, nor when—after she had explained the situation truthfully—he agreed to continue to feed Ghatanothoa without any further persuasion. While under no illusions as to Ghatanothoa's intentions, Ghirmeyn reasoned (based on Laurent's evidence) that the only other option to working for the lloigor and selling the human race into slavery was to allow humanity to be completely destroyed.

ISAS's work has continued since that day in much the same way that it has since 1971. Laurent, for her own reasons, although perhaps a more obvious choice for Tremper's replacement, preferred to stay in her current post, allowing Ghirmeyn to take the central role.

In comparison to Tremper, Ghirmeyn is clean-living and straight-laced. He's been divorced for 18 years (his ex-wife, Claudette, lives in a suburb of Brussels and hasn't seen him since they divorced), and hasn't had a romantic partner since. He doesn't smoke or drink, and although he eats at some of Brussels' finest restaurants, he never eats to excess, and rarely even stays for dessert. He works twelve-hour days and rarely takes holidays, or even weekends. He expects a commitment from his employees that matches his own.

He is also extremely ruthless. Ghirmeyn does exactly what he thinks he has to do. The survival of the human race is at stake. Hard decisions must be made. This extends even to his own organisation.

The New Way of Doing Things

Ghirmeyn had long known of ISAS's ethical advisors, but had not been happy about them.When, after he had taken over, Laurent revealed to him what they actually were—ISAS members hand-picked by Laurent to be the new cultists of Ghatanothoa—Ghirmeyn was even less happy. Many of these were, in the nature of cultists, rather unstable, and many had links to other cults.

Laurent had, in the time-honoured fashion of so many cults of the Old Ones, simply tracked down isolated potential cultists and enticed them to join ISAS with promises of wealth and occult power. Although undeniably useful in keeping ISAS's less ethical modes of research quiet, these ethical advisors had on occasion got out of hand. Ghirmeyn had to buy several of his advisors out of trouble in the 1980s, and in one unfortunate instance he had to get expert legal help for an overzealous advisor. Cultists being rather free with their devotions, the ethical advisors were often under the sway of other powers. Some of Laurent's cultists were even plotting against Tremper and Laurent. Ghirmeyn was horrified to find that Laurent had taken a great deal of pleasure in playing Tremper's employees against each other.

As ISAS's new general director, Ghirmeyn demanded that they be gotten rid of and replaced with "something more effective." He left it to Laurent to work out what that might be.

In 1993 there were 17 ethical advisors; by 1996 nearly all were dead, mostly having suffered 'accidents.' Only two of Mlle. Laurent's cultists survived the purge: Albrecht van der Paardt and Zoë Gerber. Both were researchers at Barthes Cybernetics who had been recruited as ethical advisors in the late 1980s. Their work for ISAS—and their presentation to Mlle. Laurent of a solution to the ethical advisor problem—ensured their survival.

Ghirmeyn recognises Laurent to be far more dangerous than Tremper had ever been,

but considers her no danger to him. Her influence over the organisation is problematic, but ISAS needs her. Mlle. Laurent still works for ISAS as personnel director and oversees the recruitment of all ISAS personnel, including administrative staff, seminar workers, and the new ethical advisors.

So You Want To Be An Ethical Advisor?

Between 1993 and 1996, the cultists were replaced by a very different kind of ethical advisor. When Gerber and Van Der Paardt produced a report on Barthes' advances in personality alteration technology in late 1994, Laurent realised that she had the means to create reliable agents. With Ghirmeyn's permission, she created the first of the new breed of ethical advisors.

When recruiting, Laurent chooses guests at ISAS's residential training who have no strong roots, and who have very little in the way of psychic ability. If they are under the age of 30 and good-looking, this is better still.

The potential employees are invited to the Barthes facility, where they are sedated and injected with a cocktail of drugs designed to make them as suggestible as possible. Minor surgery follows, performed by Gerber and van der Paardt, during which the subjects' brains are implanted with a chip which suppresses some right-brain function and alters behaviour.

Over the span of a month, the recruits are coldly, brutally brainwashed. By the end of the process, any individuality they once had has been utterly destroyed. They no longer have personalities to speak of, having become nearly emotionless agents of ISAS, incapable of relating to other human beings in any meaningful manner outside their work. They are entirely trustworthy and completely dedicated to ISAS's designs. They do not react to pain, and will not lose their cool when subjected to otherworldly horrors. Since they no longer have much in the way of emotional responses—or, for that matter, much of personality or subconscious—they can even endure direct mind contact with the lloigor without the usual psychic distress (although some of the physical ill-effects, such as bleeding and vomiting, sometimes still occur).

While the ethical advisors have had little need of violence in the past, in the last two years they have stepped up their operations. Barthes, PIT, and Weide are all preparing to launch new discoveries, and there has been a threat from those in the three companies with ethical objections to the new advances.

The advisors' preferred method of killing is to handcuff a victim to a chair and sit them in front of a TV and a video or DVD player. They press the Play button and leave the room. Ten minutes later, they come back and dispose of the mummified body. The video is 10 minutes long, and contains footage of a sacrifice to Ghatanothoa from ancient Mu (see the *Atlantean Communication* spell in the 'New Spells' sidebar). Ghatanothoa appears two minutes into the footage, and remains on screen for the remainder of the film. No living thing left in a room for eight minutes with footage of Ghatanothoa can escape petrifaction.

A preferred method of killing is to handcuff a victim to a chair in front of a TV and a DVD player.

The ethical advisors have killed 12 people in the last three years. No weapons have ever been used, and of the nine bodies which were found by authorities, all were considered accidental deaths. The other three victims were shown the video, and their mummified corpses then incinerated.

Mlle. Laurent and the ethical advisors, while working for Ghirmeyn, are faithful to Ghatanothoa. Should Ghirmeyn ever betray the Masters, Laurent would not hesitate to order the advisors to lock him in a room with a DVD player.

Weide, Barthes, and PIT

By 1976, ISAS had become Ghatanothoa's primary instrument for the domestication of humanity. At Laurent's instigation, Tremper's investments allowed him to advance an agenda dedicated to the improvement of human stock for lloigor consumption. While Weide, Barthes, and PIT all work to improve the human condition, for every move they make toward the eradication of disease or the extension of human life, there's a side effect that makes people calmer, more docile. Some of the technology used by these companies is far ahead of anything else known to man. ISAS has a great deal to do with this; thanks to ISAS, the secrets of real Atlantean super-science (technology of the 'granted by Nyarlathotep' variety) have been granted to initially grateful (and later very frightened) researchers, who are generally recruited into ISAS's general membership. The result of this is simple: Barthes, Weide, and PIT are giving mankind a better life with one hand and taking away the will to fight with the other.

Further, each of these organisations has projects which are neither legal nor ethical in any human sense of the word.

Weide's research has created some of the most effective painkillers and anti-depressants on the market; but many of their drugs make the user highly open to suggestion, and some even cause very mild brain damage. Weide's researchers are striving to create a drug that will both reduce intelligence and increase suggestibility without actually causing physical damage; at the same time, the drug in question has to work as an extremely effective pain killer, an anti-depressant, or a sedative without side effects. Although something of a tall order, Weide's researchers think they may have reached their goal. The trick will be getting the drug through testing. The last time they reached the testing stage, in April 2001, they failed miserably. Shortly afterward, three of the team were dismissed; all died in separate car accidents within months. Weide's researchers are very scared right now.

PIT's fertility treatments and treatments for genetic disorders are well known; less well known is that the newest fertility treatment PIT is testing improves the physical health of the children it will help to bring to birth while at the same time reducing intelligence. Meanwhile, PIT's new morning sickness pill is just a few weeks away from approval. The results of tests on the pill, which show it to not only detrimentally affect the intelligence of mother and child but also to increase obedience to certain stimuli, have been suppressed. If all goes according to plan, it is due to be declared as safe to prescribe in 2005.

Barthes, the company of which Alain Ghirmeyn is chairman, works to create medical prostheses for amputees which are almost as mobile as the real thing, and has made astonishing advances in neural links with electronic devices; in a few years they might produce a prosthetic limb as sensitive as a real one. The same project producing breakthroughs with neural links is producing equal breakthroughs in behaviour modification. Another recent advance is an implanted bioelectric chip which, along with surgical and electrical processes, can edit, control, or even wipe clean human memory or emotions. Barthes is currently testing these innovations, and has been for about nine years now, although this is of course not public knowledge. ISAS's ethical advisors immediately dispose of anyone who even looks like they might be about to blow the whistle, and have also appropriated the technology for their own uses.

Employees who question the ethics of their research, and those rare individuals from the outside who get wind of what's going on, usually find themselves meeting with one of ISAS's ethical advisors, who assures them that there is "nothing to be concerned about." Employees are reminded that they have signed an unusually strict non-disclosure agreement, and that violation of it will be prosecuted to the full extent of the law. If a concerned citizen does not stand down, politely expressed threats follow. All three of ISAS's primary companies have lost an unusually high number of employees recently. Most have died in accidents outside work; others have simply vanished.

Contacting the Atlanteans

The 3,000 or so members of ISAS who are not employed by the organisation are essentially a group of like-minded individuals who are often part of other New Age, Pagan, Spiritualist, or Aquarian groups. They use the pop-magic rituals drawn from ISAS's literature in their own groups, whatever they may be.

The usual ritual—a very slightly modified form of the Hidden Rite of the Cult of Ghatanothoa—can be performed alone or by a group of people. If performed correctly, it causes the participants to enter into a REM state in which they are treated with shared—but individually tailored—visions from Atlantis and Lemuria. They may be led through the visions by a guide (normally an Atlantean priest or priestess who shows uncanny knowledge of each participant's secrets); they may find themselves reliving what appear to be past lives in the Sunken Continents.

The visions are entirely false. The ritual accesses a general framework, representative of the ISAS mythology, through which the wishes of the ritual's participants are reflected back at them as complex desire-constructs. The semi-sentience created by some visions can be frighteningly convincing, but any knowledge exhibited by an Atlantean spirit guide is drawn directly from the participant's subconscious. Ethical advisors who participate in the rite merely see the lloigor and perhaps suffer a nosebleed. More importantly, the ritual makes the participants susceptible to the feeding of the lloigor, and sometimes attracts the lloigor to the participants. Unlike the lloigor's usual 'unprimed' victims, who suffer agonising

New Spells

Contact Masters (*Hidden Rite of Ghatanothoa*): This is the traditional Hidden Rite of the cult of Ghatanothoa, and is also the basic ritual used by ISAS members who believe that they are contacting the spirits of Atlantis. The rite only works with willing participants. Each participant expends 1 MP to perform the ritual. Within about 10 minutes, every participant enters a trance for 1D4+3 hours (if more than one person is performing the ritual, only roll once: they'll all wake up about the same time). If the participant with the lowest POW [Wis] fails a Luck Roll [Will saving throw: DC15], 1D3-1 lloigor are called; each will feed 1D6 MP [1d6 Wis temporary damage] from each participant. The spell costs each participant 1 SAN the first time, but no SAN the second or subsequent times.
[**Components:** V, S; **Cost:** 1 Con temporary damage (and 1 Sanity point on first use); **Casting Time:** 10 minutes; **Range:** Personal; **Target:** One human; **Duration:** 1d4+3 hours; **Saving Throw:** None.]

Contact Lloigor (*Open Rite of Ghatanothoa*): This is the ritual used by the cult of Ghatanothoa. Unlike the other rite, where everyone involved is fed upon, one or more people—willing or unwilling—are offered as sacrifices. It doesn't matter if they're drugged or awake, but they do have to remain still, so tying them up is usually an option. The main participant in the rite must expend 5 MP [5 temporary Wis damage] and chant for 20 minutes to perform the ritual with a 20% chance of success [Spellcraft check: DC25]; every additional MP spent by either the leader or by other participants who know the spell increases the chance of success by 5% [+0.5 rank]. If successful, the ritual attracts the nearest lloigor to the vicinity. If there are no lloigor around, the ritual won't work; there will only be lloigor nearby if the participant with the lowest POW [Wis] fails a luck roll [Will saving throw: DC15]. In this case, 1-2 lloigor arrive and feed on the soul of the victim, each draining 4D6 MP [4d6 temporary Wis damage]. If the total MP drained exceeds the victim's total, the lloigor make up the difference with permanent points of INT [permanent Int drain]. If INT is reduced to 2 or less, the victim is essentially reduced to a mindless, soulless vegetable (mercifully, the victim dies instantly if he fails a CONx5 roll [Fortitude saving throw: DC15]). If the total MP and INT drained exceeds the MP and INT of all victims, the lloigor will make up the difference with the MP of a participant in the rite. The lloigor will keep feeding until sated or until everyone involved in the ritual is left a mindless husk. Every participant in the ritual loses 1D10+1 SAN if it is performed successfully. As well as any MP and INT lost, the victim loses 1D6 SAN if unconscious when the rite is performed, 1D20 SAN if conscious.
[**Components:** V, S; **Cost:** 5 Wis temporary damage and 1d10+1 Sanity points; **Casting Time:** 20 minutes; **Range:** Medium; **Target:** A group of humans; **Duration:** 1d4+3 hours; **Saving Throw:** None.]

Atlantean Communication: This spell, known by most ISAS seminar workers and ethical advisors, creates pictures, voices, or text, which can be channelled through nearly any electronic media, such as televisions, computer screens, and text messaging devices. It costs 6 MP [6 Wis temporary damage] and 1 SAN to perform. Manifestations of Atlantis—what ISAS workers normally use this ritual for—cost the target between 0/1 and 0/1D6 SAN, depending on how they appear and what they show or tell. Because the manifestations depend partly upon the victim and partly upon things 'from outside,' a person creating a manifestation doesn't actually need to have had any direct experience of the thing manifested. ISAS ethical advisors have used this spell to create video tapes of Ghatanothoa, which they use as a killing tool. Televisions, computers, and telephones don't have to be turned on or even plugged in for the spell to take effect—the victim loses 1 extra point of SAN for seeing an unplugged device come to life. If an Idea Roll [Int check: DC15] is made, any supernatural creatures seen on TV or video cause full SAN loss; otherwise they're disbelieved as special effects. Unfortunately, you can't disbelieve footage of Ghatanothoa. It's kind of difficult to doubt something that's petrifying you as you look at it.
[**Components:** V, F; **Cost:** 6 Wis temporary damage and 1 Sanity point; **Casting Time:** 10 minutes; **Range:** Unlimited; **Target:** One human; **Duration:** Permanent; **Saving Throw:** Will negates.]

headaches when they wake up, participants in the ritual awaken exhausted but with a sense of well-being.

ISAS sometimes identifies a person who, for whatever reason, is a desirable member of the organisation. Seminar workers will be instructed by the Masters (via a spell cast by Laurent or one of the ethical advisors) to 'show' the intended member-to-be some of what Atlantis was like. Unless the potential dupe is very strong-willed, the phone calls, text messages, TV pictures, and so on will lead to ISAS via literature which is always conveniently placed. Seminar workers never suspect that they're doing anything deceptive: If the Masters want this person to come to a meeting, they reason, it must be in the person's interest to come.

ISAS in a Cthulhu Now Campaign

ISAS is designed as an adversary which can be used in any modern-day Cthulhu campaign. An investigator with no government contacts might find ISAS's literature initially useful, and might even try to get help from the Masters.

You might even find the investigators invited on a residential training week. What if they're offered a job? What do they do?

Or maybe the investigators are contacted by someone working for PIT, Barthes, or Weide, an employee who's a bit worried about some of the things that their organisation is producing. Perhaps the investigators find the whistle-blower mummified or memory wiped before they can learn more. The company the dead man worked for is uncooperative, and an ethical advisor takes an interest in the case. Maybe she's even initially helpful. Assuming the investigators manage to survive, the trail might lead them back to Brussels and the awful truth. Then again, it might not.

Scenario Seed: Kayleigh Come Home

The investigators are contacted by the concerned parents of Kayleigh Morgan, a Cardiff girl and recent university graduate. She apparently went off on a religious retreat of some kind and was offered a job. At first they were all for it, but over the last nine months her letters became increasingly terse, and then stopped altogether. The last Mr. and Mrs. Morgan heard, Kayleigh was working for a medical firm in Croydon. They think she's in a cult, and they want to hire the investigators to bring her home.

They're right. She is in a cult. Croydon is the home of PIT, and Kayleigh is now one of two ISAS ethical advisors there. Of course, Kayleigh is for all intents and purposes gone forever; the young woman who intimidates and kills for the Masters is not Mr. and Mrs. Morgan's daughter anymore. Whether the investigators discover this before ending up desiccated corpses is up to them. Where it leads them, is again, in their hands.

ISAS in a Delta Green Campaign

With all the conspiracies floating around in a Delta Green campaign, it can't hurt to have another one, right?

Delta Green

Delta Green don't yet know of ISAS's involvement in the supernatural, and has so far had very little to do with them, since ISAS does not yet have any interests in the U.S. But with ISAS's recent drive for expansion, and the exponential growth of both Barthes and Weide, it can't be too long before they link up with U.S. businesses.

U.S. citizens who run afoul of ISAS may be able to call upon the help of FBI offices in Europe, who in turn through contacts in the State Department or the CIA may arouse DG's attention.

Alternatively, a group of Delta Green agents might embark on an investigation of ISAS or one of its business interests in Europe as a sideline to an investigation of the Karotechia (see below) or PISCES. ISAS could prove a lethal red herring in one of these investigations.

PISCES

ISAS has no genuine psychic talents in the United Kingdom, because PISCES always gets to them first. ISAS don't know about PISCES yet; PISCES knows about ISAS but thinks it's just another New Age group. However, Severn Aerospace has recently been making overtures towards a partnership with Barthes Cybernetics. While there's nothing stopping the two companies working together, one company or the other is likely to discover the supernatural menace behind other, and may take steps to eradicate the threat.

ISAS wouldn't stand a chance against PISCES. But PISCES will have to catch them first.

The Karotechia

Not all members of ISAS are the kind of people Alain Ghirmeyn would want in his organisation. The revival of a peculiarly pagan kind of fascism in Russia has meant that a lot of ISAS members there are actually involved in some of the increasingly common neo-Nazi militias. Add to this the fact that the Masters invariably tell their followers what they want to hear, and you may well have trouble. In a Delta Green campaign, the Karotechia, with links with these groups, might soon find themselves aware of ISAS. The Karotechia have long believed in an Aryan Atlantis, and they might be happy to have ISAS's resources at their disposal. The inevitable result will be Ghirmeyn's refusal to have anything to do with the Nazis (although, interestingly, while Ghirmeyn claims not to subscribe to the racial theories of many Atlantological mystics, ISAS has never hired a black employee and likely never will), a violent response on the part of the Karotechia, and an escalation in which either side could be destroyed, since neither the Karotechia nor ISAS have any idea who they are really dealing with.

GRU SV-8

SV-8 have had their eye on a number of neo-Nazi groups in Russia for a while now. They've been on the trail of occult Nazis for ages, and now have this lead to ISAS, but they don't know for sure what the occult connection is. ISAS could be a red herring. If a Delta Green cell has established links with SV-8, they might ask for help from the Americans in checking out what's going on.

Contacting the Masters....

SIEA/ISAS: Important Individuals

Alain Patrice Ghirmeyn

Alain Ghirmeyn has been a member of ISAS since the 'Summer of Love' in 1967. An enthusiastic young man, he turned up at every meeting Etienne Tremper ever held. In fact, the only meeting he missed in his first six years as a member was the fateful meet at St. Juste in 1971. One of the first people to be hired by the revitalised SBEA, Alain was at first proud to work for the organisation.

By the time he'd been working with Etienne Tremper and Marie-Jeanne Laurent for a couple of years, all of Ghirmeyn's idealism had evaporated. When Tremper died, he completely lost his faith in the Masters. But in some ways, his new purpose has given him much more meaning. He sees himself as the one person able to protect humanity from a terrible evil, by saving it from itself.

A workaholic, Ghirmeyn often sleeps in a small room specially arranged for him at his office at Barthes Cybernetics H.Q. He avoids the ISAS offices these days, unless he really has to be there. He spends most of his time jetting between board meetings of Barthes, Weide, and PIT, and as an extremely busy businessman he is very difficult to pin down for an interview.

Alain Patrice Ghirmeyn
Selling Out the Human Race, age 60
Race: Caucasian (Belgian)

STR 9	CON 8	SIZ 11	INT 16	POW 17
DEX 13	APP 12	EDU 21	SAN 33	HP 10

Damage Bonus: None.
Education: BA Fine Arts, University of Leuven, Belgium
D.O.B: 18th April 1944
Occupation: General director of SIEA/ISAS; managing director of Barthes Cybernetics Ltd.
Skills: Accounting 84%, Anthropology 40%, Archaeology 40%, Art (Painting) 20%, Bargain 89%, Credit Rating 95%, Cthulhu Mythos 33%, Fast Talk 66%, Forgery 82%, History 76%, Law 88%, Mathematics 45%, Occult 55%, Persuade 70%, Psychology 40%, Spot Hidden 80%
Languages: French (own) 99%, Flemish (Dutch dialect) 99%, German 90%, Italian 50%, Spanish 50%, English 68%
Spells: Contact Masters (Hidden Rite of Ghatanothoa), Atlantean Communication
Mythos Books: Ghirmeyn owns copies of the *Ponape Scripture*, the complete works of Harold H. Copeland, and a copy of the Golden Goblin Press edition of Von Junzt's *Nameless Cults*.
Attacks: None
Physical Description: Ghirmeyn is of average height and is extremely thin, with chiselled cheekbones and deep-set eyes. His clean-shaven face is mostly expressionless; when emotion does appear, it never shows for more than a fleeting moment. His greying dark hair is elegantly and expensively cut, and he favours sober but stylish suits and shoes. He tends to have an abrupt manner. He works extremely hard and expects equal commitment from those around him.

Alain Patrice Ghirmeyn, 11th-Level Male Defence Option; hp 38; Init +1 (Dex); AC 11 (+4 Def); Spd 30 ft.; Atk. +4 melee (1d3-1 punch) or +6 ranged; SV Fort +4, Ref +6, Will +8; SZ M; Str 9, Con 8, Wis 17, Dex 13, Int 19, Cha 12, San. 33.
Languages: French (own), Flemish +12, German +11, English +10, Italian +9, Spanish +9.
Skills: Bluff +8, Concentration +6, Cthulhu Mythos +3, Diplomacy +9, Forgery +8, Knowledge (accounting) +12, Knowledge (anthropology) +7, Knowledge (archaeology) +8, Knowledge (art) +6, Knowledge (history) +9, Knowledge (law) +10, Knowledge (mathematics) +8, Knowledge (occult) +10, Knowledge (psychology) +7, Sense Motive +10, Spot +9.
Feats: Endurance, Innate Linguist, Skill Emphasis (Knowledge (accounting)), Wealth 3.
Spells: Contact Masters (Hidden Rite of Ghatanothoa), Atlantean Communication.
Weapons: None.

Christophe Dell

Christophe Dell became the assistant general director of ISAS in 1993. Like Alain Ghirmeyn when he started, Dell is an earnest and serious believer in ISAS. He is mainly concerned with looking after Presse SIEA and the coordination of ISAS seminar workers across Europe. While he handles the accounts of ISAS's business interests, he doesn't really have anything to do with running these organisations. As far as he's concerned, ISAS's ethical advisors give advice to ISAS companies on ethics.

Dell is easily manipulated and a physical coward. If threatened, he'll talk—but then, he has nothing to hide, really. If the truth is ever revealed to him he may refuse to believe it, unless it's coming from Alain Ghirmeyn himself. If Ghirmeyn is ever forced to reveal the truth, Dell will side with his boss, but will always be the weak link in the chain. Dell does not like Mlle. Laurent, however, and the feeling is entirely mutual. He would be more prepared to accept dirty dealings on her part than Ghirmeyn's, but would have great difficulty believing that ISAS sanctioned anything she had done.

While Dell trusts Ghirmeyn, Ghirmeyn will not hesitate to use Dell as a patsy if officials find evidence of something awful.

Christophe Dell
Practically Innocent, age 32
Race: Caucasian (Belgian)

STR 8	CON 10	SIZ 13	INT 13	POW 10
DEX 10	APP 14	EDU 18	SAN 49	HP 12

Damage Bonus: None
Education: BEng Civil Engineering, University of Brussels, Belgium
D.O.B: 17th June 1971
Occupation: Assistant general director of SIEA/ISAS
Skills: Accounting 94%, Archaeology 20%, Bargain 35%, Computer Use 40%, Credit Rating 65%, Fast Talk 32%, History 40%, Law 45%, Library Use 80%, Persuade 30%, Physics 20%
Languages: French (own) 99%, Flemish (Dutch dialect) 99%, German 60%, Italian 30%, English 50%
Spells: Contact Masters (Hidden Rite of Ghatanothoa—Dell is unaware of this)
Attacks: None
Physical Description: Dell is short (about 5'6") and slightly overweight, with an expressive, open, and friendly face. His short blonde hair has angelic curls—if he ever grew it out, he'd look like a cherub in a smart suit.

Christophe Dell, 5th-Level Male Defence Option; hp 18; Init +0 (Dex); AC 10 (+3 Def); Spd 30 ft.; Atk. +1 melee (1d3-1 punch) or +2 ranged; SV Fort +4, Ref +4, Will +1; SZ M; Str 8, Con 10, Wis 10, Dex 10, Int 16, Cha 14, San. 49.
Languages: French (own), Flemish +10, German +8, English +7, Italian +6.
Skills: Bluff +7, Computer Use +9, Diplomacy +6, Gather Information +4, Intimidate +4, Knowledge (accounting) +12, Knowledge (archaeology) +5, Knowledge (history) +5, Knowledge (law) +9, Knowledge (physics) +5, Repair +5, Research +10, Sense Motive +3.
Feats: Gearhead, Persuasive, Trustworthy, Wealth.
Spells: Unaware: Contact Masters (Hidden Rite of Ghatanothoa).
Weapons: None.

Jeanne-Marie Laurent

When Jeanne-Marie Laurent was a 19-year-old student at Université Paris, she started going out with a young man who said he was going to bring the Old Ones back. It was in the book he had, he said, and he could prove it. The world was going to be cleared off, he said; they could choose to be either victims or predators. Laurent joined in. And, unlike her hapless braggart of a boyfriend, she actually read the whole of the book he had—a rare unexpurgated copy of *Unausprechlichen Kulten*. When Jeanne-Marie Laurent was 20, she sacrificed her boyfriend to mighty Cthulhu, and then starting sacrificing other young men. She soon found cult connections in Paris, including an old man from Polynesia who was once, he said, the high priest of Ghatanothoa.

By the age of 22, Laurent had taken to attending New Age meetings and finding likely people to take home and sacrifice to her dark gods. At one of these meetings, an Atlantean regression organised in Brussels by the then-SBEA, she met Etienne Tremper. She took a liking to Tremper; instead of sacrificing him, she asked for a job. In 1971, she was present at the fateful meeting in Brittany. ISAS is what it is today because of her being in the right place at the right time.

Since 1974 Mlle. Laurent has worked in recruitment for ISAS. In the late 1980s, she brought two junior researchers into the fold as worshippers of the Many-Angled Ones. It's no accident that Zoë Gerber and Albrecht van der Paardt are now Barthes' key researchers.

Mlle. Laurent is still in charge of human resources. She oversees training in all respects, and takes a personal interest in the 'conversion' of ISAS ethical advisors. Of all the senior members of ISAS, Laurent is by far the most dangerous. She has links across Europe, including a number of high-up members of the far-right occult movement in Russia and a cordial relationship with Sir David Miley of the Carlyle-Penhew Foundation (see *The Black Seal #2*).

She has residences in Paris and Brussels.

Jeanne-Marie Laurent
The Recruiter, age 56
Race: Caucasian (French)

STR 11	CON 15	SIZ 11	INT 16	POW 19
DEX 12	APP 15	EDU 20	SAN 0	HP 13

Damage Bonus: None
Education: (Unfinished) BA Classics, Université Paris
D.O.B: 31st May 1947
Occupation: Personnel director, SIEA/ISAS
Skills: Accounting 34%, Archaeology 30%, Bargain 65%, Computer Use 22%, Credit Rating 70%, Cthulhu Mythos 45%, Demolitions 22%, Disguise 25%, Dodge 36%, Drive Auto 80%, Fast Talk 95%, Forgery 60%, Hide 30%, History 80%, Hypnosis 40%, Law 30%, Occult 65%, Persuade 80%, Pharmacy 20%, Sneak 50%, Spot Hidden 80%, Tradecraft 26%
Permanent Insanities: Paranoia, sadism
Languages: French (own) 99%, Flemish (Dutch dialect) 80%, German 95%, Italian 50%, English 75%, Latin 80%, Aklo 20%, Akashic 43%
Spells: Contact Masters (Hidden Rite of Ghatanothoa), Contact Lloigor (Open Rite of Ghatanothoa), Atlantean Communication, Contact Cthulhu, Summon/Bind Dark Young, Call/Dismiss Shub-Niggurath, Call/Dismiss Cyaegha, Dominate, Mindblast
Mythos Books: Jeanne-Marie Laurent owns a now dog-eared and tatty photocopy facsimile of an original German copy of *Unausprechlichen Kulten*. She is also familiar with the copy of the *Necronomicon* held in the Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris.
Attacks: Jewelled dagger 65%, 1D6
Physical Description: Jeanne-Marie is the epitome of the elegant middle-aged Frenchwoman. She dresses in sober but finely cut suits, and wears her hair in a flattering bob. Although she is beginning to show her age, it's still easy to see how striking she was in youth—and no doubt just as intimidating, even then. She smokes Gauloises, and makes a point of lighting up even in places with prominently displayed 'No Smoking' signs—because she can.

Jeanne-Marie Laurent, 15th-Level Female Offence Option; hp 99; Init +1 (Dex); AC 11 (+3 Def); Spd 30 ft.; Atk. +12/+7/+2 melee (1d3 dagger) or +13/+8/+3 ranged; SV Fort +7, Ref +10, Will +9; SZ M; Str 11, Con 15, Wis 19, Dex 13, Int 18, Cha 15, San. 0.
Languages: French (own), German +14, English +12, Flemish +12, Latin +12, Italian +9, Akashic +8, Aklo +6.
Skills: Bluff +10, Computer Use +6, Concentration +7, Cthulhu Mythos +5, Demolitions +6, Diplomacy +7, Disguise +5, Drive +7, Forgery +10, Gather Information +8, Hide +3, Hypnosis +6, Intimidate +8, Knowledge (accounting) +6, Knowledge (archaeology) +7, Knowledge (history) +10, Knowledge (law) +7, Knowledge (occult) +10, Knowledge (pharmacy) +9, Move Silently +5, Sense Motive +12, Spellcraft +7, Spot +9, Tradecraft +6, Tumble +2.
Feats: Dodge, Improved critical (dagger), Innate Linguist, Sharp-Eyed, Trustworthy, Wealth, Weapon Proficiency (melee weapons).
Spells: Contact Masters (Hidden Rite of Ghatanothoa), Contact Lloigor (Open Rite of Ghatanothoa), Atlantean Communication, Contact Cthulhu, Summon Dark Young, Bind Dark Young, Call Shub-Niggurath, Dismiss Shub-Niggurath, Call Cyaegha, Dismiss Cyaegha, Dominate Person, Mindblast.
Weapons: Jewelled dagger.

Malcolm Peregrine

It's a common fallacy among people with no academic background that everyone who does a research doctorate in science is necessarily brilliant or will produce work of earth-shattering significance. The truth is far more prosaic. Most scientists end up as research assistants in labs. Or they go on and become chartered accountants. Some achieve success in other fields.

Malcolm Peregrine is a shining example of how an otherwise mediocre scientist with an entrepreneurial spirit can reach the top.

When Peregrine received his PhD in 1987, he capitalised on one of the new small business grants pushed by the Thatcher administration, setting up a contract research laboratory. His company, Peregrine Implant Technologies Ltd, hired some really good researchers very early on and became a name in the medical technology world. Although PIT suffered with the early 1990s recession, it retained its good name for research, and, unlike many other British companies, remained afloat. Peregrine was awarded an OBE in the Queen's 1992 end-of-year honours list.

In 1993, Barthes Cybernetics' Alain Ghirmeyn bought a large amount of PIT stock. Rather than stage a hostile takeover, Barthes secured Ghirmeyn a seat on the board. While initially pleased with the deal, Peregrine began to have misgivings. Part of the deal was hiring ethical advisors from Ghirmeyn's weird New Age group. Peregrine couldn't see what they were for to begin with; now he knows all too well.

And then there's the direction his company's research is going. Peregrine is neither a brave nor a particularly moral man, but he keeps apprised of his company's research, and even he has begun to question the ethics of some of the work performed under the watchful eyes of Ghirmeyn and his advisors. Why are they ignoring the side effects of their fertility treatment? Why won't they let him see the results of the morning-sickness pill trials? He'd go to the Government, but he actually signed and approved some of that same research. (He doesn't remember doing it, but that's really his signature on that contract.)

And he's scared. His people keep having accidents, or just disappearing altogether. Ms. Morgan, the new ethical advisor, started asking after Helen and the kids recently. And he hasn't told anyone, but he's been seeing strange things on blank TV screens, hearing voices on his phones, and getting text messages and emails from nowhere.

He thinks he might be going mad. He may yet go to the government.

Whether the government can help him before he ends up another mummified corpse tossed into the incinerator is another question entirely.

Dr. Malcolm Peregrine, OBE
Too Scared to Say Anything Yet, age 45
Race: Caucasian (English)

STR 11	CON 13	SIZ 15	INT 16	POW 9
DEX 12	APP 12	EDU 22	SAN 38	HP 14

Damage Bonus: None
Education: PhD Medical Applications of Technology, University College, London
D.O.B: 22nd September 1958
Occupation: Managing director, PIT Ltd
Skills: Accounting 48%, Bargain 65%, Biology 62%, Computer Use 38%, Credit Rating 70%, Drive Auto 78%, Electronics 55%, Law 36%, Library Use 50%, Medicine 70%, Persuade 76%, Pharmacy 20%, Psychology 38%
Languages: English (own) 99%, French 55%, German 45%
Attacks: None
Physical Description: Dr. Peregrine is a big man who spends a lot of time jogging or at the gym. He tends to be seen around his office in shirtsleeves, braces, and tie, a holdover from the Eighties when the yuppie style was fashionable. He's losing his hair and keeps it shaved. He wears small wire-framed glasses for reading. Although blessed with rugged good looks, his face is now heavily lined. He's clearly a man who worries a lot.

Dr. Malcolm Peregrine, 6th-Level Male Defence Option; hp 36; Init +1 (Dex); AC 11 (+3 Def); Spd 30 ft.; Atk. +3 melee (1d3 punch) or +4 ranged; SV Fort +6, Ref +3, Will +4; SZ M; Str 11, Con 13, Wis 9, Dex 12, Int 19, Cha 12, San. 38.
Languages: English (own), French +10, German +9.
Skills: Computer Use +8, Diplomacy +7, Drive +7, Knowledge (accounting) +8, Knowledge (biology) +10, Knowledge (electronics) +10, Knowledge (law) +7, Knowledge (medicine) +10, Knowledge (pharmacy) +6, Knowledge (psychology) +7, Research +7, Sense Motive +5.
Feats: Skill Emphasis (Knowledge (accounting)), Skill Emphasis (Knowledge (medicine)), Wealth 2.
Weapons: None.

Kayleigh Morgan

When Kayleigh was at university, she was a member of the Aquarian Society. Friends remember her as pretty if a little spacey, affecting beads and flowing hippy dresses. She'd go on trips to Glastonbury Tor and Stonehenge, lead meditation sessions, and receive information from most of the European Pagan and New Age societies. In the summer of 2001, however, shortly after graduating, she was invited on an ISAS residential course. She was stunned by what she experienced there, and even more stunned when Mlle. Laurent offered her a job. As a recent graduate, she jumped at the chance. So they took her to Brussels and trained her.

The Kayleigh remembered by her parents and her friends at Cardiff University is forever gone, shredded and disposed of by a month with Mlle. Laurent and a chip in her brain. Kayleigh is now an ISAS ethical advisor, recently arrived at PIT, and a tool of the lloigor. Her job is to keep ISAS-promoted research in PIT under wraps, and to intimidate and neutralise any threats to the security of the research. She does this, and only this. She does it efficiently and at times brutally. She remembers being a normal human, and remembers what it was to feel—but the memory of feeling is not feeling itself, and she can never go back. She is unable to even want to go back.

She owns a small flat in Croydon. If an enterprising group of investigators were to break in, they would find only furniture, cleaning goods, her make-up and toiletries, and her clothes. Apart from her car, a brand new BMW, she has no other possessions. If firearms are required for a job, she can acquire disposable weapons at 24 hours notice with a single telephone call. Her spare time is spent at the gym, or at home, where, if watched, she does literally nothing other than household chores. In her free time she sits there, staring into space.

Kayleigh Morgan
Ice-Cold Assassin, age 24
Race: Caucasian (Welsh)

STR 15	CON 17	SIZ 11	INT 15	POW 10
DEX 15	APP 17	EDU 17	SAN 0	HP 14

Damage Bonus: +1D4
Education: BSc Biology, University of Wales Cardiff
D.O.B: 12th January 1980
Occupation: ISAS ethical advisor, assigned to PIT
Skills: Biology 40%, Chemistry 55%, Computer Use 78%, Credit Rating 30%, Cthulhu Mythos 45%, Demolitions 40%, Dodge 60%, Drive Auto 87%, Electronics 77%, First Aid 40%, Forensics 10%, Forgery 60%, Handgun 55%, Hide 60%, Law 22%, Martial Arts 70%, Pharmacy 25%, Photography 35%, Rifle 70%, Sneak 50%, Spot Hidden 65%, Tradecraft 40%
Languages: English (own) 85%, Welsh 40%, French 40%, German 10%
Spells: Atlantean Communication, Contact Masters (Hidden Rite of Ghatanothoa), Contact Lloigor (Open Rite of Ghatanothoa)
Magic Items: Kayleigh has VHS video tapes (PAL and NTSC formats) and a Region 0 DVD with the Ghatanothoa film.
Attacks: Fist 70% 2D3+db
Kick 70% 2D6+db
Handgun 55%, damage varies on weapon availability
Rifle 70%, damage varies on weapon availability
Physical Description: Kayleigh is highly attractive, with a slim, athletic figure. But her face is entirely devoid of expression, and her pale green eyes seem to stare right through you. Her blonde hair is cut in a severe crop, and the hippy chic she adopted in university has been replaced by sharply tailored business wear. Her Welsh accent is now entirely gone, replaced by Received Pronunciation English.

Kayleigh Morgan, 9th-Level Female Offence Option; hp 75; Init +2 (Dex); AC 12 (+1 Def); Spd 30 ft.; Atk. +9/+4 melee (1d3+2 punch) or +9/+4 ranged; SV Fort +6, Ref +8, Will +3; SZ M; Str 15, Con 17, Wis 10, Dex 15, Int 16, Cha 17, San. 0.
Languages: English (own), French +7, Welsh +7, German +4.
Skills: Computer Use +10, Craft (photography) +6, Concentration +5, Cthulhu Mythos +5, Demolitions +7, Drive +9, Forgery +9, Heal +1, Hide +7, Knowledge (biology) +7, Knowledge (chemistry) +9, Knowledge (electronics) +10, Knowledge (forensics) +4, Knowledge (law) +5, Knowledge (pharmacy) +6, Move Silently +6, Spot +7, Tradecraft +7, Tumble +5.
Feats: Dodge, Martial Artist, Weapon Focus (unarmed strike), Weapon Proficiency (handgun), Weapon Proficiency (rifle).
Spells: Atlantean Communication, Contact Masters (Hidden Rite of Ghatanothoa), Contact Lloigor (Open Rite of Ghatanothoa).
Weapons: None. Firearms are available at 24 hours notice.

Resources

Some resources available on the Web:

Sacred Texts: Atlantis
Includes full texts of Scott-Elliot, Donnelly and others.
http://www.sacred-texts.com/atl

Rudolf Steiner's Cosmic memory
http://wn.elib.com/Steiner/Books/GA011/ CM/GA011_index.html

The Theosophical Library's Complete Works of Mme. Blavatsky
Includes *The Secret Doctrine*, which contains *The Book of Dzyan*.
http://theosophy.org/BlavatskyWorks.htm

Report on NYC Burn Victim

Prof. Grant Emerson

16FEB2003 12:22:18–0800

Alphonse,

I have now had an opportunity to review the materials that Cell J provided following their investigation of the Petrucci slaying in New York. There are, as you suspected, certain anomalies to this death that may prove worthy of further investigation.

To recap the circumstances of this inquiry, Francisco "Frankie" Petrucci was a 43-year-old member of the Lobarro crime family based in Brooklyn, NY. From the background data passed on by Cell J, Petrucci was in essence a mid-level enforcer for the Family, specialising in extortion and illegal gambling. However, the recent decline in fortunes of the 'traditional' organised crime families in New York and the influx of more aggressive Eastern European syndicates (the so-called 'Russian Mafia') had led to a proposed merger between the Lobarro family and a group of Russian criminals known as 'The Oligarchy'. Petrucci was apparently not happy with this arrangement and had decided to become a Federal informant, offering his not inconsiderable knowledge and evidence about the activities of New York crime syndicates in exchange for immunity to prosecution. Petrucci was thus placed into the federal witness protection program and deposited in a safe house on Long Island under the protection of deputy U.S. marshals pending extensive debriefing with FBI investigators. Unfortunately, after two days in custody at this location Petrucci was found dead in his room of, to say the least, suspicious causes.

This case is currently under investigation by members of Cell J. The preliminary cause of death appears to be severe burns. I shall detail my analysis of the materials below.

Starting with the crime scene report and photographs, Petrucci's bedroom in the safe house appears unremarkable. The bed is unmade and apparently slept in. The windows are closed and intact with no sign of damage. An in-suite bathroom/toilet and a small walk-in closet open off this room. The room is unremarkable in appearance. There is no other obvious sign of entry into the room, other than the internal door which opened onto the lounge where two of the five marshals assigned to the protection detail were, according to their report, watching television.

The marshals apparently neither saw nor heard anything unusual until screaming began from within the bedroom at around 11.15 pm. They then forced entry into the room to find Petrucci on the floor, "writhing in pain." Over the course of the next few seconds, the marshals reported that Petrucci's skin began to blister and char. One marshal (Ramos) threw the bed sheets over him to "put him out" (despite the absence of any obvious ignition source or flames) and raised the alarm, whilst the second marshal (Mackow) ran to the kitchen for a fire extinguisher. By the time Mackow returned, Petrucci had stopped moving and Ramos was administering CPR. Two of the three remaining marshals, who had been carrying out routine sweeps of the safe house grounds, found no intruders or anything out of the ordinary.

An ambulance (which Mackow had requested via cellular phone on his return to the room) arrived at approximately 11:27 p.m. The EMTs treated Petrucci at the scene, being able to intubate and at least partially restore the airway, but were unsuccessful in using a defibrillator to restart the heart. The EMTs worked for around 15 minutes before removing Petrucci to a local emergency room, where he was pronounced dead.

There is one anomaly in the statements that has yet to be explained. Comparison of the testimony from the five marshals and the EMTs places each marshal at a specific position within the building or in the grounds. The EMTs state that they were waved in through the front gate by Deputy Marshal Farrow. However, in their statements neither Farrow nor any of the other marshals mention admitting the ambulance, and Farrow was with both Ramos and Mackow in the same room as Petrucci by the time the EMTs arrived. Whilst it is possible that this was a simple human error, this discrepancy has not yet been explained and may suggest a seventh person (in addition to the five agents and Petrucci), who may have been mistaken for Farrow, within the grounds at the time of the incident.

The medical examiner's report compiled from data obtained at autopsy includes a reasonably thorough description of the injuries suffered by Petrucci, giving the cause of death as "fatal burns." In my opinion this is an accurate assessment, although it must be noted that the unusual aspects of the case may have led the ME to an oversimplification of the facts. Rather than conduct a point-by-point critique of the report, I will try to summarise some of the salient features revealed at autopsy.

Firstly, I believe the ME is correct in his assessment of the cause of death. Petrucci suffered what American physicians classify as fourth-degree burns over 100% of his body. As you may know, first-degree burns are characterised by redness and blistering of the epidermal (dead cell) layer of the skin, second-degree by burning of the epidermis and exposure of the dermis, and third-degree, or full-thickness burns, by destruction of the epidermis and dermis down to underlying tissues. Sometimes, as is the case here, full-thickness burns extend deeper than the dermis, with carbonisation of the dead tissue (hence the apparent blackening of the skin) exposing muscle and bone, although the latter was not seen here. Burns of this magnitude are known as 'char-,' 'black-' (due to the carbonisation), or fourth-degree, and the prognosis for the victim is extremely grave. Generally, even first-degree burns over greater than 50% of the surface area of the body are likely to eventually prove fatal. Much of the damage caused by burns results from loss of fluids and electrolytes (due to damage to the integrity of the dermis and underlying tissue) resulting in a fall in blood volume, which precipitates a sudden drop in blood pressure resulting in shock, although this tends to occur minutes or hours after the burn was incurred.

However, it is unusual for 'fatal burns' to be recorded as the primary cause of death in acute cases. Most often in fire victims, death occurs from inhalation of carbon monoxide or other toxic gases leading to asphyxiation. In this case this was seemingly not a factor, as the marshals on site suffered no ill effects from being in the same room. The autopsy did reveal a very curious finding, namely that the mouth, throat, airway, and lungs were also badly burnt (mostly second-degree with some patches of either first- or third-degree). This may be a major contributing factor to the rapidity of Petrucci's death, as it would essentially result in asphyxia. Puzzlingly, the gastro-intestinal tract and

urogenital tracts suffered similar patterns of damage as the respiratory tract. Basically, it appears that every external surface of Petrucci's body was burned to some extent. A cursory examination of the ME's photographs shows that the hair was also singed, but a microscopic examination of skin sections reveals that damage to the hair was more extensive at the roots than the tips, suggesting that the heat was most intense at the surface of the skin. Indeed, full-thickness burns result in destruction of the hair follicles and sebaceous glands, which makes the fact that much of Petrucci's hair survived fairly intact yet stranger.

Two other observations are relevant at this point. First, Agent Ramos was able to attempt CPR to Petrucci without suffering injury to herself. Indeed, her testimony states that, despite the aroma of burning skin, Petrucci was cold to the touch. Second, Petrucci's bathrobe was undamaged despite carbonisation of the skin directly beneath it. Perhaps more curious is the testimony from Ramos that Petrucci was apparently in pain even after the skin had begun to char. This should not be possible following full thickness burns as the nerve endings in the affected areas of the dermis will have been destroyed by this point.

The ME also notes that Petrucci suffered breaks to the right humerus, sternum and three ribs, along with a dislocated left shoulder. These injuries were most likely caused by Agent Ramos, who noted that she had to forcibly move Petrucci's arms to gain access to his chest and face for CPR. Whilst many would regard such injuries as excessive, they are in fact unsurprising given the circumstances. Most likely, Petrucci placed his hands up over his face to shield it as the burns appeared and as they became more and more severe the muscles in his arms spasmed and contracted, resulting in his arms being locked in place. This would necessitate considerable force to move them away. Likewise, the broken ribs and sternum are probably a consequence of the CPR (such injuries are not uncommon, even when administered correctly by trained personnel). It should be noted that the EMTs reportedly had difficulty intubating Petrucci on their arrival, which is consistent with tracheal burns and swelling of the airway (whilst seemingly not the case here, such injuries are often reported following inhalation of flames or superheated air, such as may be generated in an explosion). However, given the severity of the damage to the trachea, intubation should have been all but impossible, perhaps indicating that the damage continued even after the artificial airway was placed. Personally, I am a little surprised that the EMTs even attempted resuscitation given the severity of the victim's injuries. However, one supposes that the presence of armed and panicked federal agents is a powerful motivating factor.

Examination of the tissue specimens obtained from the ME's office by Cell J basically recapitulate the above, demonstrating that the damage occurred at the epithelial surfaces and did not penetrate into the underlying tissues. The stomach and bowel contents were reported as "typical" by the coroner (again implying that the damage was confined to the epithelial surfaces rather than the intestinal lumen). Blood and urine analysis showed nothing unexpected, and toxicology screens came up blank. Similarly, there was no evidence of accelerants (chemicals which promote ignition) being present on or near Petrucci. To rule out the blindingly obvious, it should also be noted that Petrucci was a non-smoker. One interesting observation is the lack of damage to the clothing; Petrucci's bathrobe (which he was wearing at the time) was apparently untouched by any form of flame. The forensics report finds nothing remarkable about the robe itself.

Taken together, these findings effectively rule out the possibility that these wounds were chemically induced. Similarly, the lack of damage to internal organs would seem to preclude the suggestion made by Cell J that microwave radiation may be responsible, as this would have caused the victim to cook from the inside out, not from the outside in, as observed here.

At this point, there is a temptation to label this death as 'spontaneous human combustion'. However, I am not completely comfortable with this definition, mostly because nothing ever just happens without an external cause. There also appear to be some differences from so-called spontaneous human combustion in this case. Firstly, complete combustion of the cadaver did not occur, although admittedly the intervention of the marshals may have prevented this. Secondly, in most well documented 'spontaneous' combustion cases there is a source of ignition somewhere not far from the cadaver (although almost always out of reach). In this case there was no such ignition source. The most well touted explanation for spontaneous combustion is the so-called 'wick effect,' where body fat smoulders and then burns around the bones, which act as a candle's wick to direct the combustion, which usually starts at one or other extremity. Clearly this is not the case here.

One possibility I have considered, but find little direct evidence for, is that the injuries to Petrucci were as a result of electrical burns. However, this would not only need a prolonged exposure to an electrical source, but would also require his whole body surface (inside and out) to act as a conductor without current passing through the body. (Generally for electrical burns there is a defined entry point and exit point with the current, and hence the damage, passing through the body, often in a circuitous route, between these points.) Without further evidence, I must emphasise that this is merely speculation.

It must be stated at this point that we have little further to go on, although the presence of a possible seventh person should be pursued further if only to exclude this as a factor. We can be reasonably certain as to the cause of death, but not how it came (or was brought) about. If it was a murder, as the circumstances would imply, then we have no idea as to who caused it, or how to prevent such an attack in the future. I can only wish Cell J luck in their investigation.

Regards,

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RESOLUTION ZERO: THE UNITED NATIONS AND THE STARKWEATHER MOORE CONSPIRACY

BY DANIEL HARMS
WITH DAVID CONYERS AND ADAM CROSSINGHAM
WEAPONS STATISTICS BY HANS CHRISTIAN VORTISCH

Delta Green is a setting of many secrets. Covert agencies seek out evidence of the paranormal, or attempt to destroy the same, in countless games of cat-and-mouse. Within these labyrinthine conspiracies, one of Lovecraft's most important creations has yet to receive attention. Here, then, is the covert United Nations task force instituted by an off-the-books directive called Resolution Zero.

History

In 1931, a Miskatonic University expedition led by Professors William Dyer and Frank Pabodie entered Antarctica to uncover new fossil specimens using Pabodie's experimental drilling apparatus. What they found instead was a chain of mountains higher than the Himalayas and a tremendous city, the capital of the Elder Thing civilisation. These beings possessed a high level of technology and were masters of genetic manipulation, creating not only servitor creatures known as 'shoggoths' but a wide variety of Earth's life forms—including humans. Carvings in the city hinted at a more distant chain of mountains concealing an even greater horror. Many members of the expedition died from causes that the expedition leaders hushed up in the press, and the survivors soon retreated from Antarctica.

Dyer frantically tried to cover up what he had found, but he was unable to keep three expeditions—one led by German scientists Josef Barsmeier and Klaus Falken, one led by American heiress Acacia Lexington, and one led by explorer James Starkweather and Miskatonic geology professor William Moore—from returning to the continent in 1933. The three expeditions found everything Dyer spoke of, and further secrets that threatened all life on earth. All three teams took heavy casualties, and their members were forced to cooperate in an evacuation.

The survivors met with Dyer and hastily assembled a plan to discourage scientific expeditions to that area of the continent. Lexington took the lead, using her family's wealth and influence to pressure others to abandon efforts to explore the icy continent. It worked, not so much because of the group's influence, but due to the political difficulties that were sweeping Europe in the 1920s and '30s. The power-grabbing of Mussolini and Hitler kept the public eye off scientific discoveries for some time.

Despite the best efforts of Barsmeier to cover up his expedition's discoveries, the Nazis independently found evidence of the Elder Things in 1939. Under the cover of Aktion Eisschloss, they set up a base utilising Elder Thing technology in Neuschwabenland. But as World War II progressed the base was forgotten, and the personnel fell prey to the horrors they disturbed.

None of the previous explorers knew about this—Barsmeier was imprisoned soon after an investigation revealed his "collaboration with the enemy"—but they did take note of the Nazis' interest in Antarctica. The former expedition members had to make some tough decisions. Even if the Nazis did not discover the secrets of the frozen land, it was only a matter of time before a well-funded government effort was made to explore and exploit the alien city. It was time for a new approach.

On 5 October 1944, the survivors of the expeditions presented their discoveries to representatives of the four Allied Powers who attended a conference in the interests of world peace at Dumbarton Oaks in Washington, D.C. The diplomats viewed photographs and films of the city and listened to speeches from the eminent scientists and professors the group had assembled. Faced with undeniable evidence of an alien civilisation and its advanced technology, the diplomats had to decide what to do. None of the Allies could afford to waste valuable resources and manpower on a mad dash to seize the city's wonders—the Axis seemed to be retreating, but a potential conflict among the Allies might divert resources that might be needed later. Full disclosure was also dismissed, as was destroying the metropolis outright. Rather, the countries that came together to fight the Axis had to agree to maintain a state of détente regarding this area.

Fortunately, another proposal on the table gave them the impetus they needed.

The U.N.'s Security Council was founded on 17 January 1946 with five permanent members: the United States, the United Kingdom, France, the U.S.S.R., and China (Taiwan). These permanent members were responsible for drafting and enacting Security Council Resolution Zero, which appears in no official record of that body.

The purpose of Resolution Zero was threefold:

1) To establish a secret neutral zone, claimed by no nation, near the two deadly mountain ranges;
2) To establish a base within this zone and man it with personnel picked and trained by the permanent members of the Security Council; and
3) To declare any attack on the sovereignty of this base, from whatever nation, to be an assault on the sovereignty and territory of every permanent member of the Security Council.

The first efforts to carry out this mission met with failure. Most of the staff assigned to Resolution Zero consisted of second-stringers their governments didn't want to assign to their national defence programs. Many contributed little to the effort, or were nothing more than spies. The base, first established in 1946, was wiped out twice, once in 1947 when the American initiative Operation HIGHJUMP disturbed what lay beneath the ice, and again in 1950 in still-mysterious circumstances, with no trace left of the personnel and practically none of the settlement. These devastating tragedies became the subject of considerable spin from the United Nations—if something capable of this much destruction remained in Antarctica, the world must be protected from it—and more funding from the Security Council

members was channelled in their direction.

For over 50 years of consensus and dissension, hot words and cold conflicts, the United Nations has manned, supplied, and defended Zero Station. For the most part, it has been virtually autonomous; the Security Council doesn't mind what's going on there as long as the status quo is maintained. But some shake-ups were inevitable. When China was recognised as a permanent member of the Security Council in 1971, taking Taiwan's seat, the other members decided to cut the new member out of the loop. Whether someone in Taiwan still knows about Resolution Zero is unknown, though they are probably not in a position to anything about it. It is also possible that, when the Soviet Union fractured in 1991, some individuals from breakaway provinces retained knowledge of the secret base, though the Russian delegation states that any such problem has been dealt with.

The cooperation between the permanent members of the Security Council—except China—in preserving Zero Station's secrets continues. Each permanent member knows that it cannot risk war, no matter how great the secrets hidden beneath the ice may be, and they agree that it is absolutely imperative that no other contender should appear. At the same time, all members keep an eye out for technology or information that could directly benefit their own governments.

State of Affairs

No elected official is ever briefed on Resolution Zero. A small cabal of in-the-know senior diplomats and military officials from each country pressure their governments to support the United Nations black budget in a time when no nation provides that body with its full amount of dues. These individuals have discouraged incursions into that area of Antarctica, suppressed or altered maps and satellite footage of the area, and kept the peace. This is not to say that no technology from Zero Station has ever made it to the outside world, but the situation for humanity might be much worse if not for the U.N. force stationed there.

Resolution Zero usually recruits two types of individuals: hardened ex-special ops warriors and scholars who are masters of all academic fields. The soldiers are often 'killed in training accidents' and shipped to secret stations in Latin America and Antarctica for further training. The scientists often disappear in more dramatic circumstances, and not all of them depart their former lives willingly. These vanishings have led to speculation among conspiracy theorists who claim that the departed are taken to another planet to work at a secret base. The truth is slightly less spectacular.

With its huge budget, friends in high places, and the best in military technology and scientific training, one would expect Resolution Zero to be the greatest threat the Great Old Ones and their minions have ever experienced on this world, but lack of information hampers the organisation severely. Though the murals in Yian-Ho and Mythos books depict alien species, investigation into these matters rarely goes beyond a few minutes of informal discussion. Even researchers who have seen the monstrosities beneath the antarctic wastes have a hard time accepting that an eighth-century Arab—or anyone else from those ancient books—could possibly have anything of worth to say about it. Resolution Zero's leadership sees little evidence that such beings have influence over today's world. In addition, the group runs the risk of discovery each time it carries out an operation on another country's soil, and investigating rumours of otherwordly beings is seen as pointless at best and hazardous to the overall mission at worst. Best to fall back to defending Zero Station and its secrets.

The Charcot Institute of Antarctic Research (ICRA)

The Security Council does not dirty its members' hands with the day-to-day business of guarding Zero Station and preventing its existence being made known to the world. The Institut Charcot pour la Recherché en Antarctique does this for them.

Ostensibly the Charcot Institute of Antarctic Research (named after Jean-Baptiste Charcot, a French antarctic explorer of the early 20th century) funds and organises antarctic research programs. This allows it access to the closed academic world of antarctic research and allows it to keep its finger on the pulse of current thinking—and subtly divert attention away from areas it doesn't want investigated.

The Charcot Institute was created in late 1956 as an emergency reaction to the increased scientific scrutiny of Antarctica during the International Geophysical Year of 1957/58 (18 months of internationally co-ordinated, concentrated study of the Earth and its cosmic environment, which coincided with a period of intense solar activity). The institute maintains offices in Le Havre, France, and New York, close to the U.N. buildings. It maintains particularly close relations with the French Institute for Polar Research and Technology in Brest.

If the academics of the Charcot Institute are unable to curtail or influence research, a second team is activated to deal with the problem. This is a team of six men who have been trained in the French art of 'direct action.' Almost all are former French special forces or DGSE officers, although American, British, and Russian personnel have served in the unit. The team, known as 'Les Charcleurs,' are proficient in persuasion, blackmail, breaking and entering, framing, accidents, and the ultimate sanction, 'wet works.' Assassination is taken as the matter of last recourse, when all other avenues have been exhausted or would be impossible. Sudden death draws attention as much as it eliminates witnesses.

Les Charcleurs were originally part of SDECE, the predecessor to France's DGSE, when they were outsourced to Resolution Zero, and have maintained friendly relations with their mother agency and its successor, recruiting most of its personnel from it. Select DGSE operators know the Charcot Institute as a small, para-governmental organisation with some U.N. connections. Most assume it must be connected with furthering French foreign policy.

When in the field, Les Charcleurs use an eclectic mix of equipment depending on local availability and personal preference. They do not have diplomatic immunity and cannot easily travel with weapons and interesting equipment, and have to acquire weaponry locally through established contacts or well-prepared stashes.

Relations

PISCES

The British contribution to Resolution Zero came from within Operation TABARIN, established in February 1944 to prevent the Germans from using Antarctica as a staging area for Axis attacks. Their researches turned up that the Nazis were interested in unusual technology found at the South Pole. Discreet inquiries were made to previous antarctic expeditions, but they were not discreet enough, for a group already on their guard, and led to the survivors' decision to divulge the secrets of Antarctica to the Allies.

When PISCES underwent its post-war reorganisation, one of the conditions of its continued existence attached by Clement Attlee was that the personnel who had been involved with Operation TABARIN be reassigned to that group, now renamed the Falkland Islands Dependency Survey, along with the relevant files on their discoveries in the south. In 1962, the FIDS would become the British Antarctic Survey, and it would remain the main liaison between Resolution Zero and the U.K. government. Effectively, this has isolated Resolution Zero from PISCES for most of both groups' histories.

This ignorance led to tragedy in the late 1960s, when both Resolution Zero and PISCES investigated the death of the curator of the Wharby Museum in Yorkshire, who supposedly owned several items of Elder Thing manufacture. A Charcleur team met a PISCES team at the museum, and the ensuing fire fight left two PISCES and three Resolution Zero agents dead. The Security Council was informed of what happened, and U.K. officials eventually disclosed that an unnamed security

agency was behind the incident. The Home Secretary's Office told PISCES that their opponents had been MI5 agents looking for an anarchist group's cache of weapons. As PISCES agents had concluded their investigation with no sign of occult activity, they were more than happy to turn in a few agents' resignations and keep things quiet.

Otherwise, contact between the two organisations has been one-sided. Resolution Zero has used PISCES as an asset when it needed certain work done. Information was usually leaked through the Joint Air Reconnaissance Intelligence Centre (JARIC) to appear as genuine intel to PISCES, and subsequent efforts would come through the Defence Geographic and Imagery Intelligence Agency, the product of JARIC's merger with the Military Survey Defence Agency in 2000. The higher-ups are reluctant to do this often, as it may provide the British with Elder Thing technology and risk Resolution Zero's cover, but it has worked successfully under the right conditions.

GRU SV-8

At first, the GRU were hardly brought in on Resolution Zero. Stalin remembered the disaster in the tunnels beneath the Kremlin in 1931 all too vividly, so he spent his last years pumping a great deal of money into Resolution Zero to keep '"those monsters"' at bay. Shalin found out about Resolution Zero in the documents that the GRU collected after Beria's death and SMERSH's disbandment in 1953, and funding was continued with his blessing. A number of GRU SV-8 personnel were allotted to Resolution Zero, especially if political fortune turned against one of them—they still served the interests of Mother Russia, they were ultimately someone else's responsibility, and no one would complain of getting lighter duty than a gulag.

It is unknown whether anyone in GRU SV-8 is still in the loop regarding Resolution Zero, given the large number of retirees from the department after the fall of the U.S.S.R. Responsibility for Resolution Zero in the new Russia seems to be based elsewhere, but they haven't shown their hand or identified themselves yet.

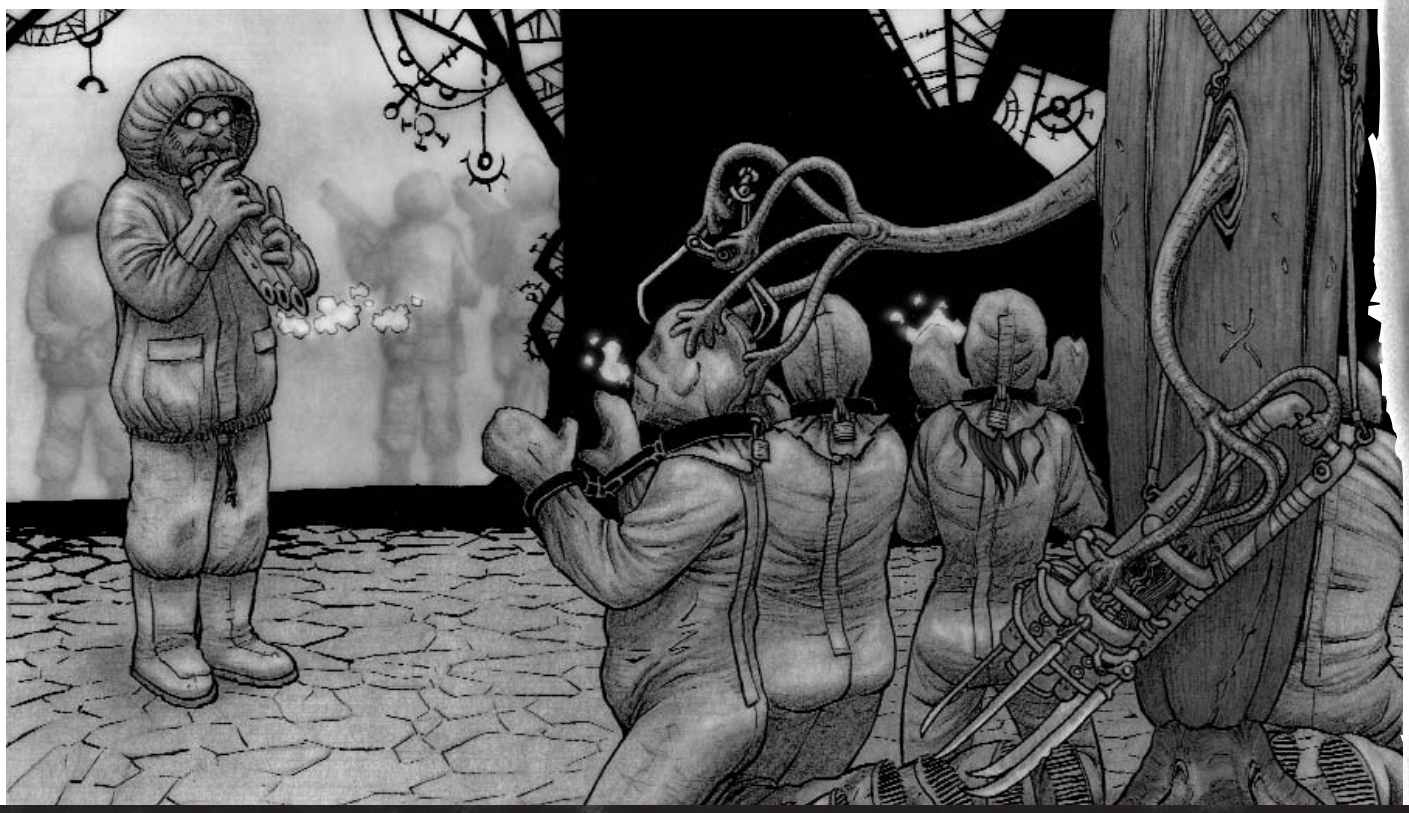
Majestic-12

When the Roswell crash occurred in 1947, some in the U.S. government who were aware of the newly formed Resolution Zero wondered whether that organisation should be told of the new discovery. The overwhelming vote was in the negative—the crashed saucer seemed to have little or no connection to the photos found by the antarctic expeditions, and it promised technological boons that could belong to the U.S. alone. If some connection showed up, the government ruled, they would tell the U.N., but not before.

The compartmentalisation of American intelligence, in this case, did some good. Majestic-12 was effectively kept out of the loop on Resolution Zero for decades. The National Reconnaissance Office was forced to serve two masters, but it worked out—Majestic-12 wasn't interested in photos of Antarctica for a good long while. When the Greys gave Majestic-12 'The Report' in 1980, they noted the forces surrounding Zero Point, but Resolution Zero friendlies in the State Department deflected their interest. Majestic-12 was interested, but was much more enthusiastic about the Report and the Cookbook, not to mention continued talks with the aliens, who tried to keep them in the dark about other alien species. In the end, the foremost factor that kept Majestic-12 from uncovering the Elder Thing presence was its members' arrogance—they couldn't possibly imagine that someone in the government other than them had knowledge of an alien civilisation.

The charade crumbled in 1996, when a Project MOON DUST team was dispatched to part of Queen Maud Land to verify an explorer's report of a 'downed flying saucer'. What they found was a downed Nazi aeroplane, with the preserved corpses of officers and a diary in German describing secret Nazi experiments taking place at an antarctic location called 'Point 103.' A small-scale search for this installation began, soon abandoned when it attracted attention on an international scale. Serendipitously, this led to the Steering Committee's discovery that satellite imagery of Antarctica was not as available as they might have liked. Indeed, their requests stirred up a minor interagency controversy which Majestic-12 quietly defused and kept under wraps. Two years later, a team headed by Adolph Lepus kidnapped one of their main foes in the debate and took him to Vieques Island for OUTLOOK

Flute playing signals the exchange at Mizpah



Beyond the Mountains of Madness Spoilers

DO NOT READ THE FOLLOWING IF YOU ARE PLAYING, OR EVER WANT TO PLAY, THE CHAOSIUM CAMPAIGN *BEYOND THE MOUNTAINS OF MADNESS*.

Just as the Starkweather-Moore Expedition uncovered it, the God-Trap remains in Antarctica, guarding the planet's darkest secret. This is the true reason that Resolution Zero exists—to keep the trap supplied with the psychic material it needs.

One of the first tasks undertaken by Resolution Zero was the establishment of communication with what few Elder Things survived near the Mountains of Madness. After much effort, they have managed to keep a tentative peace with the alien beings, allowing them to inspect the structure of the God-Trap and make a few minor repairs. Only about a dozen people, who have been most faithful to Resolution Zero, maintain such contact, using flutes that help them mimic the rudiments of the Elder Things' whistling language. They keep their own small outpost near the God-Trap at a place they call "Mizpah".

Each permanent member of the Security Council is expected to provide a quota of 'raw material' each year to keep the trap functioning. Resolution Zero turns a blind eye to exactly who is used as fodder. Prisoners of war, criminals, subversives, dissidents, and people snatched off the streets have all been used at one time or another. In most cases, they are people with no surviving family, few friends, and little fame or money. Once they arrive in Antarctica, they have nowhere to run, and the countries never have to worry about them again. If anyone in a government is ungrateful enough to ask where these people go, the Security Council's liaison refers to various 'construction projects' of which a beautiful (and completely erroneous) slideshow is available.

How long this relationship will be maintained is up in the air. The Elder Things are suspicious of their 'gifts' as it is, and if they found out that Resolution Zero was dissecting Elder Things, they would likely respond with violence, attempting to capture camp personnel for the God Trap.

interrogation. They found more than they bargained for.

Now Majestic-12 faces one of its greatest challenges: infiltrating one of the greatest cover-ups the world had ever known without exposing their own dealings in the process. While the Steering Committee is confident that it could survive being uncovered, it would bring unwanted scrutiny to their own efforts. As a result, the committee is looking to recruit officers in connection to Resolution Zero for their own purposes.

Delta Green

It is suggested that no one in Delta Green (save perhaps for A Cell) has any idea that Resolution Zero exists. It should be left for the players to uncover it. If A Cell does know, only Alphonse knows of its existence thanks to a highly placed friendly, a Clinton appointee who forwarded hints of Resolution Zero to Alphonse before the Bush team took office. During an investigation they might find their footsteps dogged not just by the Bronsons, but also by a shadowy third force seeking the same goal. They might find an ancient Elder Thing artefact only to have it stolen or taken by force. People with high-level diplomatic credentials may attempt to stymie their interest in the matter, or may find the players' expertise useful to the Security Council. Eventually, the players should make the final visit to Antarctica, perhaps to find Zero Station under siege by the horrors of a forgotten age.

Recent Events

Resolution Zero continues to cover up evidence of the Mountains of Madness and the alien city. In 1996, a meteorologist affiliated with the group noticed that the current maps of Antarctica, carefully prepared decades before to remove any hint of the tremendous mountain ranges, were in fact flawed, with elements that might lead to discovery of Resolution Zero's secrets. Working in concert with the United States Geological Service, the maps were quietly taken off the market and replaced.

The next threat to Resolution Zero's security was closer to a nightmare. In 1999, a body of water was found beneath the nearby Russian research station known as Vostok. The scientific community saw this as a boon; many talked of collecting the micro-organisms within, and NASA planned to use it as a staging point for testing equipment used to probe liquid planets and moons. A test drilling, however, turned up something else—not quite living or dead, not quite organism or virus, a forgotten weapon of the Elder Things. A hasty series of evacuations and quarantines began, and the confusion was exacerbated when a NASA official suggested to the press that this was the result of an intelligence agency debacle. Nonetheless, the story quickly died, the affected researchers were cured or disposed of, and life went on.

More recently, a survey team steered off course in the antarctic waste. On their way back, they noticed large cargo planes in the distance, seemingly headed toward the higher mountains to the northwest. This has ignited several rumours inside the camp. Is there another base? If so, what new wonders might be found there?

Finally, while Resolution Zero has kept governments from interfering in its affairs, the world seems to be catching up with it. Global temperatures rise, a hole in the ozone sits above the South Pole, and every year the ice cap shrinks. Some fear that this will destroy this valuable archaeological resource, while others mutter darker misgivings. A few have called for submitting these problems to the Security Council, but given the uncertainty that often grips that body, this might not do any good. And the situation only grows worse. . .

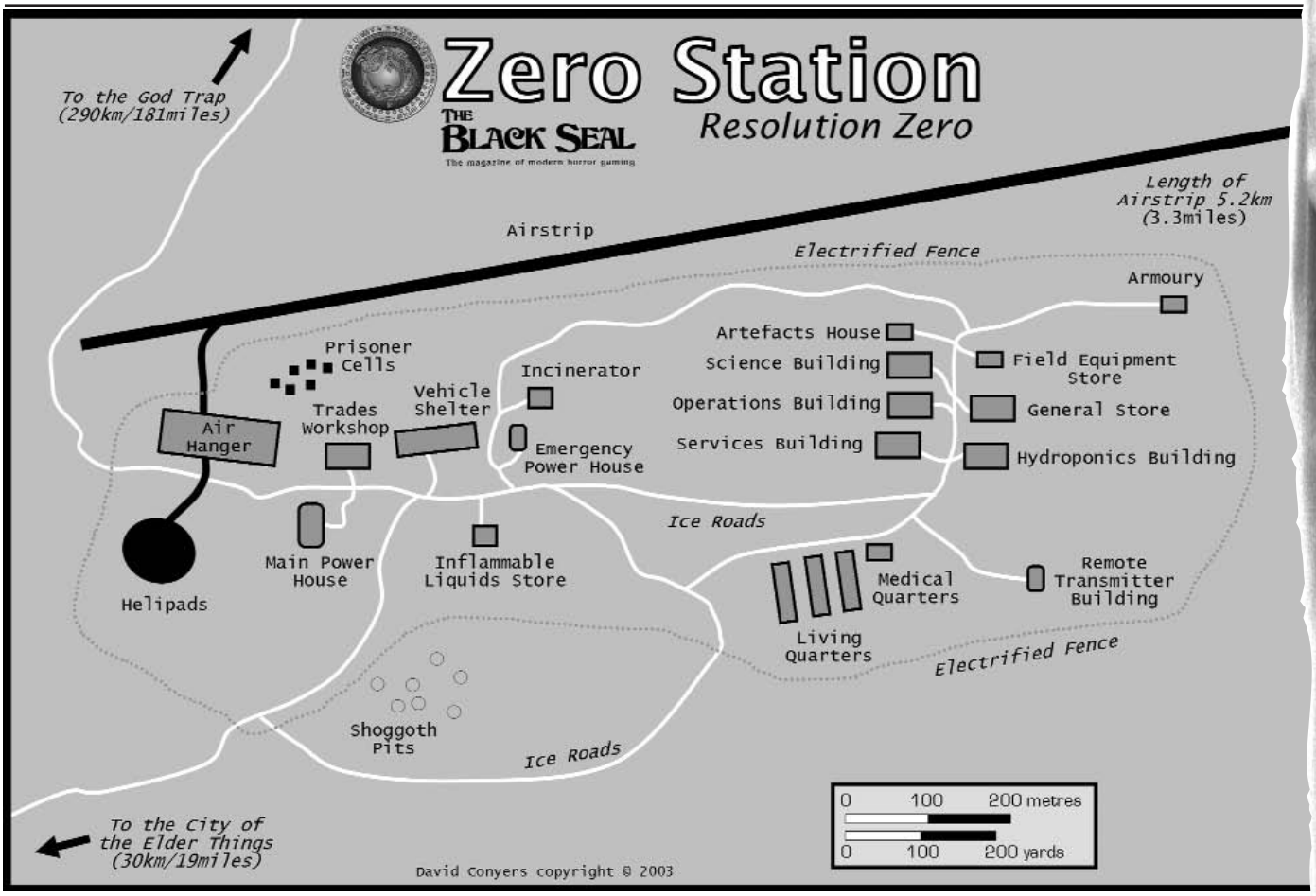
Zero Station

Zero Station is a small, isolated outpost, home to some 300 individuals assigned to Antarctica by the United Nations year-round, from the summer to the long, cold night of winter.

Resolution Zero for Cthulhu Now

Resolution Zero makes an excellent addition to modern non-Delta Green settings, particularly for those willing to inject an element of *X-Files*-style paranoia into their games. The lack of large governmental Mythos-busting organisations in the standard Cthulhu setting gives Resolution Zero more freedom to flex its muscles. As such, it should be used with caution—most Cthulhu Now investigators do not have the influence, money, and backing of law that Resolution Zero commands, and one wrong step could lead them into serious trouble. Some may feel that a large anti-Mythos organisation may nullify some of the cosmic horror of the setting, but Resolution Zero is primarily concerned with keeping its own secrets, not preserving individual lives.

The presence of Resolution Zero might also open up possibilities for a campaign based entirely within the organisation. What if the players are scientists and soldiers newly sent to Zero Station and forced to work together? What about a Charcot Institute team, dispatched around the globe to investigate and close possible leaks of information? If either group finds out about the broader significance of the Great Old Ones, what will they do about it?



Situated at 99°E 77°S, Zero Station is positioned halfway between the Russian Vostok base, which is closer to the pole, and the Australian Casey station to the north. Both bases are approximately 1,400 kilometres (870 miles) from Zero Station. Visible from Zero Station is the Elder Thing city, and beyond that the Miskatonic Mountains.

The population of the base is divided into four main groups. The first, Security, includes approximately 100 personnel with expertise in special operations and cold climate survival. The second group, Research, includes about 100 scientists and other academic staff who spend their days exploring the Elder Thing city, studying and analysing artefacts and other mysteries, or in laboratories back at the base. The third group, Services, with about 80 individuals, supports the first two groups. They are mechanics, pilots, drivers, builders, electricians, horticulturalists, information technology specialists, chefs, cleaners, doctors, and psychologists, all of whom have limited knowledge of the city and what lies inside. The last and smallest group rarely interact with the rest of the staff, for they remain unseen and unknown to many who work at Zero Station: These are the criminals and misfits brought from around the globe in special transportable containment cells, where they are held until they feed the God Trap. They are known only to those who need to know of their existence. Everyone else believes the containers that bring them are fuel and cargo pallets.

The base is regularly supplied by C-130 Hercules transport planes arriving every one to two weeks from a secret Royal Air Force Base in the Falkland Islands. A secondary emergency supply base is situated in Tasmania, Australia. When the planes can't land because of unpredictable or violent weather, they airdrop supplies, including subjects for the God Trap.

Base staff work on a six-month-on, six-month-off cycle and often overlap their stays through the summer-day and the winter-night months. When not working, staff are provided two months' leave with pay and sent anywhere in the world they desire. The other four non-base months are spent undertaking office work either at Resolution Zero's administration offices at Hobart in Tasmania or, for the privileged few, in Paris out of the offices of the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO). Security personnel are assigned to top secret military training camps operated by the United States, United Kingdom, France, or Russia.

Buildings and Compounds

Most of the buildings at Zero Station are constructed from braced steel frames with concrete footing anchored into the rock, which does away with the need for external guying (steel cables used to hold structures down against the wind). Building walls include several layers of insulation, including inside vapour barriers and external moisture barriers that prevent the entry of cold streams. Most building components are prefabricated in Australia to minimise labour requirements in Antarctica, where the summer only allows for a construction season of three to four months.

Buildings must be positioned carefully to minimise the effect of drift on the ice sheets and are orientated with their long sides parallel to the winds, which can reach hundreds of kilometres per hour and add to the drift. Doors, windows, and other openings are only permitted on sides where snowdrift does not accumulate in large quantities.

Fire is a serious threat in the dry antarctic conditions, and every building has fire-fighting equipment. Emergency survival equipment—such as fibreglass tents, survival clothing, and food rations—is also easily accessible in case important structures are destroyed.

Most building interiors maintain a constant temperature of 18°C (65°F). Water drawn from a lake deep under the ice is pumped into heated storage tanks. Rationing is enforced, so base members are only allowed three-minute showers and can only request two loads of laundry per week.

Originally technicians attempted to power the base by hooking into what appeared to be power plants inside the Elder Thing city, but this never lasted very long: Power cables were often mysteriously cut and lengthy sections vanished. Diesel generators now power the

base using fuel flown in on the Hercules transports. During the winter the entire site is heavily lit with floodlights, which is an enormous drain on power supplies but is necessary to maintain sanity and security.

Aircraft Hangar: This large building can house two C-130 Hercules, six C-212 aircraft, and the six Black Hawk helicopters permanently assigned to the base. One Hercules always remains on site for emergencies, rotated with visiting transports when necessary maintenance overhauls are performed in the Falklands or Hobart. The engines and cabins of the aircraft are continually heated via electrical power so that they don't freeze up.

Airstrip: The bitumen airstrip is five kilometres long and floodlit during winter. Due to the base's need for constant supplies, electrical slab heating runs just under the surface of the track to stop ice from forming, and snow walls stop snowdrift. While this system works quite well at maintaining an airstrip even in winter, it requires a lot of maintenance.

Armoury: The well-stocked armoury holds enough small arms and munitions to supply an entire company. Basic weapons issued are the Glock 17 pistol and H&K G3KA4 carbine. Support weapons include FNMI MK48 MOD0 light machine guns, Accuracy International AW50FT sniper rifles, and GM-94 rifled pump-action shotguns. Due to the unique threat posed in the area, obsolete M9A1-7 backpack flamethrowers and Russian RPO-A Shmel single-shot rocket launchers with thermobaric warheads are available. The armoury is located away from other structures, just in case there is an explosive accident here.

Artefacts House: This warehouse, also on electrically heated concrete slabs, contains many of the artefacts uncovered from the Elder Thing city, including bas-reliefs and murals, building material such as stones and obelisks, dysfunctional palladium boxes, and crystals of many shapes and sizes.

Electrified Fence: A three-metre (10 ft) fence runs the perimeter of the base, but it has become next to useless as blizzards and snowdrifts knock it down faster than it can be economically maintained. (It would require 200 hours of work to put the fence back into operation. Each successful Mechanical Repair, Electrical Repair, or Operate Heavy Machinery skill roll [Repair and Operate Heavy Machinery checks: DC10] by participating members of the work crew completes 1D10 hours of work; otherwise that same period of time has been lost with no discernable progress.) If operational, the fence causes 10D10 points of electrical shock to anyone (or anything) who touches it, including shoggoths.

Emergency Power House: This emergency power station consists of eight 330 kw diesel-powered generators that can keep the base lit and heated for a continuous period of four weeks during summer and two weeks during winter. The generators were installed in the early 1980s and require a manual start up. Plans are in place to replace them soon.

Field Equipment Store: Another building heated with electrical slabs, this building contains almost every type of equipment an antarctic explorer might need, including parkas, snow-goggles, snow boots, flashlights, rope, climbing equipment, ice picks (damage 1D6+1), batteries, tents, sleeping bags, shovels, GPS readers, compasses, two-way radios, satellite radios, signal flare guns (damage 1D10+1D3 burn), Geiger counters, knives (damage 1D4+1), welding kits, mechanical tools, cameras, thermal blankets, and so forth. Finding a specific piece of equipment takes 1D10 minutes and successful Spot Hidden and Luck rolls [Search check and Will saving throw: both DC15], assuming a Keeper deems that the item would be a likely find.

General Store: This blue-painted building contains food supplies and other general provisions such as paper, detergents, kitchen supplies, light bulbs, and anything else that could be conceivably consumed inside a remote camp.

Helipads: Heated and lit concrete helipads are used by the Black Hawk helicopters. This pad is easier to maintain than the runway only because its surface area is much smaller.

Hydroponics Building: Many fruits and vegetables are grown in the base, providing fresh food to the staff. Two horticulturalists work full-time ensuring that food supplies do not run short. Unlike other buildings in Zero Station, the interior is green and tropical.

Incinerator: This two-stage oil-fired burner is used to incinerate food scraps, human waste, packaging, and medical and scientific waste.

Inflammable Liquids Store: This building contains the numerous fuel cylinders required to power the base and vehicles. The store is rather large and contains gangplanks with specially fitted casings to ensure cylinders do not become dislodged and volatile.

Living Quarters: Several living quarters make up the accommodation for Zero Station staff. These are divided between Security, Research, and Services to minimise any idle chit-chat that might compromise base secrets. Most sleep quarters consist of four bunks; no one is allowed to live alone. This way, everyone can be watched just in case someone starts to develop abnormal behaviour from the prolonged stress of working in the city. Each person on the base has a desk, wardrobe, shelves, and internal telephone, while bathrooms are shared. Meals are eaten in the mess and are served at 0700 hours (breakfast), 1000 hours (morning tea), 1300 hours (lunch), and 1800 hours (dinner). Lounge areas include a pool table, bar, DVD player, and a small library consisting of mostly popular fiction titles.

Main Power House: Power to the base is supplied by twenty 165 KVA diesel generator sets, fully automated and computer-controlled. These generators run around the clock, providing power, heating, and lighting to the base. Normally 10 generators run during the day, with an additional six running to provide external light during the long night. The four additional generators were fitted to power the electrified fence while utilised. The power supply can be adjusted with an Electronics [Knowledge (electronics)] or a Computer Use skill roll. The building is fire-resistant to two hours and has electrically heated floor slabs.

Medical Quarters: This building contains medical supplies and drugs, a small surgery, an infirmary, and two padded cells for employees who go a little crazy and need to be confined-either temporarily or indefinitely until they can be properly dealt with (such as feeding them to the God Trap as has happened in extreme situations). The station's psychiatrist works out of an office in this building.

Operations Building: This large building is home to telecommunications operations and administrative staff offices, including offices for the head of Security. The largest room in this building is a 'command centre' not unlike a NASA control room, with banks of desktops and a massive digital display screen with regular updates of satellite imagery of the City of the Elder Things. Small arms (MP5SD6 submachine guns and G36KA2 assault rifles) are kept in lockers.

Prison Cells: Most people at Zero Station believe these massive containers are used to collect artefacts from the City of the Elder Things for shipment back to other parts of the world where they undergo further research. And they do occasionally ship artefacts out—but more often they deliver victims for the God Trap. Cells are heated and provide prisoners with minimal lighting, food, and water until they are handed over to the Elder Things. Until then they are regularly attended by Security personnel and a select group from Research.

The Autopsy Room

Security around these cells is tight.

Remote Transmitter Building: This high-frequency remote receiver is used for field communications with expedition parties, ships, aircraft, and when necessary, other antarctic stations. It is remote from other buildings to reduce electrical interference.

Science Building: Another large building, consisting of several laboratories fully equipped to cater to chemists, physicists, biologists, geologists, meteorologists, archaeologists, anthropologists, and academics from a range of other scientific disciplines. Corpses of several Elder Things are kept in storage at one end of this building, while several more of these monsters have been dissected and studied and their parts stored through various laboratories. One Elder Thing is being sliced into very thin wedges and images of it fed into a mainframe computer so that a detailed virtual model of the creature can be studied. Samples of what is thought to be shoggoth tissue are contained in magnetic fields at temperatures just above absolute zero—the only safe way it can be contained. This building contains offices for the head of Research.

Services Building: Contains the offices of the administrative staff and the head of Services. The main network servers and information technology staff offices are also located in this building.

Shoggoth Pits: In the early days, Zero Station attempted to capture patrolling shoggoths inside huge concrete pits 30 metres (100 ft) deep and fitted with huge steel lids weighing several tonnes. Special plumbing was incorporated into the pits so that samples of shoggoth tissue could be siphoned off in minute quantities for research. Problem was, even though the pits were based on designs found in the City of the Elder Things, they never worked. Only one pit actually ever caught a shoggoth, and it made so much noise bashing its pseudopods against the steel casing that the pit was covered with hundreds of tonnes of concrete until the creature could no longer be heard.

Twenty years ago, a researcher turned on the tap connected to this pit, and a pseudopod immediately leapt out of the tap and attempted to pull him through a two-inch steel pipe, with fatal results. The tap was permanently sealed shut, and to this day everyone at Zero Station knows there is one mad shoggoth down there, waiting to be freed.

Trades Workshop: This large fabrication workshop has welding, fitting, and machining tools used for base repairs, construction of new buildings and services, ground vehicle or aircraft maintenance, and repairs that cannot be conducted in their respective buildings. Large quantities of concrete can also be manufactured in the workshop.

Vehicle Shelter: This large hangar-style building contains berthing for all the skidoos, Nodwells, Hägglunds, sleds, and other ground vehicles assigned to the base. There is also a workshop and garage for vehicle repairs and maintenance. No heating is provided in this shelter, but vehicles can be plugged into electrical sockets so their engines do not freeze solid.

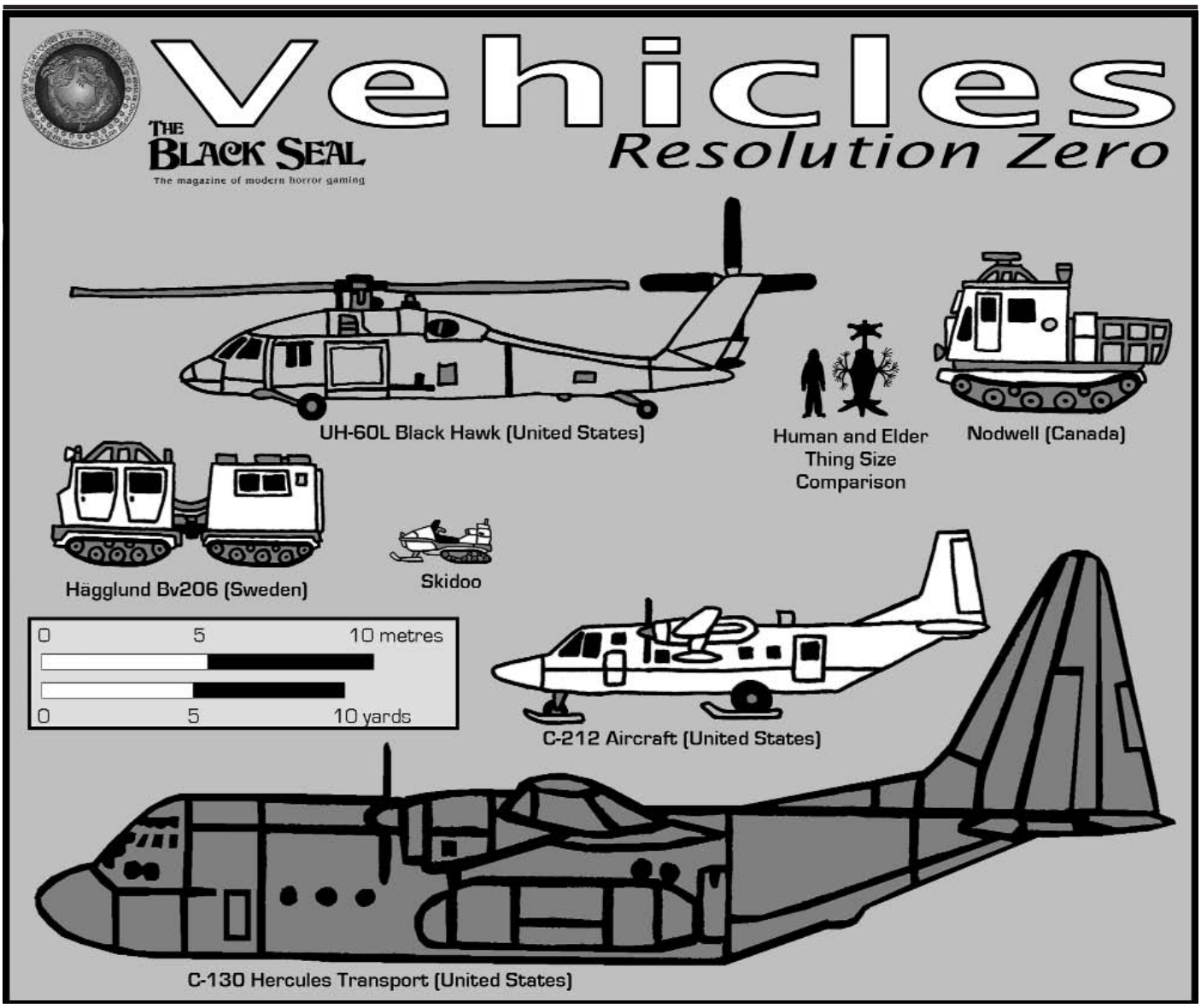
Water Tanks: Fresh water is pumped from an underground lake and heated so that it will not freeze. Early analysis showed trace amounts of organic material within the water, but filtration supposedly eliminates these. Any effects these compounds might have on the staff is slow-acting, to say the least.

Vehicles

C-130 Hercules

The C-130 turboprop air lifter is the primary military workhorse for many of the world's air forces, able to carry large numbers of troops and equipment. Manufactured in the United States, Hercules can operate from rough, ice or dirt runways and can refuel mid-flight. Zero Station uses four Hercules to supply their base from the Falkland Islands, 8,000 kilometres (5,000 miles) distant, and have a reduced payload capacity to allow for the extra fuel required to complete the journey.

Speed: 600 kph (375 mph)
Range: 8,500 km (5,300 miles) (normally 3,800 km [2,400 miles])
Crew: 5 (2 pilots, navigator, flight engineer, and loadmaster)
Passengers: 40 troops or two standard



freight pallets (normally 92 troops or five standard freight pallets)
Payload: 10,000 kg (22,200 lb) (normally 19,500 kg [43,400 lbs])
Required Skills: Pilot Civil Prop, Navigation Sea/Air, Electrical Repair, Electronics, Mechanical Repair, Operate Heavy Machinery [Pilot (aircraft), Intuit Direction, Repair, Knowledge (electronics), Operate Heavy Machinery]
Armaments: None

C-212 Aircraft

These ski-fitted twin turboprop engine planes are used primarily for intercontinental flights and survey. With a fixed undercarriage, low-temperature operability, and a rear cargo door/ramp, C-212s have proven ideal in antarctic conditions. When weather conditions are suitable they even land and takeoff from natural ice fields. Zero Station uses six of these C-212s to investigate any anomaly discovered on the continent, and they have additional fuel tanks at the expense of passenger/cargo capacity.
Speed: 360 kph (225 mph)
Range: 5,000 km (3,100 miles) (normally 2550 km [1600 miles])
Crew: 2 (pilot and navigator)
Passengers: 8 (normally 16)
Payload: 1,000 kg (2,200 lbs) (normally 2000 kg [4,400 lbs])
Required Skills: Pilot Civilian Propeller Aircraft, Navigate Sea/Air [Pilot (aircraft), Intuit Direction]
Armaments: None

Hägglunds Bv 206

These Swedish designed dual-cab rubber-tracked vehicles are used for lengthy expeditions out onto the ice. They are reliable on the field and can be driven across hard ice with a minimum thickness of half a metre. Zero Station commonly uses Hägglunds to explore the outer edges of the Elder Thing City or to visit the God Trap. Each Hägglund is fitted with a .50 calibre FN-Browning M2QCB heavy machine gun. Two M9A1-7 backpack flamethrowers are also carried to be used by the occupants in case of attack.

Speed: 50 kph (30 mph)
Range: 250 km (160 miles)
Crew: 2 (driver and navigator)
Passengers: 2
Payload: 100 kg (220 lbs); can tow an additional 2,000 kg (4,400 lbs) on an attached sled
Required Skills: Drive Tracked Vehicle, Mechanical Repair, Navigate Sea/Air [Drive, Repair, Intuit Direction]
Armaments: .50 calibre FN-Browning M2QCB heavy machine gun

Nodwell

These Canadian-designed, large, single-cab, rubber-tracked vehicles have a dual purpose as workhorses and scientific field support vehicles. They are mechanically complex, requiring a mechanic or suitably experience operator to accompany any expedition. One Nodwell at Zero Station is fitted with a cage for containing human sacrifices taken to the God Trap. Each Nodwell is fitted with an M60 machine gun and two heavy vehicle-mounted flamethrowers.

Speed: 50 kph (30 mph)
Range: 400 km (250 miles)
Crew: 3 (driver, navigator, and mechanic)
Passengers: 3

Payload: 4,000 kg (8,800 lbs); can tow an additional 3,000 kg (6,600 lbs) on an attached sled
Required Skills: Drive Tracked Vehicle, Mechanical Repair, Navigate Sea/Air [Drive, Repair, Intuit Direction]
Armaments: Two M60 7.62 x51 mm general purpose machine guns and two heavy flamethrowers

Skidoo

These petrol-powered snowmobiles drive on one or two rubber tracks. They can travel long distances and operate in soft snow conditions that would stop most other ground vehicles. Their suspension and undercarriage drive systems require a lot of maintenance.

Speed: 70 kph (40 mph)
Range: 300 km (190 miles)
Crew: 1
Passengers: 1
Payload: 60 kg (130 lbs); can pull sleds with up to 500 kg (1,100 lb) payloads
Required Skills: Drive Skidoo, Mechanical Repair [Drive, Repair]
Armaments: None

UH-60L Black Hawk

A military helicopter designed and built by Sikorsky Aircraft, the Black Hawk is the United States' primary front-line utility helicopter used for air assault, evacuation, and as a command or special operations platform. Zero Station's six Black Hawk helicopters have proven useful in exploring the City of the Elder Things.

Speed: 280 kph (175 mph)
Range: 920 km (580 miles)
Crew: 4 (pilot, navigator, flight engineer, and gunner)
Passengers: 11
Payload: 3,600 kg (8,000 lbs) external load
Required Skills: Pilot Helicopter, Navigation Sea/Air, Electrical Repair, Electronics, Mechanical Repair, Operate Heavy Machinery [Pilot (helicopter), Intuit Direction, Repair, Knowledge (electronics), Operate Heavy Machinery]
Armaments: Two 7.62x51mm GE M134 miniguns.

Weapons

These unusual weapons are mostly used to deter the occasional roaming shoggoth, although those haven't been seen for a few years now.

AI AW50FT (12.7x99mm). Base Chance: Rifle 25%; Damage: 2D10+1D8+6; Range: 200 yds; Attacks: 1; Shots: 5; 14 HPs; Malfunction 99-00.
[Damage: 2d12; Crit: x4; Action: bolt; Capacity: 5; Loading: mag; Range: 200; Rate: Standard.]

FN M2QCB (12.7x99mm). Base Chance: Machine Gun 15%; Damage: 2D10+1D8+6; Range: 200 yds; Attacks: 1 or 20; Shots: 100; 18 HPs; Malfunction 99-00.
[Damage: 2d12; Crit: x4; Action: auto; Capacity: 100; Loading: belt; Range: 200; Rate: Autofire.]

FN MK48 MOD0 (7.62x51mm). Base Chance: Machine Gun 15%; Damage: 2D6+3; Range: 90 yds; Attacks: 20; Shots: 100; 12 HPs; Malfunction 98-00.
[Damage: 2d10; Crit: x3; Action: select; Capacity: 100; Loading: drum; Range: 200; Rate: Autofire.]

Freygan Liquescent Cone Point Focal Charge.
This is a small, tripod-mounted device containing a concentrated liquid charge. Directed at a target, it releases a stream of highly concentrated solvent. A human loses 1 APP and SAN for every point of damage, and observers take 0/1D4 SAN for seeing its effects on any target. (Though no one is aware of it yet, the device does triple damage to proto-shoggoth tissue.)
Base Chance: Demolitions/Explosives skill; Damage: 4D6; Ammo 1; Shots: 1; 5 HPs; Malfunction 96-00.
[Damage: 4d6; Crit: x3/x6; Action: n/a; Capacity: 1; Loading: n/a; Range: 50; Rate: Standard.]

GE M134 (7.62x51mm). See BRP 5.5 edition rulebook, page 59.
[Damage: 2d10; Crit: x3; Action: auto; Capacity: 4000; Loading: drum; Range: 200; Rate: Autofire.]

Glock 17 (9x19mm). See BRP 5.5 edition rulebook, page 58.
[See *d20 Call of Cthulhu* rulebook, page 98.]

H&K G36KA2 (5.56x45mm). Base Chance: Rifle 25%; Damage: 2D6; Range: 55 yds; Attacks: 1 or 20; Shots: 30; 12 HPs; Malfunction 99-00.
[Damage: 2d6;Crit: x3; Action: select; Capacity: 30; Loading: mag; Range: 200; Rate: Autofire.]

H&K G3KA4 (7.62x51mm). Base Chance: Rifle 25%; Damage: 2D6+3; Range: 90 yds; Attacks: 1 or 20; Shots: 20; 12 HPs; Malfunction 98-00.
[See *d20 Call of Cthulhu* rulebook, page 99, but does 2d10 damage not 2d6.]

H&K MP5SD6 (9x19mm). Base Chance: SMG 15%; Damage: 1D10; Range: 20 yds; Attacks: 2, 3 or 25; Shots: 30; 10 HPs; Malfunction 98-00.
[See *d20 Call of Cthulhu* rulebook, page 99.]

Heavy Flamethrower, Vehicle Mounted. Base Chance: 05%, Damage: 4D6; Range:50 yds; Shots: 1; Ammo: 30; 8 HPs; Malfunction 93-00.
[Damage: 4d10; Crit: x3; Action: n/a; Capacity: 30; Loading: n/a; Range: 150; Rate: Standard.]

KBP GM-94 (43mm). Base Chance: Grenade Launcher 25% or Shotgun 30%; Damage: 3D6 + Burn/ 2 yds*; Range: 50 yds; Attacks: 1; Shots: 3+1; 12 HPs; Malfunction 98-00.
[Damage: 3d6+burn; Crit: x3; Action: pump; Capacity: 3+1; Loading: mag; Range: 150; Rate: Standard.]

KBP RPO-A Shmel (93mm). Base Chance: Rocket Launcher 15%; Damage: 12D6 + Burn/ 4 yds; Range: 150 yds; Attacks: 1; Shots: 1; 10 HPs; Malfunction 98-00.
[Damage: 12d6+burn; Crit: x4; Action: n/a; Capacity: 1; Loading: n/a; Range: 400; Rate: Standard.]

M60 General Purpose Machine Gun (7.62x51mm). (Base Chance: Machine Gun 15%; Damage: 2D6+3; Range: 110 yds; Shots: 100; Ammo 4000, 14 HPs; Malfunction 98-00.
[Damage: 2d10; Crit: x3; Action: auto; Capacity: 100; Loading: belt; Range: 200; Rate: Autofire.]

M9A1-7. Base Chance: Flame Thrower 05%; Damage: 2D6 + Burn; Range: 25 yds; Attacks: 1; Shots: 10; 6 HPs; Malfunction 95-00.
[Damage: 2d6+burn; Crit: x3; Action: n/a; Capacity: 10; Loading: n/a; Range: 75; Rate: Standard.]

Personnel

Candice Fenton

Fenton was recruited immediately after obtaining her Ph.D. in biochemistry. It was a welcome assignment for her; she had grown tired of seeing her male colleagues hired quickly by labs and research facilities while she struggled to keep herself in grad school. Even the antarctic wastes could not keep her away once she learned of the mysteries that awaited her there.

Resolution Zero assigned Candice to analyse the strange biological compounds, not quite living and not quiet dead, recently discovered at the bottom of Lake Vostok. Shunning the society of her fellow scientists, Candice began working in the lab at all hours to unravel the mystery. One night she dropped a test tube on the counter, and the protoplasmic goo inside crawled onto her hand and vanished. She immediately felt uneasy, but an impulse told her not to inform the base's doctors.

In the months that followed, Candice has become one of the world's few proto-shoggoths, a creature similar to the Elder Things' slaves but able to remain in its original form indefinitely. She occasionally experiments with her powers, creating an eye on the back of her head or snaking out a pseudopod to grasp something across the room, but she knows the consequences would be harsh if anyone found out what she was.

This may be the least of Candice's problems. She now hears the telepathic whispers of the shoggoths in her head, asking her to let them in and put an end to the human occupation of Antarctica. Alienated from her fellow humans but repulsed by the shoggoths and her new inhuman nature, it is difficult to say which side Candice will choose.

Candice Fenton
Proto-Shoggoth in Sheep's Clothing, age appears 43
Race: Caucasian (New Zealander)

STR 26 (16*)	CON 33 (13)	SIZ 16	INT 14	POW 17
DEX 13	APP 08	EDU 20	SAN 5	HP 25 (15)

Damage Bonus: +2D6 (+1D4)
* statistics in parentheses are while in human form
Education: Ph.D. Biochemistry, University of California Los Angeles
Occupation: Biochemistry researcher for Resolution Zero
Skills: Anthropology 50%, Archaeology 45%, Bargain 35%, Biology 95%, Botany 25%, Chemistry 85%, Computer Use 35%, Credit Rating (Human Form) 40%/(Shoggoth Form) 00%, Cthulhu Mythos 40%, First Aid 50%, History 40%, Library Use 60%, Mathematics 35%, Medicine 40%, Natural History 30%, Occult 40%, Spot Hidden 90%, Xenobiology (Elder Thing) 45%, Xenobiology (Shoggoth) 55%, Zoology 74%
Languages: English (own) 95%, German 40%, Latin 55%
Attacks: Crush 100%, damage is db
Rhino Fist (Pseudopod) 95%, damage 2D3+db
Grapple 90%, victim is pulled into the Candice's body and suffers 1D6 hit points of damage per round until he or she is completely digested (this attack can be made only in shoggoth form). Victim can attempt a STR versus STR roll each round to try and break free, or die trying.
Spells: None.
Armour: None, but fire and electrical attacks do only half damage; physical weapons such as firearms do only 1 point of damage per hit, impaling or not; and Candice regenerates 2 hit points per round.
Sanity Loss: None in human form. 1D6/1D20 Sanity points to see Candice in shoggoth form. Keepers may add an additional 1/1D3 Sanity point loss for investigators who witness her change from human to shoggoth.
Description: Candice is a plump, sweaty woman who is considered narrow-minded and intolerant by most of her peers. She is focused on her research and finds every possible excuse to avoid dealing with other staff members or involving them in what she has learnt. Her hair is cropped short but still stays messy. Clothes are always loose covering her large figure, and she doesn't wear many layers considering the freezing conditions at Zero Station. She becomes angry and aggressive towards anyone who questions anything that she does.

Candice Fenton, Proto-Shoggoth
Hit Dice: 154 hp
Initiative: +2 (Dex, Dodge)
Speed: 30 ft as human, 40 ft as shoggoth
Armour Class: 11 as human, 9 as shoggoth
Attacks: Human: +22/+17/+12 melee (1d3+7 punch) or +7/+2 ranged; Shoggoth: +20/+15/+10 melee.
Saves: Fort +12, Ref +7, Will +11
Abilities: Str 26, Con 33, Wis 17, Dex 13, Int 17, Cha 8 human form, 18 in shoggoth form.
Languages: English (own), German +7, Latin +9.
Skills: Computer Use +7, Cthulhu Mythos +4, Intimidate +7 (+12 in shoggoth form), Knowledge (anthropology) +8, Knowledge (archaeology) +8, Knowledge (biology) +8, Knowledge (botany) +6, Knowledge (chemistry) +12, Knowledge (history) +5, Knowledge (mathematics) +6, Knowledge (medicine) +7, Knowledge (natural history) +5, Knowledge (occult) +7, Knowledge (xenobiology: elder thing) +9, Knowledge (xenobiology: shoggoth) +13, Knowledge (zoology) +10, Move Silently +11, Research +7, Sense Motive +6, Spot +8.
Feats: Ambidextrous, Dodge, Iron Will, Power Attack, Track, Weapon Focus (grapple).
Psychic Feats: Sensitive, Biofeedback Trance.
CR: 15
Climate/Terrain: Antarctic
Sanity Loss: None in human form; 1d6/1d20 in shoggoth form; 1/1d3 to witness transformation.

Olivier Grimaut

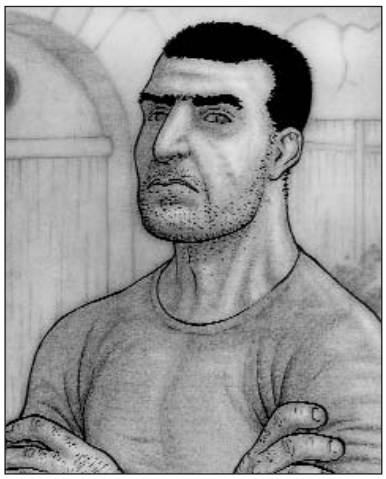
Grimaut joined the espionage world via the French Army, then 11ème CHOC, and then the DGSE. He was recruited by the Charcot Institute in late 1990. Grimaut was a little annoyed to have missed the action in Iraq but has since settled into his role of travelling the world and cleaning up problems. He enjoys travel, new places, and new challenges.

Grimaut was promoted to team leader in 2000, and since then has been working to reduce the number of 'wet' operations. He prefers old-fashioned persuasion and intimidation or a little bit of B&E to plant incriminating evidence to fulfil the mission. Grimaut has not personally seen what happens at Zero Station but knows enough to bring a little humanity to his side of the operation—it's the least he can do. His superiors dislike Grimaut's approach, but as his missions have been successful so far they are not in a position to discipline him.

Divorced with two teen daughters, Grimaut spends his free time renovating and bringing back into cultivation the family farm in Brittany.

Olivier Grimaut

'Les Charcleurs' team leader, age 39



Race: Caucasian (French)

STR 15	CON 13	SIZ 17	INT 12	POW 11
DEX 12	APP 10	EDU 19	SAN 55	HP 15

Damage Bonus: +1D4
Education: Lycée
Occupation: Resolution Zero's Cleaner
Skills: Boating 20%, Climb 50%, Conceal 35%, Demolitions 25%, Dodge 29%, Drive Auto 50%, Electronics 20%, Handgun 40%, Hide 55%, Knife 40%, Locksmith 30%, Martial Arts 22%, Military Science 40%, Natural History 35%, Navigate 55%, Parachute 35%, Photography 35%, Pilot: Small Boat 40%, Psychology 25%, Rifle 50%, SCUBA 25%, Sneak 45%, Spot Hidden 50%, Sub-Machine Gun 50%, Swim 38%, Tradecraft 32%
Languages: French (own) 95%, English 45%, Spanish 50%
Attacks: Fist/Punch 65%, 1D3+db
Grapple 35%, special
Kick 40%, 1D6+db
Blackjack 60%, 1D8+db
Fighting knife 40%, 1D4+2+db
SAKO m95 assault rifle 50%, 2D8
H&K MP5SD6 suppressed SMG 50%, 1D10
Taurus 9mm semi-automatic pistol 40%, 1D10
Description: Grimault is tall and lean with closely cropped black hair which shows flecks of white. He almost constantly wears an expression of laconic amusement on his long face, and is rarely without a lit cigarette in his hand.

Olivier Grimaut, 8th-Level Male Offence Option; hp 50; Init +1 (Dex); AC 11 (+1 Def); Spd 30 ft.; Atk. +8/+3 melee (1d3+2 punch) or +7/+2 ranged; SV Fort +9, Ref +13, Will +8; SZ M; Str 15, Con 13, Wis 11, Dex 12, Int 16, Cha 10, San. 55.
Languages: French (own), English +8, Spanish +8.
Skills: Climb +5, Craft (photography) +6, Demolitions +6, Drive +6, Hide +6, Intuit Direction +5, Knowledge (electronics) +5, Knowledge (military) +10, Knowledge (natural history) +6, Knowledge (psychology) +5, Move Silently +7, Open Locks +6, Parachuting +5, Pilot (boat) +7, SCUBA +4, Sleight of Hand +3, Spot +7, Swim +3, Tradecraft +10, Tumble +2.
Feats: Alertness, Weapon Proficiency (handgun), Weapon Proficiency (melee weapons), Weapon Proficiency (rifle), Weapon Proficiency (sub-machine gun).
Weapons: Blackjack, knife, SAKO m95 assault rifle (2d6), MP5SD6, Taurus pistol.

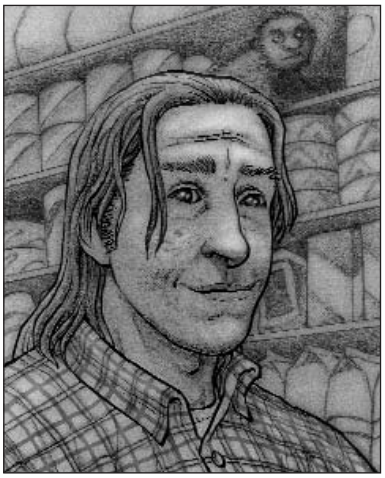
Gray Hackworth

Growing up in Worcester, Massachusetts Gray was never at the top of his class. He was more interested in travelling the hills and backroads of eastern Massachusetts, looking at stone fences and digging up arrowheads. He made it into Brown University because his family had done so, and he majored in Northeastern United States archaeology to support his antiquarian interests. When searching for a job, he quickly learned that his field of specialty was not one leading to an academic career. He became a contract archaeologist, working under government contracts to evaluate roadside sites.

On his days off, Gray wandered through New England looking for new discoveries that would make or break his career. Camping north of Chesuncook Lake in Maine, he found the remnants of a stone structure composed of monolithic blocks and bearing faint markings. He quickly wrote up a paper and submitted it to a local journal. Three weeks later, his beat-up Honda Civic was found in the lot at the Logan International Airport in Boston.

Gray's enthusiasm for life in Resolution Zero quickly soured. His colleagues, though nice enough, all seemed much smarter and more experienced than him, often boasting of their trips to exotic places. His wanderlust was checked—even on days when it wasn't so cold, base Security had forbidden him from traversing the mountain slopes alone. Growing more frustrated, he took to spending long hours in a cramped supply closet, writing reports that never seemed to be good enough and indulging his frustration.

Five days ago, Gray made a new friend. He's intelligent, laughs at Gray's jokes, and likes children (he was horribly disappointed to find out that Zero Station has none). . On the flip side, he's a rat with a man's face, and Gray only sees him in the supply closet. He's very tempted to talk to the base's psychiatrist, but at the same time "Jinx," as his friend calls himself, is very friendly. Plus, he's promised Gray a chance to see the city as it was, if he will only help Jinx out a little. . .



Gray Hackworth
Archaeologist who's not as crazy as he thinks, age 34
Race: Caucasian
STR 14 CON 15 SIZ 16 INT 14 POW 8
DEX 15 APP 10 EDU 18 SAN 23 HP 16
Damage Bonus: +1D4
Education: B.A. in Archaeology, Brown University
Occupation: Archaeological advisor for Resolution Zero
Skills: Anthropology 35%, Archaeology 77%, Architecture 45%, Boating 20%, Cartography 48%, Climb 67%, Cthulhu Mythos 5%, Geology 34%, History 65%, Library Use 55%, Navigation/Land 59%, Persuade 5%, Spot Hidden 43%
Languages: English (own) 90%, Russian 5%
Attacks: Remington Sportsman 74 rifle 44%, 2D6+4
Bowie Knife 57%, 1D4+2+db
Description: Gray prefers to wear flannel shirts, jeans, and boots. He wears his hair unfashionably long. His hands are rough and calloused, and his right cheek twitches occasionally. When distracted by a new find, or even a particularly interesting game of Solitaire, his interaction with others is limited to grunting "Uh-huh" to whatever they say.

Gray Hackworth, 3rd-Level Male Defence Option; hp 24; Init +2 (Dex); AC 12 (+2 Def); Spd 30 ft.; Atk. +3 melee (1d3+2 punch) or +3 ranged; SV Fort +6, Ref +6, Will +1; SZ M; Str 14, Con 15, Wis 8, Dex 15, Int 16, Cha 10, San. 23.
Languages: English (own), Russian +4.
Skills: Cartography +8, Climb +5, Cthulhu Mythos +1, Intuit Direction +4, Knowledge (anthropology) +8, Knowledge (archaeology) +11, Knowledge (architecture) +8, Knowledge (geology) +6, Knowledge (history) +8, Pilot (boat) +4, Research +6, Spot +4.
Feats: Endurance, Skill Emphasis (archaeology), Weapon Proficiency (melee weapons).
Weapons: Bowie knife, Remington Sportsman 74 rifle (2d10).

David Levkowitz

David's parents fled Poland for Israel to escape Communist persecution. While in the kibbutz, David found he had a natural flair with languages, and soon he was admitted to the University of Tel Aviv. After his parents died in a bus accident, David worked hard to keep his scholarship while at the same time channelling much of his funds toward the care of his sickly brother Gershom.

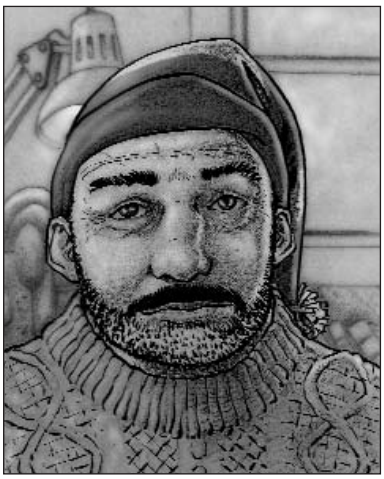
While browsing through a Jerusalem bookstore, David found an early 20th-century journal of linguistics containing an article on a curious dot-script manuscript found in Palestine, that later ended up in the hands of a British scholar. The article presented only a few hints of the manuscript, but David was intrigued. Forgetting to bring it with him one day on a trip to the library, he stumbled across a mystery: The library's issue of the journal contained an article with the same title but a completely different body. He began tracking down sources that seemed to be related, correlating his findings and growing exhilarated and frightened at the same time.

That's when the U.N. tracked him to his hole-in-the-wall apartment and made David an offer he could hardly refuse: A chance to use his skills on cutting-edge problems, a chance to see the world, and lifetime medical care for his brother—how could he refuse?

So David went to Zero Station and began his studies. He was astounded by the might of the aliens' stone city. He was intrigued by the hints in their hieroglyphic work. He was surprised when he was appointed to an administrative post. He was disgusted when he found he was actually good at it. The work was engrossing. Years quickly passed.

While on a much-needed vacation in Rio, David was approached by three men claiming to represent Mossad. He was surprised when they began to talk with him about the city; though they spoke in general terms, they seemed to know whereof they spoke. They told him that the recruiters on his project were in reality the Russian government, who sought to regain their superpower status by producing super weapons. Finally, they produced an obituary of his brother, complete with photo, taken from a Hebrew newspaper dated two decades before.

David is a man with choices to make.



David Levkowitz
Confused linguist, age 58
Race: Caucasian (Polish)
STR 11 CON 13 SIZ 12 INT 17 POW 15
DEX 7 APP 14 EDU 22 SAN 34 HP 13
Damage Bonus: None
Education: M.A. in Linguistics, University of Tel Aviv
Occupation: Scientific administrator for Resolution Zero
Skills: Accounting 35%, Archaeology 15%, Cryptography 30%, Cthulhu Mythos 17%, Fast Talk 25%, History 65%, Library Use 88%, Navigation/Land 24%, Persuade 60%, Psychology 35%, Survival 27%
Languages: Hebrew (own) 99%, Arabic 39%, English 65%, Pnakotic 45%, Russian 40%
Attacks: None worth mentioning
Description: David is an unassuming man with a closely cropped beard and a face that looks as if it should be smiling, though he rarely does. The palms of his hands are a mass of scar tissue, the result of an accident involving a portable range during his early days at camp. He typically dresses in wool sweaters, usually in different shades of red, slacks with long underwear peeking out of the bottoms, and a toboggan hat.

David Levkowitz, 5th-Level Male Defence Option; hp 32; Init -1 (Dex); AC 8 (+3 Def); Spd 30 ft.; Atk. +2 melee (1d3+0 punch) or +0 ranged; SV Fort +4, Ref +4, Will +8; SZ M; Str 11, Con 13, Wis 15, Dex 7, Int 20, Cha 14, San. 34.
Languages: Hebrew (own), Arabic +12, English +14, Pnakotic +11, Russian +11.
Skills: Bluff +4, Computer Use +8, Cthulhu Mythos +2, Decipher Text +11, Diplomacy +6, Intimidate +3, Intuit Direction +3, Knowledge (accounting) +8, Knowledge (archaeology) +7, Knowledge (history) +12, Knowledge (psychology) +8, Research +13, Wilderness Lore +4.
Feats: Cryptic Mind, Innate Linguist, Research Frenzy, Skill Emphasis (research).
Weapons: none.

Doug Roxby

A military man his whole life, Australian Doug Roxby learnt early on that in order to survive one had to be cautious, careful, and methodical. A Special Air Service Regiment (SASR) veteran of the first Gulf War and the Somalia conflict, Roxby led troops behind enemy lines, pinpointing enemy targets, and assassinating regional leaders. Because of his attention to detail and uncanny ability to accurately determine the risk of any situation, Roxby returned from both wars achieving high records for the least number of injuries sustained by any coalition unit. Only after Iraq and Somalia did Roxby encounter enemies he could not understand: the Elder Things and their servants.

The event in question transpired in 1998 when Roxby lead an SASR team to the oilfields of northeast South Australia, where a drilling team had punctured 'something' deep underground and freed what Roxby would later come to know as a shoggoth. The battle lasted 18 days as his men chased it across the outback desert, finally killing it with a heavy arsenal of missiles and incendiary devices. Later Roxby discovered that the drilling team had punctured an outpost of the Elder Things, abandoned millions of years ago while the aliens were at war with the Great Race of Yith. SASR casualties were high, and Roxby thought his career was over, because no one in the Australian military could ever understand what horrors he'd been up against.

Out of work and out of favour with his government, Roxby relocated to South Africa, training mercenary outfits such as Executive Negotiations (see the scenario 'The Spiralling' in this issue for more information on this group) before he was approached by men who knew all about the creature he had taken on in the desert. They even showed him photographs of these creatures, almost exclusively in snow and icy conditions, and Roxby was convinced they knew what they were talking about. The men offered him a well-paying job, two months' vacation anywhere in the world every year, and training and development in Australia another four months of the year. The catch was that he had to relocate to Antarctica and train the soldiers down there on how to fight shoggoths. While faced with escalating violence and instability in South Africa, Roxby had his concerns about confronting these creatures again, but the offer seemed more attractive than the nightmares he'd suffered. Anything he could do to eradicate the creatures strangely seemed to be an attractive offer.

When Roxby arrived at Zero Station he was disturbed to find that his superior officer, a dozen soldiers, and some researchers had just disappeared in the Elder Thing City—leaving him in charge. The missing men and women never returned and his authority was not questioned. In the following years he reorganised the Special Security Forces at Zero Station, changing them from a primarily protective force to one that hunted down and killed shoggoths wherever found. Casualties were high, but in six months he had six shoggoth kills and base morale was growing. Then the shoggoths all vanished and haven't been seen anywhere since.

Today Roxby is a desperate man. He knows the shoggoths are intelligent creatures, and knows better than to assume that the enemy has been wiped out. Problem is, he can't work out what their next strategy will be, and it is driving him nuts in the meantime trying to double-guess such alien minds. The truth, as always, is far worse than he could imagine.

Captain Doug Roxby

Concerned and Cautious Soldier, age 41
Race: Caucasian (Australian)

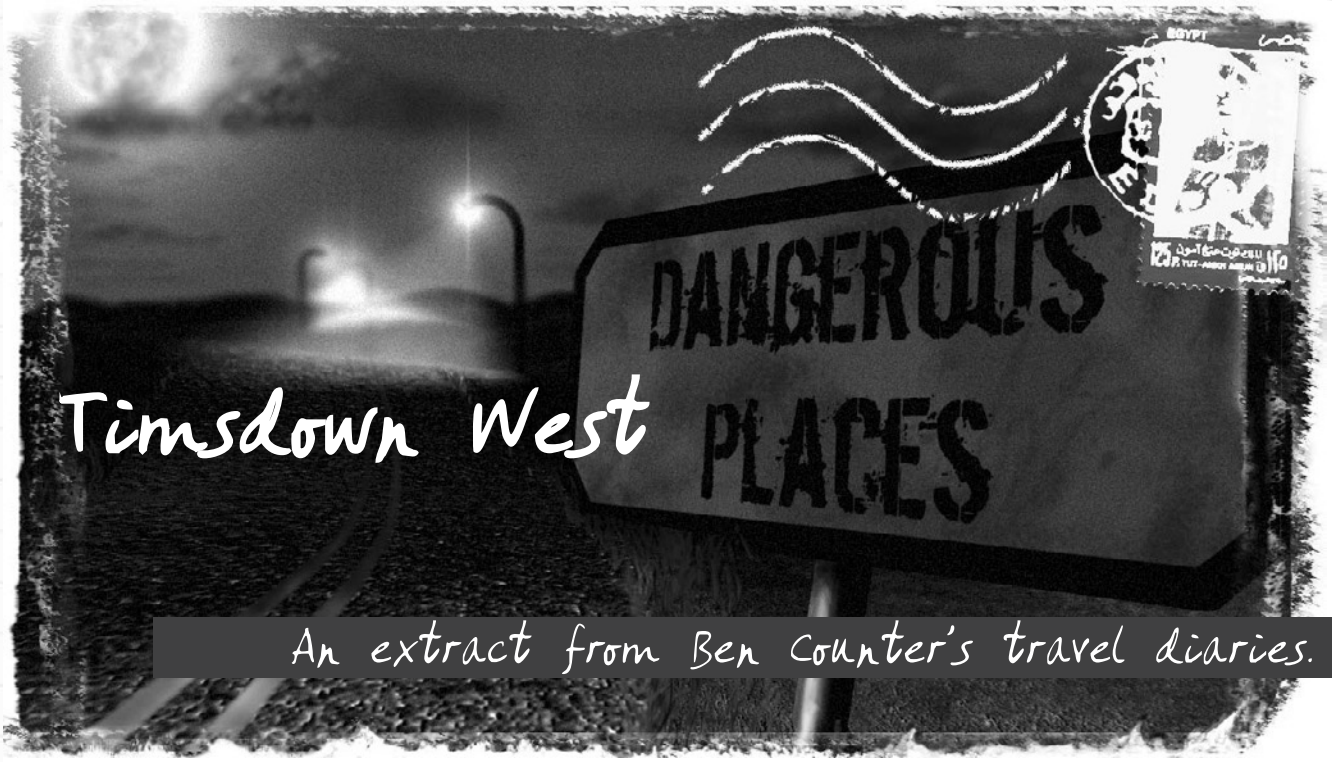
STR 14	CON 15	SIZ 14	INT 15	POW 12
DEX 15	APP 13	EDU 15	SAN 46	HP 15

Damage Bonus: +1D4
Education: B.Eng. Mechanical, Canberra Military College, SAS Selection and Training
Occupation: Head of Security at Resolution Zero
Skills: Bargain 50%, Cartography 35%, Climb 60%, Conceal 40%, Computer Use 50%, Cryptography 30%, Cthulhu Mythos 05%, Dodge 45%, Drive Auto 60%, Drive Nodwell 45%, Drive Skidoo 60%, Fast Talk 45%, First Aid 40%, Hide 70%, History 25%, Jump 40%, Library Use 30%, Listen 55%, Martial Arts 70%, Mechanical Repair 60%, Military Science 40%, Navigation Land 60%, Operate Heavy Machinery 50%, Parachuting 40%, Persuade 60%, Psychology 55%, Sneak 40%, Spot Hidden 50%
Languages: English (own) 75%, Afrikaans 15%, Swahili 10%
Attacks: Fist 70%, 2D3+db
Commando Knife 70%, 1D4+2+db
Glock-17 9mm pistol 65%, 1D10
G3KA4 assault rifle 50%, 2D6+4
RPO-A Shmel rocket launcher 70%, 12D6+burn

Description: Despite his neat, military uniform and shaved head, Roxby looks dishevelled and on-edge. But he's had his successes at Zero Station, and most of the staff respect him despite the intensity in his eyes and the continual cracking of his knuckles. He sleeps little, and when he does he wakes continually through the night.

Captain Doug Roxby, 9th-Level Male Offence Option; hp 65; Init +2 (Dex); AC 12 (+1 Def); Spd 30 ft.; Atk. +9/+4 melee (1d3+2 punch) or +9/+4 ranged (2d10 G3); SV Fort +12, Ref +15, Will +11; SZ M; Str 14, Con 15, Wis 12, Dex 15, Int 15, Cha 13, San. 46.
Languages: English (own), Afrikaans +4, Swahili +3.
Skills: Bluff +5, Cartography +6, Climb +4, Computer Use +7, Cthulhu Mythos +1, Decipher Text +5, Diplomacy +3, Drive +8, Heal +2, Hide +8, Intimidate +4, Intuit Direction +6, Jump +4, Knowledge (history) +3, Knowledge (military) +6, Knowledge (psychology) +6, Listen +4, Move Silently +5, Operate Heavy Machinery +7, Parachuting +6, Repair +6, Research +3, Sense Motive +6, Sleight of Hand +5, Spot +4, Tumble +4.
Feats: Improved Critical (rocket launcher), Weapon Proficiency (handgun), Weapon Proficiency (heavy weapons), Weapon Proficiency (melee weapons), Weapon Proficiency (rifle).
Weapons: Commando knife, Glock 17 pistol, G3 assault rifle, RPO-A Shmel rocket launcher (12d6+burn).

Hunter or Hunted?



Timsdown West

An extract from Ben Counter's travel diaries.

Timsdown West is the kind of place you thought had been knocked down by now. Located bang in the middle of an area of crippling urban blight and plagued by crime, drugs and unemployment, the estate is a sinkhole of broken lives and desperation. It is in places like this that the downtrodden and trapped call on darker powers in the hope of escape. Families have children they can't afford while the elderly hope their pensions will stretch to central heating this week. Children waver between trying to make something of themselves and giving up on society to be dragged down with the drug dealers and prostitutes. Dropouts hover at the edge of society. Whole generations are forgotten and ignored. Timsdown West is a symptom of human weakness, and its connection with the Great Old Ones is just one of its problems.

The estate's two tower blocks (known simply as North and South) are each 12 floors high, with two lifts and two flights of steps in each tower (one lift is usually working). Each floor holds four flats, for a total of 96 flats. About a third of them are vacant at any one time and are typically used as squats, local kids' loitering places, and sleeping places for dropouts. A short flight of stairs and a locked door give access to the roof of each block. The total population of Timsdown West is somewhere between 200 and 250, depending on whether you count all the dropouts and transients.

The two blocks are, whether through accident or constraints of space, very close to one another at one corner. This is known as the 'Kiss' and at this corner there is only a gap of about 10 feet between the blocks. A popular game involves jumping the Kiss from one block to the other, the higher up the better. Variations include jumping the Kiss from the roof on a bicycle, and trying to get residents' pets to jump it. So far, no one has died.

The estate's shabby youth club is a temporary prefabricated building that was never replaced. It has a table tennis table and not much else. It is run as somewhere for kids to go apart from onto the streets. The nearby basketball court is usually home to a gaggle of youths, some of them actually playing basketball but most just hanging around.

No-one parks in the car park. There are typically three or four abandoned cars waiting to be towed away, often burned-out. More than a few bodies have been found in towed car boots over the years.

Timsdown West could be located in any urban area in the U.K. like Castle Vale in Birmingham, Seacroft in Leeds or Glasgow's Red Road. A few changes of names and backgrounds and it could be in the Chicago Projects, Mexico City, or any other urban place where human misery takes form.

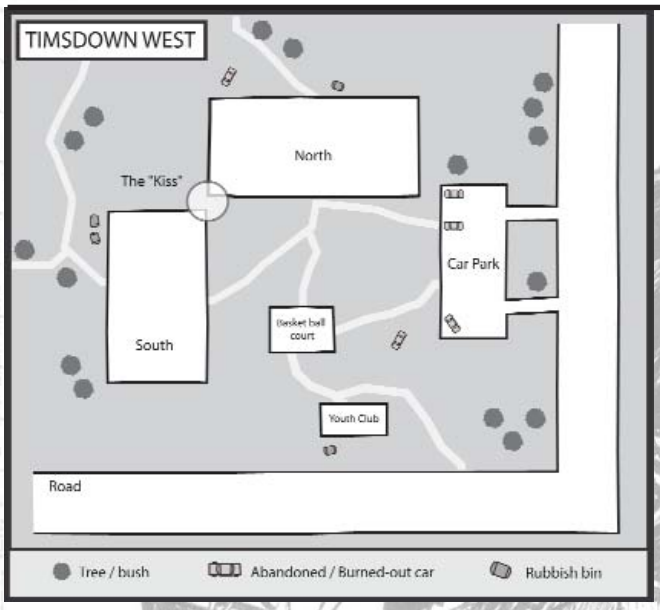
The Residents' Association

There is a way out of Timsdown West, if you know where to look. There's a place just beneath the roof of the northern block, in the maintenance space between the top floor and the roof itself. It's dusty and dirty, covered with rat droppings and illiterate graffiti. Used condoms lie in the corners, a reminder of local kids' attempts to relieve the boredom. But there's something else here, too. There's a door. A door to the other side.

The cult that has grown up around Timsdown West centres on the elderly. They're the most invisible of the estate residents, always fearful of the burglaries committed, they say, by kids who live in the lift shafts and come out at night. But every other Monday afternoon, under the guise of the Timsdown West Residents' Association, the elderly meet in the youth centre to have a nice cup of tea and discuss their next sacrifice to the Doorman.

He's a friendly old chap, say the few who have encountered the Doorman. He's an old, upright and softly spoken fellow who dresses very neatly. Those who have seen him think he must be an old soldier. He appears occasionally in a front room, kindly accepting offers of tea and biscuits, and politely asking if the Resident's Association can arrange for another young troublemaker to disappear. In return, he'll open the Door for one of them.

It's not difficult doing the Doorman's bidding. Kids disappear all the time. Some of them see a door left stupidly unlocked and decide on a spot of opportunistic burglary. Members of the Residents' Association lying in wait usually bludgeon the intruder to death, although old Wilf has a sword he took off a dead Jap officer in Burma



that'll do just as well. Few amongst the Association have much compunction about killing the youth of the estate. None of the kids are good for anything else and besides, the Doorman asks so nicely.

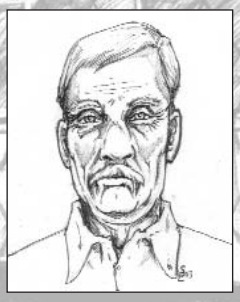
The bodies are left on the half-floor beneath the roof of the North block, in front of the Door. The Door is a simple wooden door with peeling beige paint, set into one outer wall of the half-floor. If one of the Association unlocks the Door with the brass key that gets handed down from Chairperson to Chairperson, the next day the body will be gone and the door will be locked again.

The Doorman's repayment is the chance of escape. None of the old boys and girls wants to die in Timsdown West, but many are still looking forward to clocking off. The solution is a trip through the Door. So long as the Doorman has been given his due, the Chairperson can unlock the Door and let one of the Association walk into the darkness past the threshold.

A walk though the door makes you disappear completely—not just your body but the traces you leave on the world. Photos of you fade to white. Personal effects disappear from your flat over the next few days, leaving just furniture and impersonal things. It's as if you never existed—no one who takes the walk is ever missed, there are no police or uninterested relatives to go through the dreary routine of death. The Association are all certain that whoever goes through the Door ends up in a better place.

Notable Residents

Wilf Abberley



Wilf's an old soldier. He fought, killed, and nearly bloody died for this country in Burma. Now he's waiting out the rest of his life in this hellhole of an estate. He's looking forward to walking through the Door when the Association finds someone else to take over his role. Wilf is, for want of a better word, the Association's hitman. He arranges, and often executes, the trapping and killing of sacrifices. He prefers to use the Japanese officer's katana he acquired in Burma, but anything will do in a pinch. Wilf is a tough old bugger and stronger than he looks. He's an irascible, red-cheeked octagenarian with a grey handlebar moustache.

Wilf Abberley, homicidal curmudgeon, age 81
STR 15 CON 11 SIZ 15 INT 8 POW 14
DEX 10 APP 13 SAN 55 EDU 14 HP 13
Damage Bonus: +1D4
Education: Secondary.
Occupation: Pensioner.
Skills: Bargain 30%, Dodge 40%, Drive Auto 40%, Entice Children 30%, Listen 70%, Locksmith 20%, Occult 25%, Persuade 50%, Psychology 30%, Rifle 50%, Set Trap 60%, Sneak 40%, Spot Hidden 75%, Sword 50%.
Languages: English (own) 70%.
Attacks: Katana 50%, 1D10+1+db
Improvised Weapon 50%, damage varies

Wilf Abberley , 5th-level Male Offensive option; hp 25; Init. +0; Spd. 30ft; AC 10; Atk. +6 melee or +4 ranged; SV Fort +4, Ref +1, Will+3; Str 15 Dex 10 Con 11 Int 11 Wis 14 Cha 13, San. 55.
Languages: English (own).
Skills: Drive +4, Heal +4, Intimidate +9, Knowledge (occult) +4, Listen +10, Open Lock +4, Sense Motive +10, Spot +10, Use Rope +8.
Feats: Toughness, Weapon Proficiency (melee), Weapon Proficiency (rifle).
Weapons: Katana (1d6+2 damage).

Agnes Brightholme

The current Chairperson of the Association, Agnes is well into her nineties. A very wizened and tiny old lady, she is only seen outside her rose-scented flat when other Association members help her down to the meetings every other Monday. The Doorman appears to her once every couple of months and she reports his wishes to the Association. For some reason, Agnes' flat is the only one that no one has ever dared to burgle on the estate. There is a suspicion amongst some members that Agnes is having negotiations of her own with the Doorman, and might know what he really is.

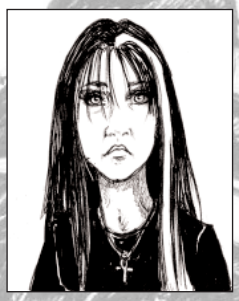
Agnes Brightholme, wizened cult leader, age 94
STR 8 CON 7 SIZ 11 INT 15 POW 17
DEX 9 APP 16 SAN 45 EDU 18 HP 9
Damage Bonus: None.
Education: Secondary.
Occupation: Pensioner
Skills: Bargain 25%, Fast Talk 40%, First Aid 30%, History 65%, Listen 50%, Occult 85%, Persuade 50%, Philosophy & Religion 45%.
Languages: English (own) 90%, Other Language (Lip Reading) 25%.
Attacks: None.
Spells: Welcome the Doorman (Contact Aspect of Yog-Sothoth), Mother's Voice (Dominate Person)

Agnes Brightholme, 2nd level Female Defensive option; hp 5; Init. -1; Spd. 15ft; AC 9; Atk. N/A ; SV Fort +1, Ref -1, Will +6; Str 8, Dex 9, Con 7, Int 15, Wis 17, Cha 16, San. 45.
Languages: English (own).
Skills: Bluff +8, Diplomacy +8, Innuendo +8, Knowledge (history) +7, Knowledge (occult) +10, Knowledge (religion) +7, Listen +8, Read Lips +7, Sense Motive +10, Spellcraft +9.
Feats: Skill Focus (Knowledge (occult)), Sensitive.

Spells: Welcome the Doorman (Contact Aspect of Yog-Sothoth), Mother's Voice (Dominate Person)
Possessions: Zimmer frame, occult library.

Note that Agnes' base speed is lower than for a normal human owing to her great age. She can make double move actions, but may not run or sprint.

Krystal Madden



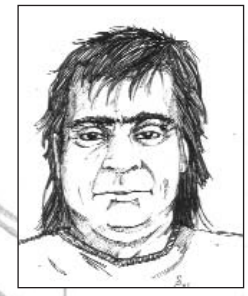
Krystal would like for nothing more than to get away from Timsdown West, and one day she will. But at 15 she knows she can't just up and leave just yet, so she might as well make the most of it while she can. Krystal craves the feeling that she belongs, and she gets it by leading what outsiders would call a cult. Krystal and her friends get dressed up in black, gather together in an abandoned flat halfway up the south tower every Saturday night and enact rituals to the Dark Powers of the universe.

Krystal's group call themselves the Unholy Disciples, refer to each other as vampires or dark magicians, and have absolutely no occult relevance whatsoever. Krystal devises various spooky-sounding rituals and prayers for the group, pretends to drink blood, schools her followers in made-up occultism and generally creates a hierarchy with her at the top. She considers it all just one more way to while away time and escape from the grimness of the reality around her. Krystal is a petite girl with a face that scowls easily, and would generally not stand out were it not for the white streak she has dyed into her dark hair. When the Disciples gather she dresses in black with plenty of silver jewellery.

Krystal Madden, Grand High Vampire Priestess, age 15
STR 9 CON 8 SIZ 13 INT 13 POW 13
DEX 13 APP 16 SAN 61 EDU 14 HP 11
Damage Bonus: None.
Education: Local comprehensive.
Occupation: School child.
Skills: Art (act) 25%, Bargain 15%, Climb 45%, Conceal 25%, Craft (write) 25%, Dodge 26%, Fast Talk 40%, Hide 40%, Listen 35%, Persuade 60%, Psychology 15%, Sneak 40%, Spot Hidden 35%.
Languages: English (own) 70%.
Attacks: None.
Krystal Madden, 1st level Female Defensive Option; hp 5; Init. +1; Spd. 30ft.; AC 11 (12 with Dodge); Atk. -1 melee (1d4-1 subdual) or +1 ranged; SV Fort -1, Ref +4, Will +4; Str 9, Dex 13, Con 8, Int 13, Wis 13, Cha 16. San. 61.
Languages: English (own).
Skills: Bluff +10, Craft (writing) +5, Diplomacy +7, Hide +3, Listen +5, Performance (acting) +7, Move Silently +3, Sense Motive +5, Sleight of Hand +3, Spot +3.
Feats: Dodge, Skill Focus (Bluff).
Possessions: Crystal ball, pewter chalice, notebook with assorted made-up spells.

Note that none of Krystal's 'spells' actually do anything. If threatened she will run, but some of the more impressionable Disciples might believe she actually has some occult powers.

Colin Trass



Colin lives with his wife halfway up the north block. At least, he did until he killed her when he came home drunk and spoiling for a fight. Panicking, he cut her up and tried to cram her into the fridge-freezer, but there wasn't enough room for all of her. In desperation, knowing the parts kept in the fridge compartment will spoil, he is eating the surplus flesh and crushing the bones. Colin is a large-set man in his thirties who works for the council emptying public bins. He is sweaty and unfriendly, all the more so since his unnatural diet started turning him into a degenerate ghoul. He now has difficulty eating anything other than his wife's remains, and his skin is turning an unhealthy grey. Soon he will become a bloated parody of his former self. That'll be about the time his wife runs out and he has to find alternative sources of human meat.

Colin Trass, murderer and neophyte ghoul, age 34
STR 18 CON 14 SIZ 13 INT 9 POW 10
DEX 11 APP 9 SAN 0 EDU 12 HP 14
Damage Bonus: +1D4
Education: Comprehensive
Occupation: Dust Bin Man.
Skills: Climb 55%, Craft (Carpentry) 25%, Craft (Cooking) 15%, Dodge 22%, Drive Auto 45%, Electrical Repair 30%, Engineering 20%, Hide 25%, Knife 50%, Mechanical Repair 25%, Operate Heavy Machinery 15%, Spot Hidden 55%.
Languages: English (own) 60%.
Attacks: Knife 50%, 1D6+db

Colin Trass, 1st-level Male Offensive option; hp 12; Init. +1; Spd. 30ft; AC 15 (+1 Dex; +3 natural); Atk. +4 melee (bite -1 melee (1d4+2 damage)) or +1 ranged; SV Fort +4, Ref +1, Will +0; Str 18, Dex 11, Con 14, Int 9, Wis 10, Cha 9. San. 0.
Languages: English (own).
Skills: Climb +7, Craft (carpentry) +3, Craft (cookery) +1, Drive +5, Hide +3, Knowledge (engineering) +3, Operate Heavy Machinery +3, Repair +3, Spot +4.
Feats: Toughness, Weapon Proficiency (Melee).
Weapons: Kitchen knife (1d4+3 damage).
Undead Traits: Colin Trass is immune to poison, paralysis, stunning and disease.

Colin Trass is indefinitely insane. This manifests as an inability to eat anything other than human flesh—he simply can't keep anything else down. In about three weeks he will have completed his conversion into a ghoul, and will be permanently lost to humanity. His partial ghoulishness accounts for his natural AC bonus, high Strength and Hit Dice type and some undead traits.

David McKell

David is a middle-aged librarian, friendly and popular. He ran up debts in his earlier life, which explains his incarceration in Timsdown West. He runs the youth club, trying to keep the estate's kids from going completely off the rails. McKell is one of the few people to have noticed the strange things

happening in Timsdown West, like Colin doing the shopping instead of his wife and flats becoming vacant without anyone moving out. He is starting to ask questions. If he asks the wrong ones, the Doorman may get a gift he wasn't expecting.

David McKell, do-gooder, age 44
STR 12 CON 10 SIZ 17 INT 13 POW 14
DEX 10 APP 16 SAN 70 EDU 16 HP 14
Damage Bonus: +1D4
Education: Polytechnic.
Occupation: Librarian.
Skills: Ask Questions 30%, Craft (writing) 15%, Dodge 20%, Drive Auto 30%, Electrical Repair 20%, Fast Talk 25%, History 40%, Keep Kids Off Streets 65%, Library Use 60%, Listen 40%, Organise Activities 80%, Persuade 55%, Spot Hidden 40%.
Languages: English (own) 80%.
Attacks: None.

David McKell, 1st-level Male Defensive option; hp 6; Init. +0; Spd. 30ft; AC 10; Atk. N/A; SV Fort +2, Ref +0, Will +4; Str 12, Dex 10, Con 10, Int 13, Wis 14, Cha 16, San. 70.
Languages: English (own).
Skills: Bluff +7, Craft (writing) +3, Diplomacy +9, Drive +2, Gather Information +9, Heal +4, Intimidate +5, Knowledge (History) +5, Listen +6, Repair +3, Research +8, Spot +4.
Feats: Trustworthy, Persuasive.
Possessions: Keys to the youth club.

Keeper's Note

The Timsdown West Residents' Association worships Yog-Sothoth in the aspect of the Doorman. Beyond the Door in the north tower is an area permanently infused with an effect similar to the 'Consciousness Expansion' spell in the *Delta Green* sourcebook, page 151. This causes the body to dissipate and the mind to enter the non-Euclidian dimensions and persist in a 'higher plane' of existence. The area of the spell's effect extends from the threshold of the door out into the open air for about six feet. The spell-area's existence is a gift from Yog-Sothoth to his faithful followers.

The Unholy Disciples are little more than a group of friends with similar dress sense. Krystal Madden's pretences to occult knowledge are meaningless. The Disciples are pure misdirection—investigators searching for a cult in Timsdown West might waste time gathering info on the Disciples even as the Resident's Association are planning their next kill. Agnes Brightholme is quite intelligent and ruthless enough to use the Disciples as bait to throw investigators who get too close to discovering her arrangement with the Doorman.

Investigation Seeds

There is no shortage of reasons for Timsdown West to be investigated. Quite apart from the Association cult, any police characters might end up on the estate hunting for stolen goods, drugs, or suspects in any number of crimes. The disappearances caused by the cult might eventually register with the authorities, and perhaps some more knowledgeable Association member might suspect the true nature of the being they serve.

Gnarly

Sooner or later, some dumb kid's going to try to jump the Kiss on a skateboard from the roof. When they fall, they'll drop straight into the area of the spell effect beyond the Door. The skateboard will land 12 floors down, but the body won't.

Ratboy

You know those rumours about kids living in the lift shafts? Well, they're true. Ratboy is a 12-year-old 'superpredator' who survives through theft and lives at the top of the lift shaft on the south block. No one knows who his family are, or what his real name is. He's worked out how to trip the brakes on the lifts and is going to start mugging people in them any day now. The Doorman wants Ratboy as his next offering, and the Association is arranging for a concerted effort to find, capture, and kill him. Investigators following up rumours of Ratboy will have to get to him before the Association does.

Ratboy, human crimewave, age 12
STR 13 CON 9 SIZ 9 INT 8 POW 15
DEX 16 APP 11 SAN 75 EDU 10 HP 9
Damage Bonus: None.
Education: Junior School.
Occupation: Thief.
Skills: Climb 70%, Conceal 45%, Dodge 32%, Hide 50%, Jump 45%, Listen 60%, Locksmith 25%, Mechanical Repair 25%, Persuade 40%, Sneak 60%, Spot Hidden 70%, Throw 50%.
Languages: English (own) 55%.
Attacks: Thrown knife 50%, 1D4+½db

Ratboy, 3rd-level Male Defensive option; hp 13; Init. +4; Spd. 30ft; AC 13; Atk. -1 melee or +3 ranged (thrown); SV Fort +0, Ref +6, Will +5; Str 13, Dex 16, Con 9, Int 8, Wis 15, Cha 11 San. 75.
Languages: English (own)
Skills: Climb +7, Escape Artist +9, Hide +11, Intimidate +4, Jump +4, Listen +7, Move Silently +11, Open Lock +6, Sleight of Hand +9, Spot +7.
Feats: Stealthy, Weapon Proficiency (thrown), Mobility.
Weapons: Two knives (1d4+1 damage).
Possessions: Assorted pilfered items, sleeping bag, torch.

Contains: One Tibetan God

By Davide Mana

Keeper's Information

The Tibetan cult of Parabang Bonpo has been slowly but steadily building a network of dark energy to trap the soul of the world. Taking advantage of a large network of mostly unwitting do-gooders who have at heart the plight of the Tibetan people, the cult is scattering around the globe a number of 'God Splinters' that act as beacons for the forthcoming Ritual of Soul Burning.

A player's casual expression of sympathy during a particularly boring dinner party gets him saddled with a package containing 'One Tibetan God,' with generic instructions for placing it in a vaguely specified 'place of power.' It would be easy to dismiss the package as a prank or the request of an oddball, were it not for the dark forces gathering to harass the characters. Ghosts, apparitions, weird coincidences, and Bums from Beyond are waiting. What now?

A Word to the Wise

"Contains: One Tibetan God" is a story of personal horror, and is therefore best suited for a single player or a small group. Options are offered throughout the scenario to help the Keeper fit it to his players. Suitable for both beginners and experienced players, the scenario requires just a minimum of the classic *Call of Cthulhu* mainstay, the thorough search of all the available libraries for information about the strange going-ons. Indeed, if there's a main theme in the story, it is the lack of clear information available to the characters.

Also, the scenario is based on the idea that the characters will take some time deciding where to place (if they do anything with it at all) the package containing the god. Time spent debating options is all-important in building the progression of uncanny events, slowly increasing in magnitude and power. Go ahead and encourage the sort of endless debate of which *Call of Cthulhu* players are so fond—probably because sitting around discussing what to do is normally less lethal and sanity-shattering than actually DOING something. Problem is—this time it is not.

It would be wise to read the scenario thoroughly a couple of times, acquainting yourself with the NPCs to make the most of the social interaction that is likely to be a prominent feature. Indeed, reading through this issue of *The Black Seal* will also help expand and complement the situations presented in the scenario, allowing you to broaden the action and take full advantage of the options offered.

Scene 1: Sheila's Party

The characters are trying to fend off boredom at a party which they had the misfortune of attending. Sheila, the hostess, is a fatuous and self-centred artsy type, and her 'do' is basically her distorted interpretation of a Liberal-fringe-avant-garde open event of the sort self-styled intellectuals in New York used to hold in the mid-1980s—but without the cocaine.

The buffet is strictly vegan, and there's no alcohol on the premises—a pair of stiff-necked and positively bored rent-a-maids are serving 'mocktails,' stuff called Montego Bay (orange juice, grenadine, sour mix), Cinderella (orange and pineapple juice, soda, grenadine, sour mix) and Pac Man (bitters, grenadine, lemon juice, ginger ale). Supposedly 'refreshing and fun', the mocktails provide no amusement, especially coupled with the celery-and-tofu canapés and carrot cake being served. The soundtrack is a mix of very cool jazz and faceless New Age fare.

Sheila's loft is all whitewashed walls, indirect lights, pseudo-oriental minimalist furniture, and weird art of the junk-sculpture school. Her floor-to-ceiling windows open over a solitary view of the city lights, places where stuff is actually happening.

1.1 – Shiny Happy People

Of the following NPCs at Sheila's party, only one is essential. You can dream up more thinking about the worst date of your life.

Sheila

A self-centred anthropology BSc-holder and socialite. She wears an expensive designer number and extra-high heels.

Relevant skills: Anthropology 45%, Feign Interest 65%, Mindless Chatter 70%. [Knowledge (anthropology) +10, Feign Interest +14, Mindless Chatter +15.]

Yurij

A Russian expatriate and avant-garde artist. He wears a turtleneck jumper and corduroy jacket with retro pride, and seems to be in the throes of an age-old hunger. Found mainly around the buffet, wolfing down large portions of just about anything, he's quite willing to talk about his art. Samples are scattered around Sheila's loft. He uses the expressions 'postmodern' and 'significant' a lot, and tends to stare at women's cleavage.

Relevant skills: Art (Junk Sculpture) 55%, Philosophy (Grab-Bag) 45%, Speak English 65%.

Self-Deception

Lovecraftian horror has much to do man's capacity for self-deception. Cocooned within our thin shelter of rationality, we can survive the vast emptiness outside by denying it, and this denial is 'Reason.' The characters' self-deception through rationalisation is one of the main tools for building horror in this scenario. As the earlier phases of the scenario use a very low-level degree of horror, shrugging it off will not be difficult at first, despite the players' paranoia and experience.

To help the effect, you should push that rationalisation in any way possible. Whatever uncanny event you have ready to drop on the characters, make sure you have at least one good mundane explanation for it. Either subtly hint it to the players, having them catch on and embrace it as if they actually dreamed it up by themselves, or have ready a brace of NPCs to deploy in the roles of no-nonsense friends and relations, and use these characters to vent the materialistic line. Encourage rationalisation on the part of players with little rewards that confirm the rationalisations and take note of them—so you'll be able to dream up a proper way to shatter those delusions later.

Characters denying the supernatural surrounding them will not suffer any Sanity loss right now, but as soon as the weird nature of what they are involved with becomes undeniable they'll suffer an extra loss, caused by the shattering of their rational defences.

This opening scene sucks!

Possibly it does, yes. Maybe you need a way to bring the team together, this being their first Cthulhu game or whatever, and starting with 'You meet at a party' sounds trite. A good alternative (requiring a modicum of work) could involve getting each character independently hooked by Francesco (see below) and saddled with a Tibetan god. Francesco himself might suggest the characters meet in order to coordinate their work of god-spreading.

Or you might like to see the whole scenario as background information, and have a team of law-enforcers (customs officers or drug enforcement agents, for instance) looking into a weird traffic of packages labelled 'Contains: One Tibetan God.' Much of the tribulations in the scenario will in this case be witnessed by investigators keeping an eye on Francesco's helpers. But should the boys in blue actually intercept one of the packages, they'd be in for a weird half-hour.

[Art (junk sculpture) +11, Knowledge (philosophy) +9, Speak English +11.]

Francesco

Of vaguely oriental descent (Anthropology roll [Knowledge (anthropology) check: DC15] to place him as part Filipino), Francesco looks smooth and collected and happily engages in idle talk. He waits for the right moment to mention he's the one that imported from the Far East much of the furniture in this place, and should the players show any interest, he's more than happy to offer his services as an 'independent importer' of Asian artefacts. He's very smooth with the ladies.

More about Francesco (and expanded stats) can be found in the sidebar.

Helena

A feverish-looking opera singer and animal-rights supporter, she's the one that suggested the vegan buffet and will probably live to pay.

Relevant skills: Singing 75%. [Performance (singing) +15.]

Let the players feel the boredom growing with even less interesting party-goers for as long as possible, and then introduce each of the above characters as a much-needed diversion. *Call of Cthulhu* players will probably act paranoid from the start, so it is better to let them meet each character in face to face conversation, discussing topics neutral enough to defuse any suspicion.

Finally, as the players are nearing their limits and start looking around for a way out and maybe a game of Warhammer 40K, let them overhear a heated debate about the plight of the Tibetan people. The two major performers here are Sheila and Francesco. She sports a detached, cynical approach ('You can't really help them without undermining their culture'), while Francesco pushes a more sympathetic, proactive argument. The aim here is to involve the characters so that at least one of them sides with Francesco.

After the conversation moves on, the Filipino expatriate expresses his gratitude for the player's support, and explain he's been helping a group of monks holed up on a mountainside in their plan to bring about world harmony by giving a lecture once in a while. He still comes across as a shrewd businessman looking for prospective buyers in selected circles, but an innocuous and rather pleasant one.

Let Sheila's party peter out as you see fit.

Scene 2: With the Morning Post

About ten days pass, and hopefully the characters forget their evening out. Then, one morning, in the usual collection of bills and junk mail, one of the characters receives a small but heavy package and a letter from Francesco.

Much of the stuff scrawled on the various tags sticking on the brown paper package is impossible to make out (Anthropology or half Know roll [Knowledge (anthropology) check: DC15] to place the writing as Tibetan). There are a few weird stamps and a peeling green customs declaration that reads 'Contains: One Tibetan God.' Once opened, the package is revealed to contain another package, of finely decorated rice paper sealed with wax, and a letter.

See the texts of the letters on pages 94 and 95.

Scene 3: Now What?

The obvious thing the investigators will do at this point is break the seal and look at the fragment. It turns out to be a chunk of black stone (Geology roll [Knowledge (geology) check: DC15] to recognise it as phonolitic basalt), with no particular defining features.

Whatever they do at this point has no importance—without its protective paper, the god is open to outside attack and will be captured and removed by any agent the Soul of the World who sees fit. The Servants (see sidebar) will approach as discreetly as possible and either steal the stone or shatter it through seeming accidents. The destruction of the stone by lightning or being struck by a falling chunk from the ceiling will look damn odd, but characters superficial enough to ignore the suggestions of both Francesco and the monks will probably shrug off the oddity.

But there's more to come. In less than two days, Francesco appears, back in town from wherever he was, and asks to participate in the placing of the god. At this point either the characters will confess the 'accident,' or Francesco will weasel the truth out of them.

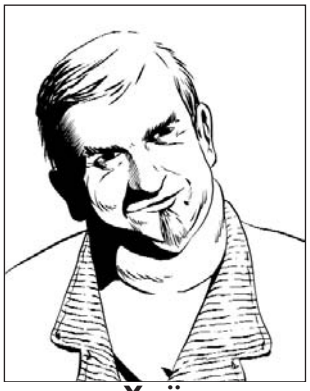
In either case, Francesco adopts a hurt stare and gives them a ten-minute rap over the moral knuckles about responsibility, sympathy, and the plight of the Tibetan people (the actual content of such a tirade is left to you to dream up).

Five days later, a package identical to the first will be delivered to the same address.

Under Wraps

On the other hand, the investigators might take the request at face value and look for a suitable


Sheila


Yurij


Francesco


Helena

Alternate Francescos

The players will be interacting more with Francesco. Chances are, one of them will decide to run a background check on him. Depending on your gaming style, you might feel like using one or indeed all four of these alternative takes on the prime mover of this little Shaggy God story.

Take 1: Francesco Hortiz, sucker

STR 13 CON 12 SIZ 11 INT 11 POW 10
DEX 12 APP 12 EDU 16 SAN 50 HP 12
Skills: Archaeology 45%, Art 50%, Credit Rating 65%, History 60%, Persuade 55%, Pick Up Foreign Languages 45%, Psychology 75%, Shady Dealings 85%, Cthulhu Mythos 02%

Francesco Hortiz, 3rd-level male defence option; hp 20; Init +1 (Dex); AC 11 (+2 Def); Spd 30 ft.; Atk. +2 melee (1d3+1 punch) or +2 ranged; SV Fort +5, Ref +3, Will +4; SZ M; Str 13, Con 12, Wis 10, Dex 12, Int 15, Cha 12, San. 50.
Languages: Filipino (own), Speak English +9
Skills: Bluff +9, Diplomacy +7, Gather Information +4, Intimidate +2, Knowledge (archaeology) +8, Knowledge (art) +8, Knowledge (history) +7, Knowledge (psychology) +10, Sense Motive +2
Feats: Innate Linguist, Trustworthy, Wealth

Francesco is a well-meaning if sly-acting individual. Through his daily work as an independent import/export agent, he's been able to observe many of the differences between the so-called civilised West and the Far East. Coming from a family of modest means, and possessed of a spiritual and altruistic streak, Francesco is constantly looking out for a good cause to sponsor—be it UNICEF, Médecins Sans Frontières, some long-suffering lone missionary somewhere around the Banda Sea, or a bunch of weird Tibetan monks. And because his job brings him in contact with a lot of people that have—at least in his opinion—time and money to spare, he's always trying to involve his acquaintances in some humanitarian scheme.

Take 2: Francesco Hortiz, cultist

STR 13 CON 12 SIZ 11 INT 14 POW 12
DEX 12 APP 12 EDU 16 SAN 00 HP 12
Skills: Archaeology 45%, Art 50%, History 60%, Psychology 75%, Shady Dealings 85%, Cthulhu Mythos 12%
Spells: Candle Communication, Cloud Memory, Vanish

Francesco Hortiz, 3rd-level male defence option; hp 20; Init +1 (Dex); AC 11 (+2 Def); Spd 30 ft.; Atk. +2 melee (1d3+1 punch) or +2 ranged; SV Fort +5, Ref +3, Will +4; SZ M; Str 13, Con 12, Wis 12, Dex 12, Int 15, Cha 12, San. 50.
Languages: Filipino (own), Speak English +9
Skills: Bluff +9, Concentration +4, Cthulhu Mythos +2, Diplomacy +7, Gather Information +4, Intimidate +2, Knowledge (archaeology) +7, Knowledge (art) +7, Knowledge (history) +7, Knowledge (psychology) +9, Sense Motive +2
Feats: Combat Casting, Trustworthy, Wealth
Spells: Candle Communication, Cloud Memory, Vanish (see BRP 5.5 rules, page 217)

Francesco is one of the few non-Tibetan members of the twisted cult of Parabang Bonpo. He was chosen by the head cultist (probably inspired by Something Man Was Not Meant To Know) because of his wide circle of contacts and his familiarity with international operations. A cynical mercenary, Francesco did not find it hard to enter the cult, and has been slowly climbing the hierarchy. While not a full-blown sorcerer, he has some minor powers and can be a dangerous foe for unwitting investigators.

Take 3: Francesco Hortiz, self-serving Tiger Transit affiliate

STR 14 CON 12 SIZ 11 INT 14 POW 12
DEX 14 APP 11 EDU 16 SAN 00 HP 12
Skills: Archaeology 45%, Art 50%, History 60%, Handgun 60%, Psychology 75%, Shady Dealings 85%, Cthulhu Mythos 12%
Attacks: Glock-17 60%, 1D10
Spells: Cloud Memory, Warding

Francesco Hortiz, 3rd-level male defence option; hp 20; Init +2 (Dex); AC 12 (+2 Def); Spd 30 ft.; Atk. +3 melee (1d3+2 punch) or +3 ranged (1d10 Glock-17); SV Fort +3, Ref +6, Will +5; SZ M; Str 14, Con 12, Wis 12, Dex 14, Int 15, Cha 12, San. 0.
Languages: Filipino (own), Speak English +9
Skills: Bluff +9, Concentration +4, Cthulhu Mythos +2, Diplomacy +7, Gather Information +4, Intimidate +2, Knowledge (archaeology) +7, Knowledge (art) +7, Knowledge (history) +7, Knowledge (psychology) +9, Sense Motive +2
Feats: Trustworthy, Wealth, Weapon Proficiency (handgun)
Spells: Cloud Memory, Warding (see BRP 5.5 rules, page 218)
Weapons: Glock-17

Francesco works for Tiger Transit (see *Delta Green: Countdown*, page 140) through his officially 'independent' activity as an import-export guy. He stumbled upon the Tibetan god cult while minding the Transit's business in Pakistan, and he's currently god-running for the Tibetans as a collateral activity that his Tcho-Tcho masters are not aware of. Obviously, spreading his skills too thin might cause him to attract unwanted attention, and Tiger Transit might prefer to take drastic measures should they ever discover he's not been completely clean with them.

Take 4: Francesco Hortiz, not-so-smart con-artist

STR 13 CON 12 SIZ 11 INT 13 POW 13
DEX 12 APP 14 EDU 16 SAN 65 HP 12
Skills: Archaeology 45%, Art 50%, Credit Rating 45%, Fast Talk 90%, History 60%, Persuade 55%, Pick Up Foreign Languages 45%, Psychology 75%, Shady Dealings 85%

Francesco Hortiz, 3rd-level male defence option; hp 20; Init +1 (Dex); AC 11 (+2 Def); Spd 30 ft.; Atk. +2 melee (1d3+1 punch) or +2 ranged; SV Fort +5, Ref +3, Will +5; SZ M; Str 13, Con 12, Wis 13, Dex 12, Int 15, Cha 14, San. 65.
Languages: Filipino (own), Speak English +9
Skills: Bluff +14, Diplomacy +8, Gather Information +4, Intimidate +3, Knowledge (archaeology) +7, Knowledge (art) +7, Knowledge (history) +6, Knowledge (psychology) +9, Sense Motive +2
Feats: Innate Linguist, Trustworthy, Wealth

This whole Tibetan god thing is a scam. Francesco comes from Birmingham, his real name is Brian, and the 'gods' are bricks that he wraps personally (with his brother-in-law Liam) in the basement of his semi-detached house. He sends them to a contact in Tibet (don't ask), and the guy sends them back. His plan is to hook a few wealthy suckers with the Tibetan god thing and then go for their money, asking for a big donation to pay for the monks to escape from the Chinese bailiwick to the West. The idea that someone might be switching packages in Tibet has never occurred to him.

place of power and tranquillity without messing with the wrapping.

They might even resort to some feng-shui or dowsing advice; check out *The Black Seal #1* for dowsing details and a selection of very British places of power. A more international selection can be found in this issue, in "Terra Occulta: An Atlas of Strange Places."

A full list of the previously placed stones can be extracted from Francesco, or he will volunteer it himself should the characters need some suggestions about the way to go (see sidebar for details).

The following chapters assume the characters will have to debate and research for a while to find a good place for the god.

Too-crowded places are unsuitable. Should the characters insist on dropping the god into the Serpentine, a pair of nosey NPCs asking lots of questions and generally being a nuisance should cause them to desist. And as they debate the question, Nature itself seems to conspire against them (see the following scene), putting them through a series of showers, hail storms, thunderstorms, and the occasional river flood. Make the characters uncertain about their choice of a location—and then make it hard for them to get there.

The text of the letter with the package is as follows:

Dear Friend,

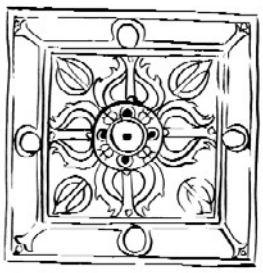
Our loyal friend Francesco made us aware of your willingness in supporting our struggle for world-rejuvenation. You cannot possibly imagine our joy.

As per your agreement with Francesco, we send you one Sacred Splinter of our most Sacred God-Stone, for you to place according to your heart's guidance and inner voices, in a place of power and tranquillity, from which it will extend its positive influence, wrapping our small blue world into a web of positive energy.

Please do not remove the seal and the paper, which represent an integral part of the rdo-rje ritual.

Take extreme care.

May the gods watch over you and defend you from the messengers of the Dark Below.



Sealed with the emblem of the wheel, of the key, of the hearth of the rdo-rje.

{an incomprehensible signature}

Smashing the Shard

One alternative is just to smash the stone and throw it away. However this is harder than it seems. Remember that bad-luck field surrounding the shard? Well, that also helps protect it from intentional harm.

The longer taken to attempt to destroy the shard, the harder and more dangerous it becomes. Implausible accidents will occur as the characters' attempt to destroy the shard—knives slip, hammers are dropped, acid is spilt, unexpected electric shocks short out. Keepers should be as inventive and outlandish as they wish describing the god-shard's self-defence reflexes. After a few weeks it becomes impossible to destroy the shard without a character fatality. If the characters want to destroy the shard, they need to do it within the first few days.

Smashing more than one god-shard will put the characters on the monks' hate list for retribution at a later date (of the Keeper's convenience).

Other Choices

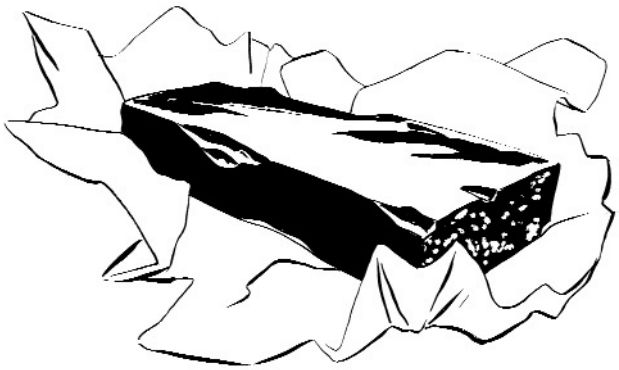
Other options include 'losing' the god—by 'accidentally' leaving it on the Underground, for instance—and keeping it at home. The characters, after all, are busy people, and might even be involved in another, completely unrelated investigation.

Evaluate the likelihood of the paper being removed—by human agents or by accident—depending on the god's location. If the paper is likely to get removed (by anyone finding the package, for instance), the Servants will destroy the god. Have Francesco drop by all of a sudden and ask the characters to show him where they placed the god, then have him humiliate the buffoons and send another stone within ten days.

If the paper is unlikely to be removed (because the god is too well-hidden or protected from interference), just check out scene six.

But do not dismiss the unthinkable—that someone might simply see the characters 'forgetting the parcel on the bus' and, being a

The parcel wrapped....



...and unwrapped.

The Letter from Francesco
The place of origin is unreadable, the stamp meaningless, and no return address is provided.

Kumusta ka?

You will probably receive soon a small package from my Tibetan contacts.

As i probably mentioned during our chat at Sheila's party, i'm helping the guys as much as i can with my limited means.

The dear old monks are currently engaged in a world-spanning peace-bringing ritual. i cannot pretend i understand the deep philosophy behind it all, but i must say that as long as i've been involved in this project, i have been feeling a sense of uplift which, even should it be due to self-suggestion, it is very welcome.

During the last summer solstice, the monks unearthed an old and sacred statue in the deeper cellar of their old monastery, and broke it in a number of small pieces. The statue was said to house a spirit or god whose benign influence will be felt as far as his many pieces are scattered around the world. A number have already been placed. i should have a plan somewhere, and i'll show it to you when we meet next time.

Meanwhile, what are you supposed to do with the thing?

Quite simply: Find a place you think is significant for you, your family, or your community, and just place the package in the close vicinity. Burying it might be a good idea, or dropping it in a pond, or placing it in a hollow tree trunk. You get the idea.

i'd avoid urban areas, but should there be a large park in your vicinities, that might do the trick. Anyway, basically that's it.

Please do not make this thing too public, as it might cause some embarrassment to the people involved—the Chinese authorities could nail us with some preposterous story about smuggling art from Tibet or what. it wouldn't be the first time.

Also, please do not remove the seal and the paper, which i understand are an integral part of the whole ritual thing.

Just let me know when you're done. The monks might like to know the details. Thanks again for your help, and please consider me at your disposal should you require any assistance.

Francesco Hortiz
Far East Trader Inc.

kindly person, trace the characters and give it back.

Scene 4: Dark Force Rising?

One thing that is not mentioned in the letters is the fact that the god-stone acts as a magnet for wicked chance—like a Murphy's Law Machine, the god makes anything that can go bad, go for worse. This is bound to cause growing problems for the characters. And one thing is certain: Whatever the players' choice about the packet, the Soul of the World is not going to let some cultist try to murder it without reacting to the threat of the god-shards.

Bad Luck Days

As the characters set out to find a place for the god, they notice a drastic change for the worse in the weather. Freak storms break over the city or the highway as they travel. The weatherman reports the lowest seasonal temperatures in a decade.

The trick here is to try and make this look commonplace, at least at the start. Just mention it's raining or it's cold. Let the players notice this is turning into an unusual occurrence as they get on with their plan. Let the paranoia grow.

Later, minor mishaps strike all the characters—burned fuses and misplaced house keys, zapped computers (all Windows, of course), pickpockets on the bus, lost mail, the car getting vandalised by unknown hooligans. The accidents should be evenly spaced so they look like the product of normal statistical bad luck. In fact, be ready to point out (after an Idea Roll [INT check: DC10]) that the characters are probably not experiencing any bout of ill luck, but just attaching more significance to standard random occurrences.

Progressively, the 'accidents' increase in number and severity (losing one's job because of missed deadlines, the accidental death of a pet, etc.). Denial gets harder to swallow. And another source of preoccupation should by this time be in the sights of the characters.

Bums from Beyond

The highest-POW [WIS] character in the team starts getting weird dreams involving the places that have been discussed as a possible resting place for the god. The places all look distorted and deserted, the signs of a long winter evident, and there's a strong sensation of a presence stalking through the shadows.

As the search for a proper resting place proceeds, and as soon as the nightmares of the first investigators have been discussed, every member of the team starts having similar dreams. Remember denial: It's all just the power of suggestion, obviously (on an Idea Roll [INT check: DC10]).

The highest-POW [WIS] player, in the meantime, starts feeling like he's being followed. He gets passing glimpses of a disquieting figure, a street person, a bum wearing an age-old anorak, the hood pulled up and completely dark. The shadowy figure stands on corners or at the end of alleyways, or along the road as the character drives by, but is impossible to track or contact.

Then, finally, as he's getting ready to step across a busy main road, the character feels unknown hands on his back, then half a second later is just missed by a speeding truck. As the truck's roar is lost amongst the traffic noise, the character turns to face the creature that tried to push him under the wheels of the truck—or maybe saved his life.

The stranger is a common street bum, wearing an anorak with its hood up, chanting unknown words. His face is lost in the darkness of the hood, and his hands are covered by thick wool mittens.

The bum staggers forward, his incomprehensible ramblings rising to a scream. Passersby seem not to see him or ignore what's happening—clearly a typical defensive reaction when faced with the anomalous. The bum then slams into the character and runs away screaming.

Play along with the player's reaction, but attempts to grab him fail; his garments are greasy and slippery. Pursuit leads nowhere—the bum turns a corner in a dead-end alley and is gone. He probably (Idea Roll [INT check: DC10]) dropped into a manhole or jumped that wall over there—it's tall, but not too tall.

In a few days, other members of the team get the impression that the Bums from Beyond are following them. It's time for one of them to experience some major creeps. The obvious target is the character keeping the god.

The scene starts out in the deepest, darkest hour of the night, around four in the morning, when the air is coldest and sleep is as deep as possible. The character wakes up.

He gets the impression he heard something—perhaps glass shattering or something fragile being broken. His hand runs to the light switch but fails to connect. Ditto the phone. Something's wrong. The floor is cold and damp—there are actually several centimetres of water on the floor. Getting around in the dark causes some splashing sound and more confusion—while generally similar to the character's apartment, this place is different enough for him to hit his shins on sharp corners and slam into doorposts. And something's moving in the apartment.

Any sane character would probably try and make a runner of it, to the door and the outside world. Should the character choose this course of action, he's pursued by a number of anorak-clad shapes, their incomprehensible moaning growing to a shriek as they follow and finally surround him.

Anyone brave enough or stupid enough to try and face the critters deserves a few minutes groping in the dark and getting scared by noises all around him. As his eyes adapt to the dark he sees a number of people in anoraks crawling through his apartment. He hears their sniffing and sees their lizard-like movement along the walls on their hands and knees. At this point there's no way out, and the poor character is soon surrounded.

In both cases, the surrounded character has the dubious opportunity of studying his uninvited guests at close quarters. He notices their disproportionate legs and arms, and certainly catches a whiff of their acrid smell, and if he listens closely to the hum that they emit he hears what might be a voice.

The confrontation is pretty stressful, and costs the character 1D8 Sanity—plus all the points he's been so far able to negate through self-deception. He's likely to pass out, but should the sanity loss not be enough, one of the circling bums steps forward, its inhuman shape and smell assaulting him almost

The Bums from Beyond—Servitor Race

The Bums—so called here due to their similarity, at least from a distance, to urban homeless persons in greasy anoraks—are hunters deployed by the Soul of the World to track and destroy the Tibetan god. One could imagine them as spiritual antibodies, in a way—their means are limited, but their stubbornness has no end.

They have rough, disproportionate bodies, with short bowed legs and over-long arms; they are surrounded by a distinctive smell, which is a mixture of oil, animal fat and ozone; and they emit a low humming sound in which a voice can possibly be detected—like when you listen too long to white noise. A Bum's face is normally framed by a hood and hidden in its dark recesses.

Observing a Bum's face very closely reveals small, deep-set eyes and vaguely mongoloid features, and a mouth large enough, when opened completely, to swallow the head of a normal human. Their pestilential breath explodes as a thick cloud of blue-yellow mist through massive, hippo-like teeth.

Their main aim is to impress on the characters the fact that they are following a dangerous path.

The Bums from Beyond

Char.	*Rolls*	*Averages*
STR	1D6+12	15-16
CON	5D6	17-18
SIZ	2D6+6	13
INT	3D6	10-11
POW	3D6	10-11
DEX	3D6	10-11
Move 8		HP 16

Av. Dam. Bonus: +1D4
Weapons: Grapple/hold 75%
Fist 70% 1D3+db
Head butt 55% 1D4+db
Armour: None, but the Bums are impervious to physical attack—massive damage causes them to disperse but not to die
Spells: None.
Sanity Loss: No Sanity points are lost to see a Bum.

Bum from Beyond

Medium-Size Aberration (Lesser Servitor Race)
Hit Dice: 2d12+3 (16 hp)
Initiative: 0
Speed: 30 ft.
Armour Class: 12 (+2 natural)
Attacks: Fist +4, head butt +4 melee
Damage: Fist 1d3+2, head butt 1d3+2
Face/Reach: 5 ft. by 5 ft./5ft.
Special Qualities: Blindsight (Ex), Fast Healing (Ex) 5, Regeneration (ex) 5
Saves: Fort +6, Ref +2, Wil +2
Abilities: Str 15, Dex 10, Con 18, Int 11, Wis 10, Cha 5
Skills: Move Silently +2, Spot +2, Search +2, Wilderness Lore +2
Feats: Track
CR: 1
Climate/Terrain: Anywhere a god-shard might be
Advancement: None
Sanity Loss: No Sanity points are lost to see a Bum.

The 'Tibetan God' and the 'Soul of the World'

The stones, wrapped up in paper and sealed with the sign of the wheel, of the key, and of the hearth of the rdo-rje, are something beyond human comprehension. They are actually fragments of a 'god,' but it's more practical here to consider them as beacons, as hardpoints in the building of a net that will trap and smother the Soul of the World. By removing the Soul, the ritual will allow the darker god to possess the planet.

The concept of Soul of the World is left for the Keeper to interpret.

It can be a positive but Hastur-like vibe that inhabits the Earth, or it could be the connection humanity has to the Dreamlands, or any other thing that makes the Earth such a special place in the wide and mostly indifferent cosmos. Note that the Soul is not necessarily a positive entity, and it will neither help nor reward the characters.

The wrap around the 'stone' is covered with marks that make it untouchable to the Outer Gods, the Great Old Ones and their servants. Servants of the Soul (described later) will be able to locate the god but unable to act against it directly. Their best line of action is scaring the characters into destroying the god, or at least removing the wrapping. But considering they lack any direct and non-aggressive means of communication with humans, this is going to be pretty complicated. But it will most likely provide a number of excellent role-playing opportunities.

The entity trapped (or residing, who knows?) inside the rock comes with the added ability to skew chance around itself, causing persistent bouts of ill luck for those that handle it. The bad luck is of course cumulative. In the first week it means your number does not come up on the national lottery. After a couple of weeks it means your number does come up, but you lost your ticket. After a month, your number comes up but your girlfriend took the ticket when she dumped you to join a biker gang.

physically. The last memory of this encounter will the contorted, vaguely mongoloid features of one of the bums, croaking in an inhuman voice "Give it to us," from the dark shadows of an anorak hood.

When the character comes back to his senses, he's lying on his back on the floor of his apartment, which apparently is back to normal.

It's a new dawn.

The character's soaked in water and reeks from the same obnoxious mixture of smells he remembers from the night before. Rationalising this one will be hard.

You Are All Alone

Up to this point, any attempt at getting in touch with Francesco is in vain. His secretary (actually a service bureau, in case anyone tries to investigate further) says Francesco is away on a business trip to the Far East. No, the secretary has no idea of the date of his return home. She can forward him a message. Anyway, it is up to you whether Francesco is a full-fledged cultist or just a crafty merchant being used by the monks.

Going to the police achieves nothing (unless you want to use this as a hook to bring PISCES in) as there's very little to be made of the case at hand.

It should be not hard to set up a PISCES investigation of the characters. If nothing else, the string of weird accidents are likely to attract a number of observers (The Fate, anybody?), including a PISCES head-hunter. What line PISCES would follow in this case is left to the industrious Keeper to work out.

Research adds very little. A few obscure books mention the Tibetan cult, but so sparsely as to actually add to its mystery instead of throwing light on its practices. Passing mentions on various Bonpo 'paths' can be found in the books by Alexandra David-Neal, and Parabang Bonpo figures prominently in a rare edition of her *'Tibetan Notebooks'* (1927, Golden Goblin Press).

The original notebooks are held in France's Bibliothèque Nationale in Paris, and tracing them should be the result of several hard Library Use rolls [Research checks: DC20] and a complicated paper trail. Anyone tracking the 'Notebooks' (2 weeks to reading them, 1D4 Sanity Loss, +1D3 Cthulhu Mythos [+1 rank Cthulhu Mythos]) will learn the basics of the Parabang canon, their hate for light and humanity, and their hunt for the Soul of the World. It also generally locates their main seat in a wind-swept monastery up in the Himalayas, not too far from the fabled Plateau of Leng.

Choices

So everything is getting weird fast around the characters, but they finally found a good place for the god to reside for the rest of time. The description of the ideal resting place provided by the letters is generic enough to fit just anywhere.

Most characters are likely to choose a place close to home. Doing some homework on local legends and nearby nature parks and protected areas might give some more ideas. The Keeper will certainly get even more ideas perusing the contents of *The Black Seal*, starting with this issue and previous issues.

Anyway, once a location has been decided upon, it's time to get there and drop-kick the god.

Planes, Trains, Automobiles

Depending on the means by which the characters travel, a number of things can happen. The only constant is bad weather.

Travelling by car is the obvious choice to get anywhere nearby in reasonable time. A flat tyre is de rigueur, especially if it stops the car on a deserted stretch of road at the height of a storm. Difficulties in tuning the radio (which returns to normal when the Tibetan god is removed) and weird little quirks of the electrical system should also help keep the characters on edge. And what can be that shape on the road—a mitten-wrapped hand with stretched thumbs up, the hollow of the hood a dark pit? And how come he's not seen in the rear-view mirror?

Travelling by train is probably the cheapest way to get anywhere in Europe. 'Lost ticket' is the name of the game here for a bit of banter and role-playing with the ticket inspector. Various delays force the characters to travel by night. A shambling anorak-clad figure appearing during the

Locations of the God Shards

God shards need to be left in 108 different places all over the Earth in order to achieve their desired effect.

Some highlights of shards already placed include:

- Mount Kanchenjunga, India—sacred to an obscure Hindu sect
- Xian, China – home of the terracotta army
- Lake Atitlàn, Guatemala; Lake Logurinn, Iceland; Loch Ness, Scotland—each lake is said to house a 'monster' in local legend
- The magnetic North Pole, Canada
- Mount Sinai, Egypt
- Mount Ararat, Turkey

Shards have also been placed in various locations in London, Paris, Copenhagen, Moscow, Florence, New York, San Francisco, Bangkok, Seoul, Hong Kong, Calcutta and other major world cities. Where exactly these are is up to the Keeper.

journey is granted to cause some action—even if it's just a student travelling with an Inter-rail ticket.

Planes can take you anywhere for a price. Flying in bad weather is always an experience. As is being forced to make a mid-way stop due to 'minor problems'. A film buff might use one of the Bums from Beyond for a remake of Richard Matheson's classic *Twilight Zone* episode featuring William Shatner's tour-de-force performance: 'Nightmare at 20,000 Feet.'

Boats and ships get downright scary in bad weather, and claustrophobic. On the other hand, there's precious little that can happen on a ship that qualifies as 'minor problem' other than a blocked lavatory. Much as we'd like for the ship to develop a chronic penchant for leaking, the main problem the characters will face will be sea sickness (halve their CON stat for all relevant checks). That, and—are those dolphins (or maybe seals) in anoraks following the ship?

Once there, wherever 'there' happens to

be, the characters face the usual small accidents and time-consuming mishaps. The weather goes to extremes, and while no Bums are in sight, an oppressive feeling pushes on the characters' chests. Once the god is placed in his new home, the results are distinctly anticlimatic: No great breaches in the cloudy cover bring forth a single golden ray of sunlight, no major changes take place in the surroundings, no feelings of relief or peace sweep their souls.

But in the distance, a chorus of howls rise, and all the dogs in the area will join the weird screechy screams of the Bums, and a chill will grip the hearts of the characters (for a token 1/1D4 SAN loss).

Do It Again?

Free of major harassment, no longer followed by ill luck and people in weird anoraks, the characters can now get back to their day-to-day routine. A few days after the placement of the god, they get a call from Francesco, enquiring about the general goings-on and asking a few details about the status of the god.

Should the characters have been caught earlier trying to 'lose' the package, Francesco is more thorough in his investigation and drops by on his way to the airport to talk about the whole thing face-to-face (his Psychology [Sense Motive] rolls work better that way).

Afterward, the characters are free to spend two full weeks minding their own business. But their tranquility is shattered one morning by a rather harassed-looking postman carrying a large and evidently heavy parcel. The customs declaration form simply reads: 'Contains: Seven Tibetan Gods.'

Far Flung Consequences

Any characters perusing the national and international news after the placement of the first god notice a pattern of repeating events. These are small accidents, unexplained bouts of homicidal or suicidal madness, freak weather events, the only common denominator being:

A. They have uniformly dire consequences.
B. They take place within one kilometre from where the god was placed.

At this point the characters will probably start feeling a pang of responsibility. Could it be that the monsters that harassed them are now preying on the population? Or were the characters tools of something far more sinister?

Some characters might like to get back and take a look. Apart from a dark aura hanging over the area, little is different from the day they dropped off the god. A lone Bum from Beyond makes an appearance, but he ignores the characters, instead staring intently at the place where the packet is hidden.

Should anyone try and remove the god, more anorak-clad shapes arrive, still passive toward the characters. Should the wrapping be removed, the shadows converge on the character holding the naked stone, take it from his hands, and smash the god which shatters in a blast of black light. Any sanity lost seeing the monsters converge screaming against the character are then regained, with a bonus 1D6 Sanity due to the sense of almost physical relief.

Scene 8: Getting Off the Hook

Getting rid of a single fragment of the god is hard enough. Is there a way to end the persecution and get rid of both the parcel-happy Tibetan Cult and the obsessive Bums?

As a general rule of thumb, once a god-shard is destroyed, the cult knows (the same god is embodied in each of the different shards, so IT knows for sure) and will cancel the characters from its list of contacts and reliable tools. But this is too easy a way out. The cult takes offence at the damage to their god and sends a crazed monk to deal with the desecrators with as much prejudice as he can manage. As package after package arrive at the characters' mailboxes, a number of options lay open.

The Parabang Cult

According to Von Junzt, the cult was founded in the 9th century A.D. by Trapa Banba, a Tibetan lama devoted to bompo (a magic path which emphasises ritual and dealings with spirits); Banba's own interpretation of the Buddhist teaching equated nirvana with the violent and radical suppression of all feelings and, indeed, of spirit itself.

Nihilistic to the extreme and the object of ferocious repression from both lay and religious powers, the Parabang cult soon cut its ties with bompo and Buddhism, and started pursuing its very own plans for world 'liberation'—which finally (circa 11th century A.D.) coalesced around the idea of suppressing the world's vital spark (the so-called 'Soul of the World'). Von Junzt wrote in his *Unaussprechlichen Kulten* "much dealing with darker forces ensued as a way to acquire the means for achieving such an end" (original edition, third volume, page 128—final entry on the subject).

The centre of the Parabang cult is the benighted and wind-swept lamasery of Bara Tipung (exact location unknown), a rambling grey stone structure inhabited by the last surviving handful of starved, half-crazed, demon-summoning, self-mutilating priests. Trapa Banba is still the head of the cult; his current nature is uncertain, and depending on the sources he might be a 1,000-year old immortal, an undead lama, a ghost or a perpetually reincarnating spirit.

Ever since the Chinese occupation started and the plight of Tibet has become a popular topic, the Cult has focused on setting up a network of 'friendlies' through which to operate outside of its lair.

The Chinese Red Army, Secret Police and Paranormal Investigations Unit are all actively pursuing the Cult, and might be pleased to interview anyone connected with its activities; the pleasure might not be reciprocal.

Scenario hook:

Little Banba—what if Tibetan monks knocked at your door to tell you your five year old son is the head of their cult reincarnated? What if he was Trapa Banba reborn?

Think *'The Golden Child'* meets *'The Omen'* by via of Bertolucci's *'Little Buddha'* and Chow Yun Fat's *'Bullet-proof Monk'*.

Option A: The Magic Word is 'Please'

Depending on the way the scenario has progressed, simply asking Francesco to refrain from sending more of the stuff—and asking him to pass the word up the line to his contacts in Tibet—might do the trick. After all, why use unwilling agents? It does only add a number of liabilities to what is already risky business indeed. Francesco will attempt to negotiate, saying that deliveries will stop with the successful planting of one god-shard by the characters. If this unacceptable, Francesco suggests that the characters take it back to Tibet. Personally.

Option B: Recipient Unknown

An equally simple solution is, of course, sending the god back to the sender with 'Recipient Unknown' stamped on the package. This should cause the monks to desist after a while—faster if postal expenses are left for them to pay.

Option C: Who You Gonna Call?

Contacting the authorities might be a good idea, even if it would almost certainly cause some degree of fuss.

The police are unlikely to do anything apart from filing a charge for harassment against Francesco (who is a foreign national anyway, leading to lengthy legal debates). There is little that the friendly police station can do when another packet lands on the doorstep of one of the characters.

Other authorities, such as PISCES or one of its alternative shadows (found in *The Black Seal # 2*), might be much more interested and 'cooperative' should the case be brought to their attention. The characters might end up being used and abused as friendlies, or you might choose to switch to another sort of campaign, setting up the players with new characters, trying to track the god back to its source.

The Chinese authorities are certainly very interested in learning that some its Tibetan citizens have been smuggling art to the West and/or conducting a propaganda campaign for the freedom of their faith. They gladly accept the case filed by the characters and act promptly and definitively on it. This option is, of course, quite radical: It means selling out the Tibetan cult to an oppressive government that carries out around 200,000 executions every year, and which will most likely lay waste the Temple of Parabang Bonpo, killing everyone on the premises. This is quite a change, considering how this scenario started out. And yet, if they are cultists. . . Of course, this might land the characters on the friendlies list of whatever agency is taking care of the Mythos in China.

New Age-ish characters might decide the best course of action is contacting some 'expert' on the matter. This might be a good occasion for playing an old PC as an NPC for the delight of the veterans, or a great way to get the characters involved with a much nastier or at least more devious cult (The Fate?) that will help them—for a price.

Option D: There is a Videotape. . .

Perhaps the only way to get rid of the packages is finding someone who will accept and take the responsibility for finding it a resting place. The god shard is effectively a chain-letter from Hell. Who knows, maybe that's why Francesco is so hot about finding new friends and getting them to help.

This option lets the characters (and players!) spend a few hours of hilarious discussion about an ideal list of candidates. Convincing the people on the list to collaborate is, of course, quite another matter.

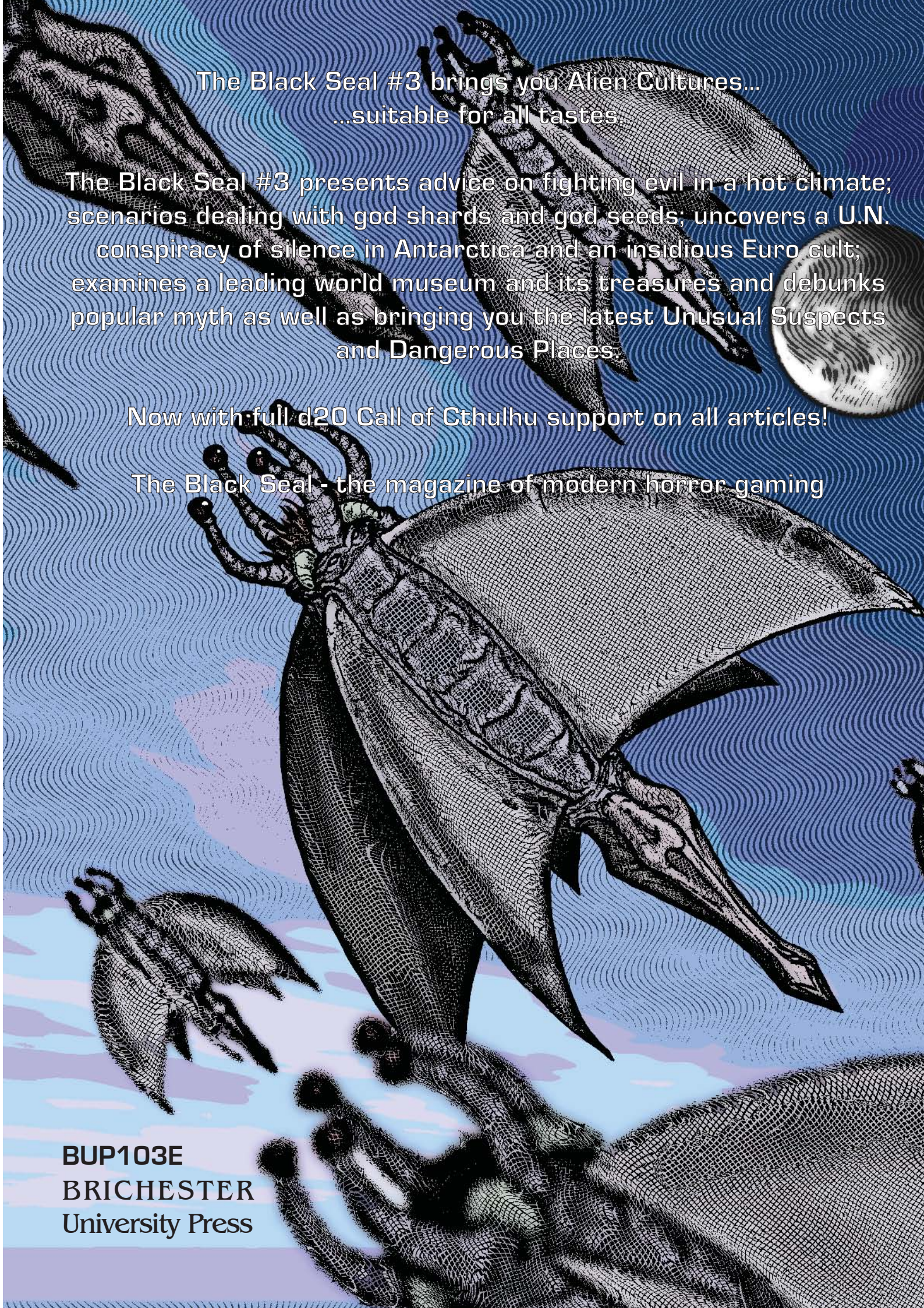
And if authorities (or PISCES, or Tiger Transit) were keeping an eye on the comings and goings of the Tibetan god, this line of action would certainly land the characters in a very nasty hornet's nest.

Option Z: The Big Switcheroo

The characters contact a Taoist expert. Keep the *Feng Shui* RPG rulebook handy and have conversions of the characters ready. Bring on the mooks with lots of guns. Wing it from there. *'Big Trouble in Little China'* is required viewing.

Concluding Remarks

The author wishes to extend his gratitude to the whole team of *The Black Seal's* writers, artists, editors, and assorted accomplices. If this scenario goes anywhere but down, it's thanks to their comments and suggestions. Thank you, gentlemen.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