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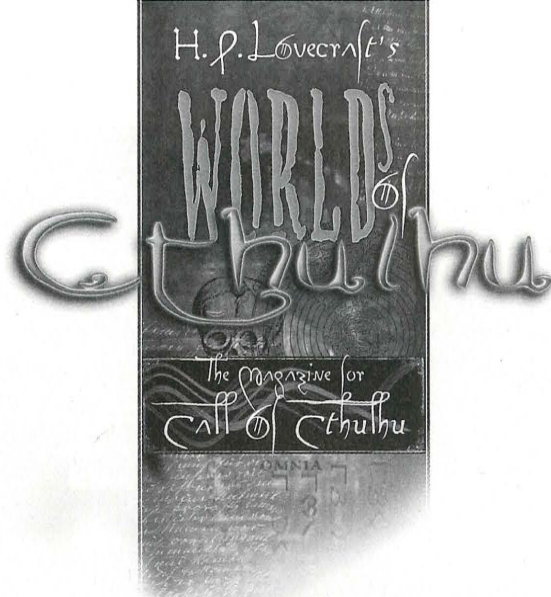
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Issue One Contents

CoC	Introductions	4
1920s	The Secret of Knossos	6
CoC	The Braincase Speaks	30
CDA	Cthulhu Dark Ages Errata	32
CDA	The Vampire of Schwarzbrunn	39
CDA	On Gaming in Averoigne	58
CDA	Averoigne Occupations	61
CDA	Skills for Dark Ages: Averoigne	63
Now	Project Pi	66
1920s	Law & Lawlessness in the 1920s: Prohibition and Bootleggers	89
1920s	Professionally Speaking: the Archaeologist	98
CoC	Out of the Dark Realms in Between	112
CoC	Cults Exposed! The Starry Wisdom Church	116
CoC	Keeper's Corner: the Cthulhu Matrix	122
DG	Directives from A Cell	125
d20	The Twenty Sides of Terror	128
CoC	Dork Tower	131

1920s: Classic period; CDA: Dark Ages; CoC: General; d20: d20 Cthulhu; DG: Delta Green; Gas: Gaslight; Now: Modern-day

Why *Call of Cthulhu* is the Greatest Game

Call of Cthulhu editor Lynn Willis once said that *Call of Cthulhu* elicited the “most literate submissions Chaosium’s ever received.” And it’s true. I spent a few years editing the game and almost without exception *Call of Cthulhu* submissions were written by intelligent, thinking people, and invariably of the highest quality. We had more publishable submissions than we could ever hope to put into print.

Call of Cthulhu attracts fans of a sort different than most role-playing games. While many or most RPGs offer simplistic worlds of good and evil, where good deeds are directly rewarded with treasure and power, *Call of Cthulhu* offers an ambiguous world where “doing the right thing” almost always leads to self-sacrifice, if not outright self-destruction. It attracts players who do not always see our real world as a simplistic struggle of good vs. evil, but a place where shades of gray predominate.

Lynn Willis made his comment nearly twenty years ago. Today it is more true than ever. Submissions for the game are increasingly more knowledgeable, increasingly better written, and capable of bringing people’s world views and philosophies to the gaming table. Without a doubt, H.P. Lovecraft would be proud of what people have done with his creations. And in the long-running tradition of the Cthulhu Mythos, writers, both fiction and game writers, continue to explore the existential existence postulated by Lovecraft.

Worlds of Cthulhu provides yet another venue for all the great *Call of Cthulhu* material fans around the world continue to generate. A world-class, award winning publisher, Pegasus Spiele, has forayed into the field, planning to provide yet another source of great *Call of Cthulhu* material for fans of the game. I’m proud to be part of a team includes Frank Heller and Adam Crossingham.

Call of Cthulhu is coming up on it’s 25th anniversary. I suspect it’s only the beginning of a very long run.

Keith ‘Doc’ Herber

Welcome the first issue of *Worlds of Cthulhu*. When Frank Heller asked me to participate I was excited. Pegasus Press produce unrivalled Cthulhu products in German, and *Cthuloide Welten* is quite possibly the best looking gaming magazine I’ve seen in a while. I got even more excited when I learnt I would be working with ‘Doc’ Herber, one of the classiest Cthulhu writers and editors ever. I hope to bring some of stuff I’ve learnt on *The Black Seal* to *Worlds of Cthulhu*, and mix it together with German precision and old school flair in order to make *Worlds of Cthulhu* the world’s number one *Call of Cthulhu* magazine – admittedly that’s not hard in a field of three. But I’m going to try.

As Frank will outline, the plan is that *Worlds of Cthulhu* will print the best from its German sister magazine as well as original material, with original material taking prominence as time goes by. We will attempt to hit all the different sub-genres of the *Call of Cthulhu* game with each issue, so most *Call of Cthulhu* fans should find something of interest in each issue. Rest assured we will be paying attention to overlooked sub-genres like Gaslight in future issues.

Enjoy what’s here and I hope you find it useful. And remember we’re always interested in new and interesting material for *Call of Cthulhu*. And we pay. Check out our submissions guidelines on our web site if you are interested.

Adam Crossingham

Worlds of Cthulhu is the international magazine for *Call of Cthulhu* horror gaming, in all eras and settings. It was mothered by the award winning German *Cthuloide Welten* magazine, which I created in 2001, and that won a lot of recognition over the years. The concept was to publish a *Call of Cthulhu* magazine that is timeless, that is a mix of magazine, source book and adventure book. No reviews, since a bi-annual magazine cannot compete with the faster Internet, no short stories because we are a gaming magazine and not a fiction magazine. And no advertisements every second page, but a magazine packed with game related material and adventures.

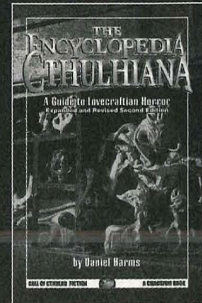
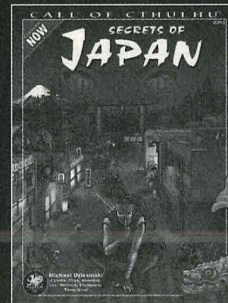
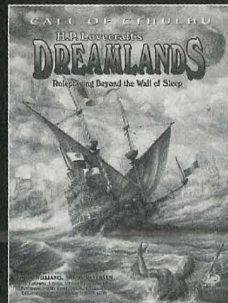
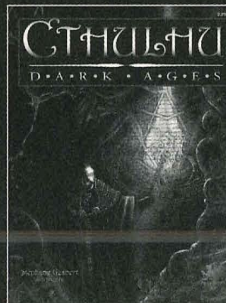
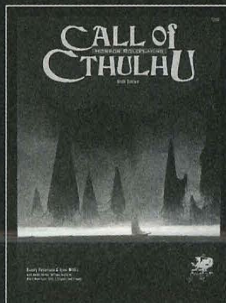
We wanted to do an international version of our magazine for some time, and when in 2003 I contacted Keith Herber, who knew our magazine already, he agreed to edit *Worlds of Cthulhu* and now is our Chief Editor. The Anglo-American editorial team consists of him, Adam Crossingham of *The Black Seal*, an esteemed colleague and friend of old, and William Jones of *Book of Dark Wisdom*, a *Call of Cthulhu* magazine that switched to fiction – he is now fulfilling his gaming interest with *Worlds of Cthulhu*.

Although this magazine contains translated texts and adventures from, and is based on *Cthuloide Welten*, my vision always has been and still is, that *Worlds of Cthulhu* is the international platform for *Call of Cthulhu*, with contributors from the US and all over the world, and will be one day independent and running its own contributions, using only the best translated articles and adventures from *Cthuloide Welten* once in a while. We are licensed and supported by Chaosium, supported by Pagan Publishing, *The Black Seal* and *Book of Dark Wisdom*, and with Keith Herber at the helm, have someone who is one of the most important figures in *Call of Cthulhu*’s history, and who is back to the game we love for the first time in 10 years. I therefore believe we are already on a good path.

Lastly, I want to express my deep gratitude to Adam Crossingham, who tirelessly worked to get the magazine finished on schedule for GenCon – thanks, Adam!

Frank Heller

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Cthulhu 1920, Classic Era:

The Secret of Knossos

An Adventure of Minoan Mysteries on Crete

By Günther Dambachmair

With the assistance of Matthias Oden

Translated from the German by Bill Walsh

The Course of the Adventure

The investigators are invited to Heraklion, the capital of Crete, for the wedding of the son of Professor Alexander Powell, an acquaintance. At the wedding, Nikolas Eflantinos, a rival suitor who bears the incendiary power of the ancient Bringers of Fire cult, takes his horrific revenge, turning the wedding reception into a fiery inferno.

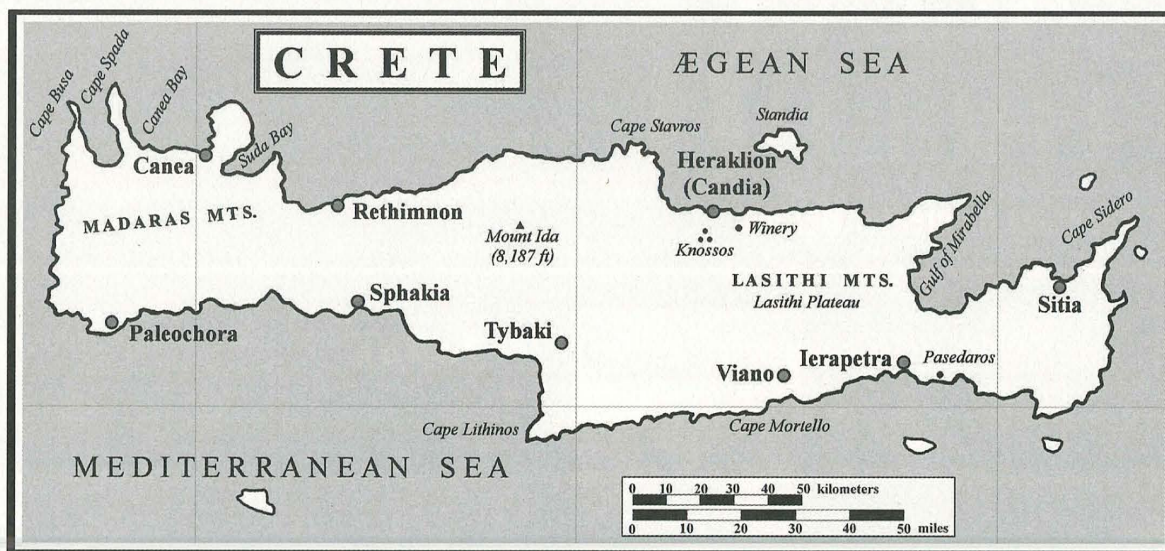
Grigorios Spazegottos, the father of the bride, demands an explanation and revenge. The first clue leads to Pasedaros, the fishing village where young Nikolas grew up. There, the investigators uncover the first evidence of a malign cult and possibly have a confrontation with the cultists in a ritual cave. In the process, their boat is destroyed and they must return to Heraklion by the longer, overland route. Along the way, they come across a monastery atop a mountain on the Lasithi Plateau, where they uncover more information about the "Bringers of Fire." Moreover, they are confronted by two cultists and receive a taste of their power. Finally, all the evidence leads to the excavation site at Knossos, where the investigators meet the great archaeologist Sir Arthur Evans and have the opportunity to examine the subterranean ruins and enter the fabled Labyrinth of King Minos. An act of sabotage bars their way back, so the investigators must find another way out of the Labyrinth. In the process, they discover inscriptions with terrifying, apocalyptic

implications. In the final showdown, they meet the cultists and the creature they are trying to rouse from an enchanted slumber: the Minotaur. The investigators may save themselves after a breathless chase through the passages toward the light of day, or they may never be seen again.

In addition to the cthulhoid horrors, this adventure is enlivened by its setting in an unfamiliar culture and the archæologically interesting context. A travel handbook about Crete and a small reference about Minoan culture would be optimal supplements for the Keeper.

What the Keeper Knows

As the first high cultures of humanity arose, a secretive cult appeared in Mesopotamia, "the land between two rivers," known to some as the Cult of Engannu. The word "Engannu" is of Sumerian origin and is translated, somewhat insufficiently, as *Bringer of Fire*. In fact, the followers of Engannu, known as the Bringers of Fire, learned to control fire through secret rites. With some degree of certainty, they seem to have successfully established contact with the Great Old One Cthugha, called in their secret traditions "the living flame from the shadows of Fomalhaut." The summoning of Fire Vampires, which raced across the night sky "like tongues of fire," was a commonly used rite in days of antiquity.



What the Educated Westerner Knows About Crete, c. 1920

The investigators can know the following with a successful *History* roll or a halved *Know* roll.

Crete is considered the cradle of European civilization. Circa 2000 B.C., the so-called First Palace Period began, featuring urban, central administration of the country and far-reaching trade networks. Three hundred years later, earthquakes destroyed this first flowering of Cretan culture, which nevertheless recovered quickly and rose to new heights. Around 1400 B.C., the first Mycenaean Greek traces are found on Crete, although in any case these Achaean (Greek) influences were limited to Knossos. It also remains unclear whether these new lords of Knossos seized power by force, or established foreign domination over a long period of time by economic means. The destruction of the palace complex at some undetermined time later was, for most of the twentieth century, considered evidence of a revolt of the Cretans against their mainland overlords. However, the contemporary destruction of other non-Achaean palaces allows for the possibility of a forcible conquest of the island by some other Achaean Greek power. Another popular thesis, that the Palace Culture of Knossos was brought to an end by the eruption of a volcano on Thera (today's Santorini) has been brought into doubt by historians' most recent datings of the event (which is now considered likely to have taken place 100 years earlier than previously believed).

Few of these controversies had come to light in the 1920s, though. With his excavations, Sir Arthur Evans laid the foundations for research into the culture, which he dubbed "Minoan" after King Minos, the legendary king of Knossos. His chronology, still considered valid today, delineated Early Minoan, Middle Minoan, and Late Minoan Periods, each containing three sub-periods (written, e.g., Early Minoan I, Early Minoan II, Middle Minoan III).

Knossos is known for the legend of Theseus, an Athenian hero, who entered the Labyrinth of Knossos, there slew the Minotaur, a monstrous half-man, half-bull, and who then found his way out with the ball of string given to him by King Minos's daughter Ariadne.

Knossos is the epitome of a cryptic culture, in which myth and history are almost inextricably woven, and whose script has resisted every attempt at deciphering unto the present day.

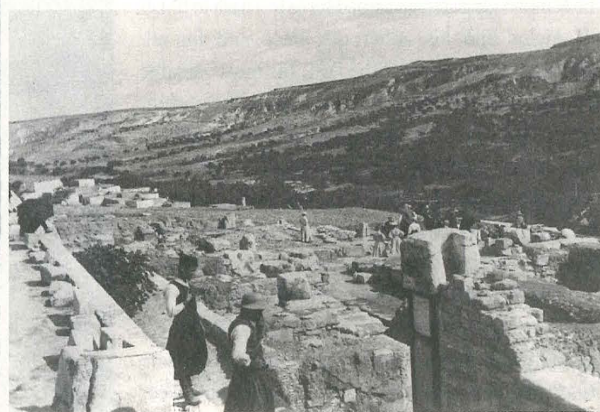
The secrets of Knossos perplex the historians of the 1920s, and no one with even the slightest interest in history would pass up the chance to visit the excavation site of the Palace Complex

As the gateway to the eastern Mediterranean, Crete has fallen in succession to the rule of the Greeks, the Romans, the Byzantines, the Venetians, and the Ottomans. Each era has left its traces on this, the greatest of the Aegean islands.

The history of the Bringers of Fire is shrouded in the darkness of bygone millennia. Some hold the opinion it is a cult which survived the sinking of Atlantis. By contrast, some ethnologists are convinced they must be the remnant of a culture from the legendary realm of Hyperborea. When they first appeared in Mesopotamia, however, their previously immense power over fire seems to have already dwindled. Although impressive examples of their destructive power appear over the course of history—Sodom, Gomorra, Santorini—by this time most Bringers of Fire had lost their magic, their knowledge and goals corrupted or forgotten through erroneous traditions. Nevertheless, the Bringers of Fire often settled where great cultures developed. It is debatable whether they served these developing cultures as Promethean bringers of progress or were merely destructive forces. Because the Bringers of Fire were frequently found in cultures that subsequently suffered—or were even annihilated by—natural disasters, the latter may be presumed.

In this adventure, the investigators must deal with the remnant of those Bringers of Fire who came to Crete and wove their webs in the shadows of high Minoan culture. These Bringers of Fire won powerful influence at the court of the Minoan kings.

Ainos Aiglos, most powerful Bringer of Fire on Crete and leader of the local cult, had the Labyrinth dug below Knossos in order to provide his god with a worthy home deep within the island. Aiglos's goal was to summon Cthugha himself and keep him and his Fire Vampires on Earth permanently. Once Cthugha was present in corpo-



In the Ruins of Knossos

real form upon Earth, then there would be nothing to stop Aiglos from unleashing a firestorm over the neighboring islands, subjugating the region. Aiglos would then rule absolutely, subject only to his all-devouring Lord from Fomalhaut.

The Labyrinth itself was the product of a diseased mind, reaching deep into unearthly depths, and designed in bizarre patterns following no known geometry. It was laid out partially as a summoning matrix, to assist in the difficult and dangerous summoning of Cthugha, and for channeling the powerful streams of elemental energy which would be liberated.

But something went wrong. Somewhere in his insane conception of the Labyrinth Aiglos erred, unknowingly tearing apart the complicated magical matrix in the stone summoning apparatus, which brought his efforts to naught. When the summoning of Cthugha was performed within the completed enclosure, the Great Old One himself did not appear, but rather a monstrous being, one which made Fire Vampires look like harmless fireflies by compar-

ison. Dozens of cultists were killed by this entity in the course of the failed ritual, devoured by this eternally ravenous fire.

Aiglos himself succeeded in subduing the Flame Made Flesh only by sacrificing the most valuable artifact of the Cretan Bringer of Fire cult. While everything around him was consumed by heat and flame, and liquid stone dripped from the cave ceiling, he fused the Holy Disc, on whose surface all the secrets and rituals of the Bringers of Fire were inscribed, into the floor of the summoning place, using the energy liberated thereby to bring the entity under control, displacing it to a lightless twilight existence outside our universe. Aiglos then sealed the Labyrinth with Elder Signs in order to ensure that, should the flaming creature be roused from its sleep, it could not leave the precincts.

The summoning of Cthugha thus ended in fiasco. Not only did Aiglos's plan for conquering the Mediterranean collapse, but soon after a new catastrophe loomed. The King of Knossos had long observed, with growing misgivings and escalating fear, the ever greater influence of the cult on affairs at court. Seizing the moment, he had every Bringer of Fire upon whom hands could be laid arrested and executed. Aiglos himself escaped the persecution by means of his magic, fleeing with his last loyal followers to the nearby island of Thera. There, Aiglos began gathering to himself Bringers of Fire from the entire Aegean, threatening to raise up Thera as a new center of the cult. But the throne of Crete was not willing to see its recently regained freedom threatened anew by the Bringers of Fire, and the Minoan king sent an armed force to Thera to finish off Aiglos and his adherents, once and for all. Although Aiglos had lost the Disc, his most valuable relic, he was still the bearer of dangerous ancient knowledge. And when he recognized the inevitability of his defeat, he decided to deploy his last remaining weapon against his enemies. In a powerfully unholy ritual he called down a rain of fire, an apocalyptic storm that tore Thera in two, nearly destroying the island.

The Bringers of Fire were effectively suppressed. Although a few worshippers of Cthugha who hadn't left Crete with Aiglos lived in sequestration, they were never able to recapture their former position of power at the court of Knossos.

Stories and legends about the sleeping fire—being in the Labyrinth began to appear, growing ever more removed from their historic basis, until they became the legend of the Minotaur, which has been passed down to the present day.

The Minoan culture was lost and Knossos—Palace, Labyrinth, and all—struck by earthquake, eventually disappeared under the surface of the earth. Only the mad, secret teachings of the remnants of the Bringers of Fire kept the secret of the true nature of the Minotaur, and the Disc which binds him. The Minotaur, trapped in mindless stasis, slept his eternal sleep, ignorant of the goings-on in the world above the Labyrinth. And so he rests today, in the inner sanctum of the Labyrinth, buried under tons of earth and stone, patiently waiting for things to come.

The trail of the Bringers of Fire who pursued their unholy machinations outside Crete has been lost over the course of the centuries. Embattled and persecuted in many places, they lost influence and power, had to practice their rites in secret, and finally disappeared

from history. Only in the Arab world did a hard-core group of the Bringers of Fire remain intact. Publicly they supported the new, young religion of Islam, which appeared after c. 700 A.D., but secretly continued pursuing their goals, only later being destroyed by the Crusades. *The Book of Nod*, one of their most significant works, fell into the hands of the crusader Jean de Tours, by which some knowledge of the Bringers of Fire reached Europe. If the Keeper desires, some of this history may be conveyed to investigators successfully researching the subject.

Around 1663, an Arab scholar of Damascus subsequently known as Abû'l-Hurqah (this *nom de culte* translates variously—and suggestively—as “Father of Burning” or “Father of Torment”) pulled together various writings, traditions, and fragments of knowledge about the Bringers of Fire and decided to investigate the possible survival of the cult. In a mountain monastery on the Arabian Peninsula, he finally struck gold. He found some of the Bringers of Fire who not only maintained a little of the old knowledge but, thanks to their ancient bloodlines, still possessed something of the ancient hereditary power they called “the Embers of the Ancestors.”

Abû'l-Hurqah collected the cultists around himself, re-established the Bringers of Fire, reconstructed some of the ancient rituals, and migrated to Crete, because he knew from the ancient texts that a direct source of power, the Holy Disc, Bearer of the Teaching of the Black Fire, could be found there. Abû'l-Hurqah correctly



The Royal Temple of Knossos

assumed this Disc must be the key to the higher mysteries of the Cult of the Bringer of Fire. Consequently, in 1740, the followers of Abû'l-Hurqah settled on Crete's southern coast and founded *al-Bassat ad-Dârisa*—literally “the obliterated embers.” This name simultaneously expresses their regret for the current degradation of their once great cult while expressing the hope that from their dimly glowing ashes, a new, all-consuming fire would one day burst forth. Abû'l-Hurqah's first venture was to seek traces and relics of the Bringers of Fire on the island. He actually found a few descendants of those who were neither killed on Thera nor discovered and destroyed by the myrmidons of the Minoan king. These survivors told Abû'l-Hurqah they had always been taught that the Labyrinth of Knossos actually existed and that in it, the Disc of Aiglos, as they called it, was to be found. They also claimed that it was the Disc which

bound the Minotaur, a flaming monstrosity, in perpetual sleep, and that the removal of the Disc was synonymous with waking the Minotaur. Abû'l-Hurqah did not allow himself to be dissuaded by their tales; he had come too far to acknowledge defeat with his goal so close at hand.

Nevertheless, all of his efforts to find the Palace of Knossos, much less the Minotaur's Labyrinth, failed. In addition, the cult's settlement was stormed by superstitious Cretans in 1758, after rumors of blood sacrifices had become prevalent in the village and notorious in the surrounding region. Many cultists were killed in the attack, including the almost 100-year-old Abû'l-Hurqah.

However, not all the cultists died in the Cretans' raid. The fishing village Pasedaros—as it's called today—remains to this day a strange, perverse place where some initiates still practice, in secret, the fire rituals introduced by Abû'l-Hurqah. In particular, Sethos Kaiphalos, a descendant of the first students of Abû'l-Hurqah, has been able to activate his hereditary powers. This sixty-eight-year-old patriarch has the village firmly in his grip and can rely upon the aid of approximately twenty cultists—almost without exception mentally unstable fishermen, farmers, and shepherds. The village has kept almost entirely to itself for the past 180 years, inbreeding and physical degeneration proceeding hand in hand with increasing moral degradation and a willingness to propitiate blasphemous gods in occult rituals.



Sethos Kaiphalos Bearer of Knowledge Immemorial

When the British archaeologist Arthur Evans began to excavate Knossos around 1900, Sethos Kaiphalos was at hand. In the years since Knossos's uncovering, Sethos Kaiphalos has been beset by visions in which his god promises him co-equal power and reveals to him powerful rituals of the primordial Bringers of Fire, rituals describing the use of the "Embers of the Ancestors."

Around 1901, Evans excavated the Royal Palace of Knossos, and its restoration and digs continued for the next thirty years. But Kaiphalos is patient. In his dream visions, he has seen the possibility of restoring the ancient power of the Bringers of Fire, exactly as the teachings of Abû'l-Hurqah foretold. Kaiphalos knows that the Minotaur has been sleeping for millennia under the earth, trapped by the power of the Disc. But exactly like his predecessor, Abû'l-Hurqah, he believes freeing the Minotaur is an acceptable risk if it promises to procure him the Disc. Moreover, he believes that he and his followers are strong enough to control the Minotaur in any case. With the Disc in his possession and the Minotaur under his control, Kaiphalos would finally have incomprehensible power in his hands. And if he still doesn't know exactly what he would do with that power, his dream visions will lead him. He will be a willing tool for demonstrating the

power of the Old Gods, for taking revenge on an impertinent culture that has turned its back on the true gods.

Kaiphalos does not know the investigators are on their way to Crete; he wouldn't pay attention to them if he did. They are, after all, only traveling there for the wedding of the son of an old English friend.

Greece's Recent Past

In the 15th century Greece came under Ottoman rule, but in 1821 a growing national consciousness caused the Greeks to rise up against this foreign rule. The Ottoman government threatened to crush the independence movement but England, France, and Russia intervened in 1827, forcing the Ottomans to cede Greece in 1828, with the Treaty of London establishing the Greek monarchy in 1832. In 1833, the new National Assembly, acting on the recommendation of the Great Powers, elected the Bavarian prince Otto of Wittelsbach as Otto I, King of the Hellenes. In foreign policy, Greece allied itself most closely with England. Domestically, Otto's heavy-handed rule caused the Greeks to revolt in 1843, demanding and eventually receiving a constitution. The despot Otto's disregard for this constitution led to his being deposed in 1862.

Otto's successor, the Danish prince who became King George I, founded the royal house of Greece (the House of Schleswig-Holstein-Sonderburg-Glücksburg) in 1863. In the ensuing decades, several rapid changes of kings, forced abdications, frequent changes to the constitution, and political revolutions were powerful obstacles to the construction of a modern state, while confrontations with the Ottoman Empire over settlement areas and colonies in Crete and Asia Minor dragged on. In the Balkan wars of 1912-13, and as a consequence of the Great War (1914-18), all the contested areas ended up in Greek hands.

Greece attempted to impose its settlement claims in Anatolia and Asia Minor by force until September 1922, when she suffered heavy losses and was driven out of Asia Minor by Turkish forces under Mustafa Kemal (later Atatürk) and Ismet Pasha (later İnönü). Troops returning home from what became known as the War for Turkish Independence forced King Constantine I, on the throne only since 1920, to abdicate in favor of his son George II. In 1924, Greece was declared a republic and Pavlos Konduriotis elected its first president on March 25 of that year.

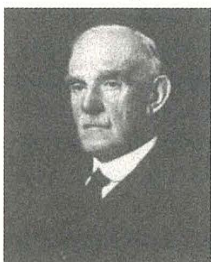


A ship will come: the harbor of Piraeus

The Adventure Begins: The Last Sirtaki

The investigators have been invited to Crete by a friend from the old days, Professor Alexander Powell, archaeologist of the Royal Geographic Society. Powell has a close connection to at least one of the investigators. His only son is getting married, and he would like the investigators to be present at the celebration. An excursion to Crete in late summer is by no means unattractive, and the group sets out enthusiastically for the Mediterranean.

On a sunny day in September, the party reaches Crete. Their itinerary has taken them via Athens or Istanbul with a ferry connection to the Cretan provincial capital of Heraklion. At this time, the capital is a major fishing port in the shadow of an imposing fourteenth-century Venetian castle. Further sights of interest include the Archaeological Museum, the Historical Museum, and some



Alexander Powell

impressive Greek Orthodox churches, including the Cathedral of St. Minas and the Church of St. Mark with their gorgeous icon paintings.

The wedding will take place at Grigorios Spazegottos's winery, amid the vineyards of Kavrochori, a suburb eight miles southwest of Heraklion. Grigorios's winery is a large compound in which grapes are harvested and processed, and employs most of the inhabitants of the village of Kavrochori.

Grigorios is the father of the bride, and as the investigators arrive, preparations are already in full swing. Alternatively, the Keeper can simply begin the game *in medias res* with the wedding already underway, briefly sketching the invitation and travel in flashback. In any case, the investigators are heartily greeted in the Cretan fashion with Mediterranean exuberance, which may cause some embarrassment to investigators of a more northerly disposition. Four hundred guests are expected, as it's usual on Crete for the entire village to take part in such festivals.



Still in a celebratory mood

The winery is a large, whitewashed farm estate consisting of a residence, a stable, and a big press house. The buildings are joined at the corners, and the wedding celebration will take place *al fresco* in the courtyard between them. It's heavily decorated with garlands, flowers, and a myriad of colorful paper lanterns which hang on strings between the buildings.

The investigators should make the following acquaintances before disaster strikes.

Professor Alexander Powell, 52, friend or mentor of the investigators. He moved to Crete some fifteen years earlier, after the death of his wife, Agatha, to write his books on archaeology in peace, and because he loves the land and its people. He will chat a little about the old days, and can introduce some of the other guests, including:

Henry Powell, 28, the groom. Alexander Powell's only son has studied archaeology at the best universities around the world. On a visit to his father's home on Crete two years earlier, he came to know, and then love, Elena Spazegottos. The greatest barrier to their union was, of course, the question of religion. Elena is Greek Orthodox, he was Church of England. Love won out in the end, with Henry converting to Orthodoxy (despite the protests of his father), clearing the way for his marriage to:

Elena Spazegottos, 19, the beautiful bride. Elena attended the University of Athens, studying art history. On a summer vacation two years ago, she met Henry and fell in love with him. Before going to Athens, she had met the young truck driver Nikolas Eflantinos and in her youthful exuberance, encouraged certain hopes on his part. Nikolas burned with jealousy upon learning of her engagement, but has apparently become reconciled to the fact. He is in fact a guest at the wedding, as is:

Ariana Mesotopolos, 24. A pretty, relatively young archaeologist who arrives from the excavation site at Knossos with a message from Sir Arthur Evans, explaining that he is sick with a fever and regrets he is unable to attend the wedding of the son of his old friend and colleague, Alexander Powell. She can tell the investigators a little about the excavations at Knossos, providing them with a future point of contact (as the final scenes of the adventure will take them to Knossos). Ariana comes from Aegina, near Athens, but spent a number of years at universities in America and speaks fluent English, French, German, and Spanish. Ariana can be a wild card for the Keeper. She can not only provide valuable information in matters archaeological, but she can outfit the group with all manner of archaeological equipment from the Knossos excavations. And if, during the course



Cretan festival costumes

of the adventure, an investigator shuffles off this mortal coil or becomes ready for a nice quiet vacation at a sanitarium, Ariana can step in as a player character. Her statistics are found in Appendix D. When she delivers Sir Arthur's regrets, Ariana is invited to stay for the wedding by:

Grigorios Spazegottos, 53, father of the bride. A typical Greek patriarch, affable and jovial. He is in a boisterous, joyful mood, and presses every guest to drink a glass of his "wedding wine" to the health of the happy couple. He bears a distinct family resemblance to:



Grigorios Spazegottos

Maria Spazegottos, 78, Elena's paternal grandmother, a "wise old woman," who knows many Cretan folk legends. If the Keeper is inclined to give the investigators a little information on the subject, Maria is provided for that purpose. She knows of the village of Pasedaros, its degraded reputation, and that its inhabitants were formerly feared as fire demons, to the extent that the militia even raided the village. She is happy to introduce the investigators to:

Papa Pavlos Mantoklapes, 62, the local parish priest. Fairly old and a bit senile, he's still loved and honored by all the inhabitants of Kavromachi. He celebrates a beautiful, reverent Orthodox wedding Mass in the old Cretan style. In the hearts of the villagers, Papa Pavlos can be said to outrank:

Petros Touplaki, 50, mayor of Kavrochori. He has no relevant information to share with the investigators other than local color.

There is of course also a musical group present, which plays traditional Greek dance music at its finest. They play the lyre, the lute, and the bouzouki, accompanied by flutes and small drums. The Cretan national dance is the Pentozali, a kind of polonaise, which becomes ever wilder and more unbridled. (*Jump rolls are necessary for investigators dancing along!*)

Keeper's tip: As background music for this game session, traditional Greek music is recommended, even if it's just "Zorba's Dance."

Amid the exuberance, Nikolas Eflantinos approaches the bride. Many guests have collected around the bride, to kiss her or to express their best wishes. When Nikolas reaches Elena, he fixes her with a burning stare and says in Greek, "You were promised to me! You belong to me!" He then turns to the wedding guests and screams, "She belongs to me! I am taking her back! WE WILL ALL BE TAKEN BACK!—FIRE, WALK WITH ME!" With these words, he bursts into flames, having invoked a particularly strong version of the spell *Self-Immolation*. In an instant, everything flammable within a fifty-foot radius ignites, especially the fabric and paper decorations and the clothing of those unfortunate enough to be standing nearby. The nearby barn, filled with straw for the farm animals, burns immediately, placing the main house in imminent danger. The decorations burn like wicks towards the press house. Sparks fly toward the fuel dump and trucks parked nearby, creating the danger of a catastrophic explosion.

Investigators within fifty feet of the ignition suffer 1d6+1d4 HP of burn damage. All others who weren't explicitly on the far edges

of the courtyard suffer at least 1d4 HP in fire damage (Keeper's decision). It's now up to the investigators to act. Many dramatic scenes can present themselves: burning guests must be saved (tablecloths, awnings, even the large bowls of wine or the small, open wine casks can be used) and the fire's encroachment on the main house, the press house, and the stables must be stopped. Unable to be saved in any case are: the bride and groom, Nikolas Eflantinos, Professor Powell, and 1d6 villagers.

Anyone succeeding with a *Listen* roll during Nikolas's last words believes that the last part of his threat didn't sound like Nikolas himself but another voice, speaking through him over the abyss of aeons. Perceiving this costs 1/1d4 Sanity, because of the realization that forces are at play which man is not meant to be involved. Witnessing the entire event, the sudden ball of fire, the dozens of burnt people etc, costs 1/1d6 SAN.

The Day After

The next day, the investigators are contacted by Kostas Garanikolas, the attorney handling the burial of the Powells. He's unimportant for the adventure, but he will keep the investigators on Crete for at least a week while all the paperwork is finished, giving them time to look into the cause of the horrific incident at the wedding.

Should the investigators not take it upon themselves to investigate, Grigorios Spazegottos will summon them to his bedside. He has suffered severe burns and is being treated by two doctors from Heraklion at his winery (if it isn't a total loss).

Grigorios takes the investigators for worldly people who could perhaps conduct inquiries in places which he would have no access. Inwardly, he's a broken man (as a *Psychology* roll shows), kept alive by the thought of avenging his daughter's death. He makes the investigators swear in the names of justice and all the Cretan saints to avenge his daughter's death for him. The perpetrator himself may be dead, but Grigorios feels that much more lies behind this atrocity, and that it merely betokens a greater evil to come.

He can provide the following information about Nikolas Eflantinos:

That the young fellow worked at the winery since he was sixteen. He was always a little different—introverted, secretive—and he seemed to have no family. In the beginning, other workers warned him that Nikolas supposedly came from "a village in the south, full of heathens who summon demons." But Nikolas was always a hard worker, so Grigorios didn't care where he came from. Nikolas eventually became a truck driver and mechanic, as he knew his way around the new model trucks. He mostly drove shipments of wine to the port at Heraklion. When Elena was sixteen, she fell for the young fellow, but Grigorios quickly told her to put such silly fancies out of her head. Shortly thereafter, Elena left for college in Athens, out of Nikolas's sight.

About a year ago, Nikolas received a visitor, an old man from his village. They conversed in a strange dialect, and Nikolas seemed



Boisterous Dancing

to hang reverently on the old man's every word. Nikolas quit his job at the winery and moved, or so it was rumored, to Heraklion, where he found a new job somewhere.

A week before the wedding, Nikolas came back to the winery, and asked for Elena's hand in marriage. When Grigorios politely but firmly declined, Nikolas's eyes rolled back in his head, he mumbled something in a strange language, and then he finally stammered threateningly, "Watch out what you're doing, old man. Your time and the time of your people is already up. A new order is coming like fire on the wind, and he who does not walk with the fire will be consumed by the fire!"

Grigorios took this to be the crazy threats of a drunk and didn't think any more about it. Now, however, Nikolas's words have taken on an all too terrible reality.

The only apparent clue is the old man from Nikolas's village. The village is called Pasedaros and is only known to Grigorios by name. It lies on the southern coast, somewhere in the neighborhood of the fishing village Ierapetra. Grigorios implores the investigators to travel to Pasedaros (by boat would be best) and look into how things could go so far as to end up in this kind of catastrophe. If anyone asks him details about the village, he refers them to his mother, Maria.

Maria Spazegottos can be found without a problem, as she lives in the same house and suffered only minor burns. To direct questions, she answers that there were, indeed, persistent rumors that Nikolas came from a village full of "heathens" on the southern coast. Her grandmother told her stories about the heathen villages in the south many years ago:

"In the little fishing village of Pasedaros, all the people sold their souls to the Devil, who came over the sea on a fishing sloop. He promised them a rich catch, and so it happened. But years later, when one of the fishermen died, he suddenly began to burn from the inside out, and a great heat seared his house. When the next fisherman died, he was lying in his coffin when he went up in flames. The other fisherman became very afraid. They didn't want to burn in the fires of Hell, so one after the other, they drowned themselves in the sea. Since then, their ghosts haunt the cove of Pasedaros, and cursed is the fisherman who sails those waters. Even today, the villagers say of someone who's hot-headed or short tempered: He has the 'Embers of the Ancestors' or 'the Curse of the Old Blood!' They know that when he dies, he'll go up in flames and be cast into the fires of Hell."

At this point, the investigators do not yet know that Nikolas Eflantinos had already left Pasedaros by the time he was a teenager, despite the great hopes the village headman, Sethos Kaiphalos, had for him. The "Embers of the Ancestors" seemed to be strong in Nikolas. Even as a small child, he could set flammable objects alight through the power of thought. But Nikolas wanted nothing to do

with it. He felt cursed, though Sethos tried to persuade him it was a very special gift. Nicholas became a loner, learned to control his pyrokinesis, and finally left Pasedaros at fifteen to find a "normal life" somewhere else. Sethos let him go, but kept tabs on his whereabouts.

When the work at Knossos finally began, it became clear that the ingress to the Labyrinth would not be discovered easily.

Sethos sought out Nikolas at the winery and

made him swear that he would return to the "Confraternity of the Bringers of Fire." He guessed that Nikolas could help him discover the entrance to the Labyrinth. Moreover, he believed that once within the Labyrinth, Nikolas would be of invaluable assistance in the effort to keep the power of the Minotaur under control, as the old blood was stronger in him than in any of the other cultists.

Sethos' insinuations fell on fertile ground this time, not least because he promised Nikolas that with the help of his gift he could take his beloved Elena from her "English unbeliever" fiancé. Nikolas agreed and applied to the Knossos excavation as a truck driver. Over the next year, he learned much of the ancient lore of the Bringers of Fire from four other cultists from Pasedaros who were also working on the excavations. Within days of the discovery of the entrance to the Labyrinth, word came of Henry and Elena's imminent wedding. Hot tempered, as he had allowed himself to become again, Nikolas sought out Grigorios in order to stop the wedding. When Grigorios threw him out, his wrath was inflamed to such a degree that he finally unleashed the fearful catastrophe on the wedding.

*Pasedaros — A fishing village
in the "Wild South"*

And so the investigators will seek out the mysterious village on the southern coast of Crete. Taking a boat to the other side of the island is highly recommended, for while the way over land is shorter, it's much more arduous. There are, at best, donkey paths across the interior and, in addition, the midday heat on the relatively inaccessible Lasithi Plateau is very uncomfortable. By contrast, boats are easy to obtain and the voyage to Ierapetra lasts only about two hours.

If the investigators speak no Greek, they will need to take an interpreter with them. It's possible they will ask Ariana Mesotopolos along. She will accompany them enthusiastically. Her statistics are found in Appendix D.

If the investigators rent a fisherman's boat, he won't agree to take them directly to Pasedaros, mumbling something about dangerous shallows and treacherous reefs which keep one from being able to land in the cove at Pasedaros. If the investigators use *Psychology* on him, he admits he's afraid of ghosts: Pasedaros' cove is said



Old Maria



Pasedaros Deceptive idyll

to be cursed, many boats have capsized there, and the fisherman in the south even shy away from sailing past the village. He will describe the people of Pasedaros as “crazy fisher folk who keep to themselves and don’t even have a church! They booze it up all day and don’t like having strangers anywhere near their town.”

The fisherman will bring them to Ierapetra, the largest town in the area. From Ierapetra, a small footpath winds east along the coast. It takes about five hours to walk to Pasedaros using this path. Or, the fisherman can take the investigators to a small cove some 200 yards west of Pasedaros, where he will wait until evening, sailing home as soon as the sun sets. He makes it absolutely clear that he will not remain after dark. For an additional fee, he’s prepared to return at sunrise the next day and wait for the investigators for an additional day.

If there is an investigator with *Pilot (Boat)*, the investigators will also be able to rent a boat. The characters will then be more independent and can reach Pasedaros directly by sea.

Pasedaros consists of about twenty crooked, wind-blown fisherman’s huts, built from wood and branches and walled up with clay. In each hut, a small hearth burns. The inhabitants make their living from fishing and have become quite degenerate due to generations of inbreeding. Their average Intelligence is in the range of 7–9. Under the leadership of Sethos Kaiphalos, they keep to themselves and are even more inscrutable to strangers. Sethos educates the more gifted

villagers as “initiates” in order to preserve the inheritance of the Bringers of Fire. They take part in regular religious processions to the nearby Gortys Caverns and worship fire as a power in and of itself.

The twenty huts house about 100 people, of whom some forty are men who spend their days asea on their fishing boats. Evenings, they get together in Ourouloki’s House, a primitive *taverna*. The publican, old Tolos, sells cheap wine, ouzo, and the powerful clear liquor called *rakí* (not to be confused with the similarly named Turkish *rakí*; Cretan *rakí* is made from the grape skins left over from wine making). Tolos is not a native of Pasedaros, nor is he a cultist, but living in the village has made him more than a little strange.

Once a week, a boat arrives from Ierapetra, a larger town which lies ten miles west along the southern coast. The crew buys up the fishermen’s catch and delivers necessities that can’t be produced in Pasedaros, primarily coffee and liquor for the *taverna*.

The villagers will simply stare stupidly at the characters and can barely answer their questions coherently. Of course they all speak only Greek. Only Tolos the publican, who speaks a few bits of English and occasionally travels to Ierapetra, is a little more open, as long as the investigators are spending money in his *taverna*. He will advise them not to get mixed up in the affairs of the villagers, as the headman, old Sethos Kaiphalos, doesn’t like strangers in town. In addition, he advises them to be moving on as soon as possible.

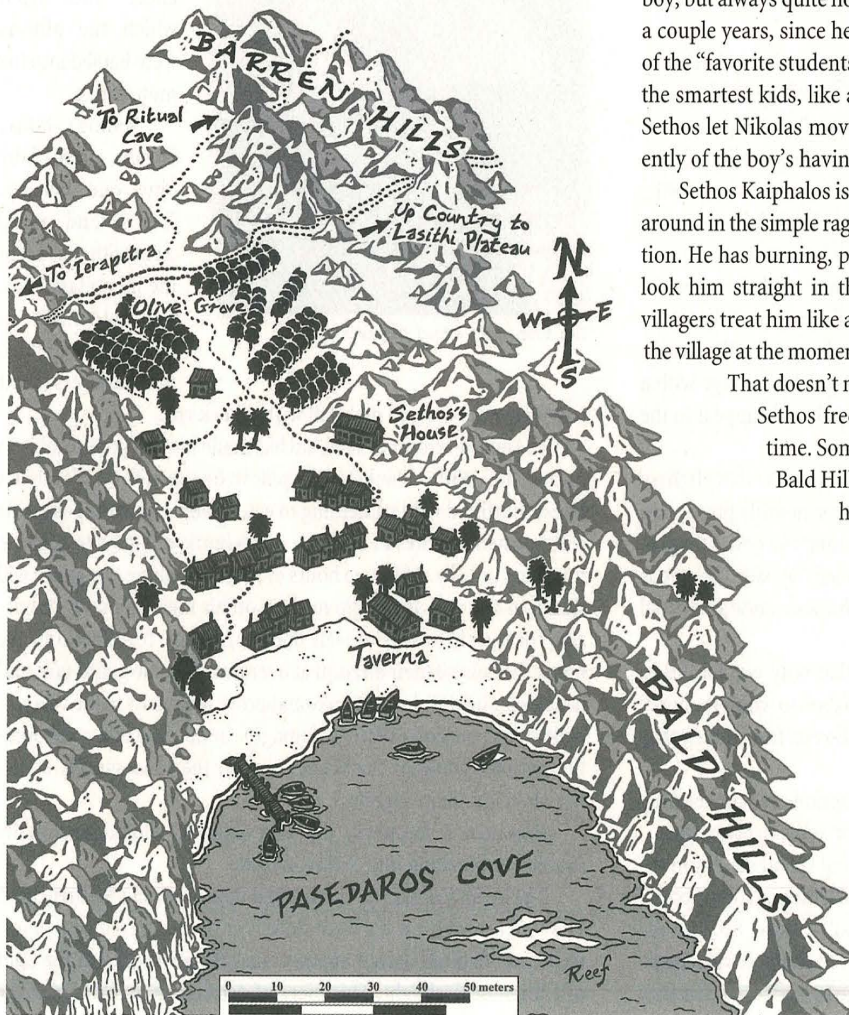
The publican doesn’t know much about Nikolas. He was a gifted boy, but always quite hot-headed, and hasn’t lived in the village for a couple years, since he found work in the north. Nikolas was one of the “favorite students” of Sethos Kaiphalos, who held classes for the smartest kids, like a teacher. Tolos always thought it odd that Sethos let Nikolas move away, after he’d always spoken so reverently of the boy’s having such a bright future.

Sethos Kaiphalos is an old man with gray-black hair, who goes around in the simple rags of a goatherd, according to Tolos’s description. He has burning, penetrating eyes, to the point that you can’t look him straight in the face without getting goosebumps. The villagers treat him like a living saint. Sethos isn’t supposed to be in the village at the moment; Tolos hasn’t seen him in a couple of days.

That doesn’t mean anything, the publican emphasizes, as Sethos frequently disappears for days or weeks at a time. Sometimes Sethos goes off to “meditate” in the Bald Hills, says the publican, pointing to a group of hills to the north. There are also supposed to be some caves up there, in which the villagers gather at certain times. But like the Bald Hills as a whole, the caves are known to be terribly haunted, and Tolos himself has never been up there.

Old Sethos’s house is easy to recognize because it’s the largest in Pasedaros. Sethos is not here, and only through deft questioning of the degenerate inhabitants can the investigators learn that he is supposed to have gone to Heraklion for a couple weeks.

Two of the strongest villagers have been instructed by Sethos to guard



his house. These two have no magic, but carry gnarled wooden staves with which they can deliver crushing blows. If there is any sign of a struggle, more villagers will approach threateningly.

Villagers – Two Guards in Front of Sethos’s House				
STR 17	CON 15	SIZ 11	DEX 12	INT 8
APP 8	EDU 5	POW 13	SAN 20	HP 13

Damage bonus: +1d4

Weapon: Dagger 40%, damage 1d4+2+db; Fist 65%, damage 1d3+db; Gnarled Shepherd’s Staff 78%, damage 1d6+db

Skills: Climb 55%, Fish 65%

The villagers carry in their blood the “Embers of the Ancestors” but weakly. Those children with particular endowments are specially educated by Sethos, and he tries to obtain a proper education for them in the cities on the island (Heraklion, Ierapetra, Rethimnon). Out of gratitude, they serve him as needed, as willing cultists. Sethos only needs the rest of the villagers because in different magical rites, their participation amplifies his mental power—the “Embers of the Ancestors” remain at least that strong in them. Some of the villagers possess the spell *Self-Immolation*.

Not everyone in Pasedaros is degenerate. Because of Sethos’s education, a handful of villagers are perfectly able to draw their own conclusions. When the characters appear, Pilos and Erui will “think for themselves.” If the investigators are too obvious in their interest in Sethos or the cult, these two will try to imprison them in some fashion, and then inform Sethos at Knossos.

If the investigators look around the village, sooner or later they notice a certain amount of activity. Those of the villagers who don’t sit in front of their huts all day, staring moronically into space, seem to be under a strain: they measure the height of the sun all too often, wash clothes, sweep out huts, and when two or more meet in the street, they whisper to each other in elated excitement. It seems as if the whole village is desperately waiting for some event.

By this point, if not sooner, Sethos’s house will have attracted the investigators’ interest, because they will observe more than once that villagers approach the house, are permitted to pass by the guards, bow reverently at the threshold, enter, and quickly emerge with a box, crate, or other cargo for a wheelbarrow, then disappear in the direction of the Bald Hills.

What the investigators can’t know at this point is that all these activities are preparations for the community’s monthly procession to the ritual cave where they pay homage to their fire god, Cthugha. The villagers are, in their way, preparing for their Sabbath. The goods that are being taken up into the hills are *objets de culte* and ritual paraphernalia.

The investigators will quickly realize that only two locales in Pasedaros are of interest: the unknown destination to which the boxes and packages are being taken and Sethos’s house, from which they come.

The investigators have two principal options for proceeding: either wait quietly and see what happens, or actively investigate.

Should they decide in favor of waiting and spend the day in the shadow of the taverna’s awning, Tolos will ask them, at some point, if they care to spend the night at Ourouloki’s House, because the day is slowly coming to an end, and he has been charged with ensuring that strangers have either left the village by sunset or that they

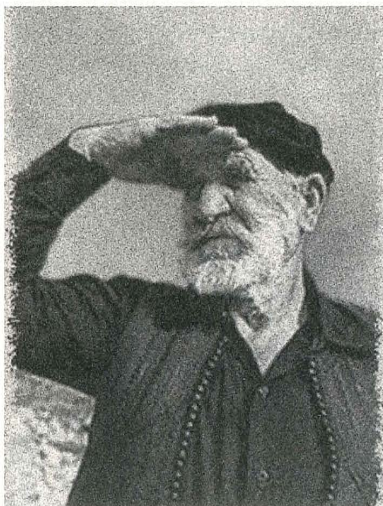
strictly remain within his establishment after dark. He presses the investigators to follow his instructions, as he knows he’ll be held responsible by the villagers for whatever the investigators might do.

If the investigators accede to these demands, they will witness the entire village gathering at twilight by the light of dozens of torches and slowly disappearing into the Bald Hills.

If the investigators continue to wait, they’ll be at a loss: they’ll never find any information about the background of Nikolas’s suicide attack.

If they leave the taverna under cover of darkness—which they can do fairly easily, as Tolos goes to sleep early—they can either try to follow the villagers or go look for something interesting in Sethos’s house.

They will only find success in the latter, however. In the darkness of night, they can in fact follow the path that leads into the Bald Hills, but without a light source, the well camouflaged entrance to the cultists’ ritual cave can’t be found. Thus, the investigators won’t be able to attend the nocturnal ritual, a circumstance not at all detrimental to their mental health.



The fishermen avoid Pasedaros

So only Sethos’s house remains to be explored, that dwelling to which the villagers showed such pious deference, and from which the objects were hauled into the mountains.

Sethos’s house is now guarded by only one villager. The second guard went with the rest of the inhabitants into the Bald Hills, a circumstance which the characters might

have observed around nightfall with a Luck roll.

The guard who stayed behind has made himself comfortable in the interim. With a blanket and a pillow, he sits in front of Sethos’s house, outfitted with something to eat, a couple of worn postcards with women in states of undress, and a bottle of liquor to help the time pass quickly. After two hours of steady drinking, the guard will slump to one side and begin to sleep off his inebriation. It’s advisable for the characters to wait that long before breaking into the house, because if their attempt at overpowering the guard fails and he cries for help, Tolos will wake and prove his loyalty to the villagers with an old musket (1d10+4 damage). In the case of a confrontation with the publican, the Keeper can take the house guards’ statistics and alter them slightly.

However it happens, the investigators should eventually succeed in breaking into Sethos’s house.

The investigators will be shocked upon entering the structure. The wall across from the front door is entirely covered by a tapestry whose flaming design appears unsettlingly lifelike in the light of a torch or flashlight. This piece of decoration is that which the

villagers always bow before so reverently. The tapestry is imbued with a magic that makes the flame motif of the tapestry look deceptively real and appear to have real flames licking at it. Deep contemplation of this optical illusion is to be dissuaded: investigators who stare at the tapestry too long can suddenly smell something burning, hear the crackling of fire, and hallucinate that they themselves are on fire. When the investigators recover from the deceptive power of the wall hanging, and press on into the house, they discover in the living room all sorts of amphorae, stone figures, and a variety of potshards which apparently came from Knossos (as an *Archæology* roll reveals). In a small adjoining room, they'll find a number of wooden boxes whose labels give every indication they've been stolen from the excavation site at Knossos. In a notebook in one of the topmost boxes, amidst all sorts of other papers, there is a pay receipt filled out in the name Nikolas Eflantinos. On the back of the receipt all sorts of notes have been scribbled in Greek. If these are deciphered, they show that not only Nikolas, but a whole series of men from Pasedaros have worked on the Knossos excavations. With a *Spot Hidden* roll, they uncover a secret niche in the floor in which lie six scrolls wrapped in wax paper. They are covered with Arabic script and are not particularly easy to decipher, as they have faded in spots. These comprise the Testament of Abû'l-Hurqah. With a successful *Other Language (Arabic)* roll and two hours of study, an investigator can convey the gist of the scrolls:

They have to do with an ancient Mesopotamian cult, which calls itself the Bringers of Fire and which has a certain power over fire. They name certain places in which the Bringers of Fire demonstrated their power: Carcosa will certainly be of interest to Mythos initiates, and Sodom will likely be very well known to all the investigators.

The scrolls describe how the wise Arab, Abû'l-Hurqah, presumably the author of these scrolls, came with his chosen followers here to the isle of Crete in the year 1075 of the Prophet (c. 1670 A.D.). They came to find the Disc of Aiglos, which keeps a monstrous being of flame in an eternal sleep and which was lost in the ruins of the blasphemous kingdom of Minos.

The rest are insane visions, partly absurd meditations on a being called *al-Khazûghâ* (with a *Cthulhu Mythos* roll, easily recognizable as "Cthugha") and depictions of the burning chaos which lurks behind Fomalhaut. These aren't relevant to the adventure *per se*, but cost the reader 0/1d3 SAN anyway.

Whatever the investigators are planning next—following the villagers (if they haven't already tried and failed), going to sleep, or even slipping away in their boat (if they have one)—they are in for an unpleasant surprise. Pilos and Erui, who lead the ritual honoring Cthugha in the caves, have spontaneously decided that they wouldn't be taking a big risk and that it surely couldn't hurt to supplement the usual animal sacrifices to Cthugha with a couple humans.

In plain language, that means that the investigators' sojourn in Pasedaros will end in a wild hunt, from which they should be able to escape, although only by the overland route across the Lasithi Plateau.

Back in the village, the investigators unexpectedly find themselves confronted with a number of villagers equal to twice their own number, who first try to invite them in the direction of the Bald Hills with lame gestures (possibly they've recruited Tolos, who would try to convince the party in his broken English to come to a "village festival" which they shouldn't miss. His previous reservations about the

Bald Hills are gone, oddly. A *Psychology* roll reveals that he is clearly lying and under tremendous stress).

The investigators will hardly fall for such a ridiculous story, which will lead to the villagers dropping their friendly masks and attempting to capture the investigators. In any case, they are both notably unskilled and insufficiently armed. If a fight breaks out, the following statistics can be used for the villagers:

Cultist Villagers – Inbred Degenerates

STR 12	CON 10	SIZ 11	DEX 12	INT 8
APP 8	EDU 7	POW 12	SAN 25	HP 11

Weapon: Club 55%, damage 1d6; Dagger 40%, damage 1d4+2; Fist 55%, damage 1d3

Skills: Climb 55%, Fish 75%, Sing 45%

Magic: Some villagers possess *Self-Immolation*,* only a few possess *Burn*.*

* New spells, see Appendix B for details.

If the investigators came by means of their own boat, it has already been destroyed, whether it was in the harbor or in a nearby cove. The investigators can lose valuable time looking for it. They can't escape by water; they have to flee overland.

If the Pasedaros chapter ends this way, the characters will lack precise knowledge of the cult's ritual caves. Nevertheless, they will possess enough clues from the search of Sethos's house to know that, by all appearances, Sethos is searching for something of great meaning to him and the Bringers of Fire at the excavations at Knossos. That knowledge is sufficient for them to continue the adventure in the chapter called "On the Lasithi Plateau."

If the characters do not spend the entire day in the *taverna*, however, but decide to look things over based on Tolos's information and the puzzling movement of objects into the Bald Hills, events in Pasedaros take a different course.

On the way into the Bald Hills, the path crosses an old country road that leads to Heraklion. The Keeper should absolutely inform the investigators of this fact, as it's a clue that the investigators can get back there by cutting across country overland.

If they walk up openly and follow a couple of bearers, the villagers will stop and make it unmistakably clear the investigators' presence is not desired. The bearers won't set out again until they're sure that they're not being followed. With successful *Hide* and *Sneak* rolls, it's nevertheless possible to follow the rather dim villagers. If they successfully shadow them, the investigators will find themselves at the entrance to the Gortys Caverns, into which the villagers have disappeared.

If the investigators strike out on their own into the Bald Hills, they will traverse the trackless landscape for some time. Except for the path which leads away from the village, there's nothing worthwhile to be discovered. Sooner or later, they'll want to follow the path. This can be done without further ado, except for the possibility of being discovered by villagers who are either taking loads up the path or are returning empty-handed. Because there aren't that many bearers on the way, there are plenty of possibilities to successfully *Hide* from view, should the investigators cross their path.

The village cult's cave is in the hills. The path from the village leads into a narrow valley and apparently ends in the middle of nowhere. The entrance to the caves is well camouflaged behind rocks

and bushes. A *Track* roll finds the barely recognizable footpath that leads to the cave. Once in front of the cave, a *Spot Hidden* roll is needed to discover the entrance itself. With a success, the cave entrance can be seen yawning in the stone hillside behind a mass of dried bushes.

Whether the investigators follow the villagers or find the cave themselves, it occurs to the villagers after some length of time that the investigators are missing, which alarms Pilos and Erui. Not wishing that the secret of the cult be exposed, they will dispatch a gang of men to look for the nosy investigators and take them prisoner.

The Gortys Caverns

The Gortys Caverns are an extensive complex of large grottos which aren't far from the ruins of the ancient city of Gortys. Gortys was a city of the Dorians which was laid waste by an earthquake c. 900 B.C. In the area around these ruins are plenty of natural caves, in one of which the founder of the Cretan Bringers of Fire, the legendary Abû'l-Hurqah, left his legacy. The Gortys Caverns are found in a small range of foothills that are known in the village of Pasedaros as the Bald Hills.

If the characters go in the cave, it's recommended that the Keeper turn down the lights and put on some appropriately spooky music, as the investigators are about to get their first indication of cthulhoid machinations in this adventure.

After a fairly wide passageway about 200 yards long, bedecked with stalactites and stalagmites, the investigators finally reach the great ritual cave, a grotto of impressive dimensions. It measures about 200 yards in diameter, the dome-shaped roof rising to a height of over 150 feet. In the southern end of the roof, a circular hole can be made out, which allows the afternoon sun in each day. The hole itself is on the outer wall of the face of a massif and can be reached with a successful *Climb* roll.

A further unusual feature is the bottomless shaft that's roughly in the middle of the cave. It is about seven feet across and is surrounded by flat stones with peculiar glyphs scratched in them. Tremendous heat pours up out of the shaft. With a *Cthulhu Mythos* roll, the glyphs are recognizable as symbols relating to Cthugha, a Great Old One whose domain is fire itself, and whose flames burn eternally in the shadow of Fomalhaut. This realization costs 0/1 SAN.

Investigators who look into the shaft have to make a roll against their POWx1. If it succeeds, they are overcome with a bad feeling. If it fails, they lose one point of SAN. If the roll exceeds POWx5, the investigator feels an irresistible urge to fling himself into the shaft—and one can only hope that helpful comrades are in the vicinity, notice this, and stop him (they need a successful DEXx5 roll within the ensuing round or else it's too late).

Keeper's information: The shaft is a direct connection to the lightless demesnes of Cthugha. Falling into the shaft is more than lethal, the victim is simply extinguished, consumed by the dark flame.

On the far side of the huge cave is a simple altar block. The blood gutters on it point to sacrifice. Remains of several campfires can be found around the altar and, further away, around the bottomless shaft.

Behind the altar is a small adjoining cave in which stand two large wooden crates. In them, packed in wood shavings, are all sorts of potsherds, small amphorae, and sections of murals. The mural sections also bear the blasphemous glyphs found on the lip of the shaft. With an *Archaeology* roll, the objects can be identified as belonging to the Minoan culture, and moreover, to have been recently excavated. In fact, there are also paper labels on the boxes that confirm they came from the Knossos excavations, near Heraklion.

Because the investigators will likely not have time to investigate Sethos's house as well, the Keeper can also make all the information available at the residence present in the cave as well. For example, the Testament of Abû'l-Hurqah can be kept in a small box on the altar, and Nikolas's pay stub can be lying on the crates in the adjacent cave.

On the ceiling of the cave, one can make out all sorts of engraved glyphs. The entire dome is dotted with them. An *Idea* roll lets one suppose that these symbols might be arranged like stars in the sky, but only an *Astronomy* roll can confirm the supposition. If the *Astronomy* roll succeeds, the investigator can make sense of many of the glyphs.

In general, the investigators will get the impression that something is being prepared in the cave. The objects that were brought from the village have only been partially unpacked, and are scattered all over the cave. Open boxes are lying around; incense burners and braziers made of precious metals await the hands that will place them in their correct positions. On the floor near the cave walls lie great rolls of red cloth, which still need to be secured to the hooks driven into the walls in order to appropriately decorate the cavern. Near the entrance to the adjoining cave two bound goats are bleating—future burnt offerings for Cthugha.

When the investigators have checked out the cavern long enough and found the important clues, some villagers come into the cave. This can occasion the first combat of the adventure; one of the villagers might even use the spell *Burn*. The investigators should, however, make it out relatively easily, although they won't be able



Well hidden: The entrance to the ritual cave

to escape by sea. Their boat will have been burned in the meantime, the coastal path to Ierapetra will be well guarded by cultists, and so the only remaining route will be the overland road. This route leads over the Lasithi Plateau.

The possibility remains, of course, that the investigators will be captured by the villagers. If this happens, they might overhear some conversations (with *Other Language (Greek)*) mentioning that Sethos Kaiphalos is already staying at Knossos, looking for their holy relic, the “Disc of Aiglos.”

If the investigators are captured, the Keeper should make their escape as easy as possible; a guard might nod off. If the investigators flee overland, they soon lose their pursuers.

If the investigators nevertheless somehow make it back to Heraklion by sea, then the chapters with the Lasithi Plateau and the mountain monastery can be omitted. The investigators have fewer clues in this case, but they should ultimately not decide the game.

However the chapter in Pasedaros runs its course, by its end the following should be true:

The investigators know that Nikolas worked at Knossos and that some other men from his village still do.

Based on the written materials they’ve taken with them, they can conclude that the Bringers of Fire cult is apparently still active and looking for an artifact in Knossos that keeps a monster under control.

The investigators will be chased by the inhabitants of Pasedaros. The only way back to Heraklion leads over the Lasithi Plateau.



Harsh interior: the Lasithi Plateau

speak only Greek, and if the investigators don’t speak the language, they’ll definitely have problems making themselves understood.

It’s assumed that the characters will be relatively exhausted after their (perhaps forced) departure from Pasedaros, and they may have injuries needing attention. If the investigators can make their problem clear to the Lasithi farmers, they will offer help in the form of

herbs and household remedies. These treatments will regenerate 1d3 HP from wounds due to bruises or sprains.

If asked about the route to Heraklion, the Lasithi folk point in a roughly northwesterly direction. There’s a monastery on a mountain there, and the farmers know that the scholarly monks there can most likely be of help to the odd strangers. The Keeper should subtly ensure that the investigators head to the abbey anyway, since the next chapter takes place there. The Monastery of St. Titus is also visible to the naked eye. Presumably the investigators will rather take refuge there than in the huts of the poor shepherds.

If the investigators don’t notice the monastery on their own, then in the course of their inquiries they should repeatedly hear that the monks there preside over a great deal of ancient wisdom and that they are said to have a good library with many ancient volumes. Wherever they continue their investigation, the monastery is always recommended to them as a good starting point.

On the Lasithi Plateau

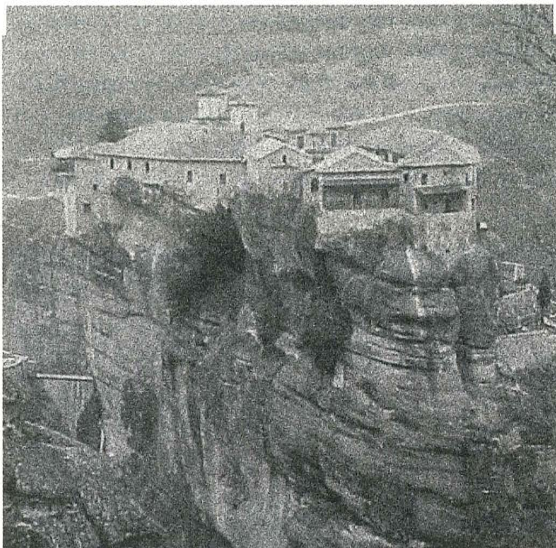
The Lasithi Plateau is a wide open area in the interior of Crete. It’s a huge, 23–square–mile circular plateau, flat as a pancake, surrounded by the steep mountains of the Dikti range. It is only reachable by two narrow mountain paths and is therefore accordingly remote. A mild wind sweeps constantly across the plateau, and as a result about ten thousand windmills have been built to catch it and then pump water up out of the subterranean limestone caverns where it collects during rainstorms. This system ensures that fields and pastures remain watered.

The land itself is consequently very fertile. The farmers grow many vegetables, as well as wheat, potatoes, and apples. The locals

The Mountain Monastery

The mountain monastery of St. Titus lies on the eastern edge of the Lasithi Plateau. It is built into a steep slope of the Dikti range, and like monasteries on the Greek mainland, it’s only reachable by a primitive rope elevator.

What the investigators don’t know is that two of the cultists from Pasedaros, Erui and Pilos, have found their trail and followed them onto the plateau. Erui and Pilos will follow them into the monastery and arrive just as the investigators are uncovering important clues in the monks’ library. In a dramatic battle in the monastery, the

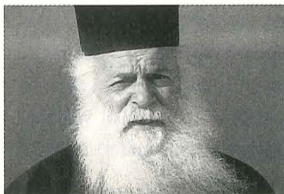


Only for those without vertigo: Monasteries like eagles aeries

library will go up in flames and plunge the investigators headlong into flight again.

The monastery is located about 250 feet up the side of a steep cliff. If the investigators shout up the cliff (the abbot speaks a few bits of German and English), the shaky elevator platform will be lowered. With a *Mechanical Repair* roll, the platform can be raised correctly by means of handgrips. It takes three minutes to reach the top. If the roll fails or if the investigators ignore the somewhat defective mechanism, the platform will frequently swing worryingly, and threaten to smash against the cliff wall. Nevertheless, they will make it up safely.

Five monks live in the monastery. The abbot, His Excellency Metropolitan Photios Petroklotos, is their leader. He listens patiently to the investigators' story while he gives them something to eat, and later perhaps tends to wounds (here as well, damage from contusions is lessened by 1d3 HP). The other monks are silent, eyeing the investigators dispassionately; they're not relevant to the adventure.



The old monks of the mountain

The abbot will nod knowingly at some key phrase in connection with fire and declare that he once saw something like that in the ancient writings in the monastery's library (simply a large room with countless scrolls and old books, decorated by icons and crosses on the walls). There, investigators who can read Greek may find *Handout 1* (in Appendix A) in 1d4 hours with a *Library Use* roll.

Just as the investigators have finished reading the excerpt, Pilos and Erui appear in the doorway of the library. They climbed up the ropes of the elevator into the monastery and intend to finish off the escaped investigators in order to protect the secret of the Labyrinth. Erui is armed with a knife, and Pilos carries an old scimitar. They demand the investigators surrender. The cultists want to tie them up and pitch them off the elevator platform to their deaths.

Of course the investigators will want to defend themselves. A dramatic mêlée ensues, during which the library and part of the

monastery should go up in flames. Pilos has the gift of *Self-Immolation*, although not to the degree that Nikolas had. Anyone who touches him suffers 1 HP damage from the heat. If Pilos wraps his arms around an investigator—an action that the fanatical Pilos will take without hesitation when he feels mortally threatened—the investigator will suffer 1d6 points of damage. Given this, the library will be in flames in no time (the handout excerpt will only escape the flames if it's specifically protected). Erui fights more conventionally. He's a good knife fighter and will attempt to drive the characters off the edge of the elevator hole or to get in a good stab.



The cultists can't dawdle long

In the end, only a precipitous flight from the monastery remains for the investigators, either by means of the elevator, which is already on fire, or down the cliff wall, which naturally requires a *Climb* roll. In case of total disaster, if, say, the players are too slow and become surrounded by flames, a merciful Keeper can have a monk appear who shouts "*Ela etho!*" to them. (Even if the investigators speak no Greek, it should be obvious what he means: "Over here!") After a sprint through the wall of fire (1d6 HP burn damage), the investigators reach the safety of the hidden caves behind the monastery.

The Cultists' Statistics

Erui – Carpenter with Dark Beliefs

STR 14	CON 14	SIZ 14	DEX 13	INT 10
APP 8	EDU 11	POW 11	SAN 0	HP 14

Damage bonus: +1d4

Weapon: Fist 65%, damage 1d3+db; Kick 50%, damage 1d6+db; Knife 72%, damage 1d4+2+db

Skills: Climb 70%, Jump 55%, Sneak 58%

Description: Erui is quite large and powerful, and has curly black hair. He's irritable and quick with a knife. He grew up in Pasedaros and is the town's carpenter. He is devoted to Sethos in principle but not suicidally so.

Pilos – Fanatic Bringer of Fire

STR 12	CON 11	SIZ 11	DEX 14	INT 12
APP 10	EDU 9	POW 15	SAN 0	HP 11

Damage bonus: n/a

Weapon: Fist 50%, damage 1d3; Scimitar 50%, damage 1d8+1; Wrestle 50%, damage special

Skills: Climb 70%; Jump 55%; Sneak 58%

Spells: *Self-Immolation*

Description: Pilos is small and unprepossessing, but he's a fanatical adherent of Sethos. He will sacrifice himself without hesitation, if it serves the fiery cause of his master.

Back in Heraklion

When the characters seek out Grigorios Spazegottos and report their experiences, the old Cretan is sure of one thing: this devilish Sethos Kaiphalos is the root of all the evils—he blinded Nikolas and drove him into the madness that culminated in the fatal wedding celebration. Grigorios, who is only slightly better, implores the investigators to go to Knossos. He’s convinced that Sethos is there, seeking whatever it is in the ruins he believes will give him power. He wants the investigators to capture Sethos and bring him to justice.

The investigators can also visit the library of Heraklion to read up on the legend of Theseus. A summary is provided as *Handout 2* (in Appendix A).

Knossos

And so the investigators finally reach Knossos, where Sir Arthur Evans has excavated a Minoan royal palace and where the finale takes place. Nikolas worked there as a truck driver, and there they will encounter Ariana again. Moreover, they get to visit an archaeological find that has been trumpeted by the world press for years. Knossos lies about six miles south of Heraklion and can be reached by a rickety bus.

The excavation site is a vast area. Sir Arthur Evans has been digging here for more than twenty years. The royal palace has not



A field of ruins: The excavation of Knossos

only been excavated, but Sir Arthur has had certain portions of the palace rebuilt. The whole throne room has been reconstructed, with cement pillars in place of the original wood, but he’s matched the original color red that was used in Knossos almost exactly. In addition, there are a vast number of buildings of the royal court, the city, and its defensive fortifications that have been liberated from the rubble of millennia. They offer the visitor a majestic view of the

ancient complex: rambling, lordly, and imposingly constructed, but also riven with alleyways, hidden, and still not fully wrested from the earth.

Sir Arthur, currently 68 years old, still directs the excavations, although he hasn’t lived year round on Crete for some time. When the investigators visit Knossos, he receives them in courtly British fashion. He is still somewhat under the weather, but he’ll have them brought into his large tent to take afternoon tea. Sir Arthur will introduce the other leaders of the excavation: Professor Hester Pickwick, Professor Nathaniel Anderson, Professor Heinrich Dunkelmann from Berlin, and Ariana Mesotopolos, head of the assistants, whom the investigators met at the wedding. Sir Arthur and the other archaeologists can give the investigators a lot of information about Minoan culture and archaeology in general, but they have not the slightest bit of Cthulhu Mythos knowledge.

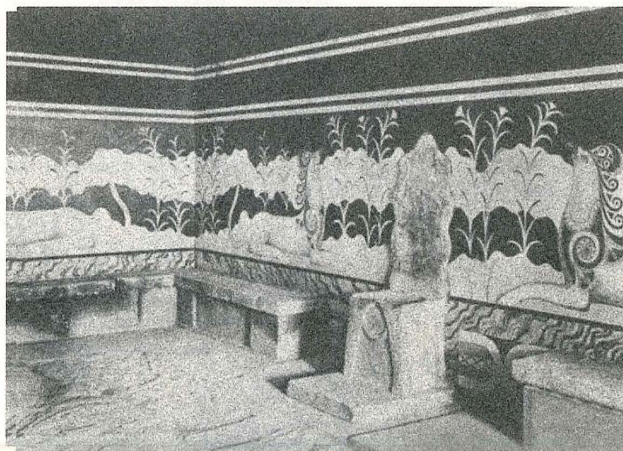


Archaeology as passion: Sir Arthur Evans

Some strange frescos have been discovered in the Hall of Double Axes in the royal palace. They apparently show that the Minoan people became involved in a revolt of the priestly caste, during which great forces of nature seem to have been let loose. Erupting mountains and whole islands afire are clearly depicted. A *Geology* or *History* roll lets an investigator guess that the catastrophe shown is the eruption of Santorini. The archaeologists also recommend the Archaeological Museum in Heraklion to the investigators.

Recently, an outlying complex has been discovered which may contain an entrance to the Labyrinth of legend. In Sir Arthur’s opinion, the Labyrinth is simply an appellation for the royal palace itself, with its many winding halls and out of the way chambers. But this newly excavated complex seems to have been connected to the royal palace with underground tunnels, so it’s very possible that it is an underground labyrinth like the one depicted in the legend of Theseus. In any case, that area is acutely at risk of collapse, so Sir Arthur has barred the entrance until further notice.

Ariana can report that Nikolas was a very quiet worker when he was a truck driver on the site. He did have a few “friends” or “relatives” on the site, who apparently came from the same area as Nikolas. They would occasionally put their heads together and converse among themselves in an archaic sounding dialect, and they seemed



King Minos throne

to be very interested in the newly discovered area that might be the entrance to the Labyrinth. There are five of them, but Ariana doesn't know their names. After she went to ask them about the calamity at the wedding, she found that those five workers didn't show up for work that Monday, and they haven't shown up since. Inquiries among the other workers will produce their names (Arakles, Kalik, Pilos, Manos, and Menthos) and confirmation that they indeed came from a southern fishing village called Pasedaros.

Regarding Sethos, Ariana can report that, in fact, an old shepherd was interested in the excavations recently. He was observed talking to the five workers from Pasedaros, but he disappeared again into the nearby hills before the foremen could throw him off the site. He hasn't been seen in three days, in any case.

A viewing of the excavated city is available at any time for guests on the site. With a Luck roll, an investigator exploring the site comes across the out of the way priests' dwellings. With a *Spot Hidden*, the investigator finds some strange runes that are clearly not Minoan (*Archaeology* roll). If a *Cthulhu Mythos* roll succeeds, these signs can be ascribed to the Mythos. More specifically, it becomes clear that it is a variant of the legendary Seal of Eibon, which is supposed to protect places from Nyarlathotep and his minions (lose 0/1 SAN for this realization). The signs are confirmation, moreover, that some elements of the Cthulhu Mythos were known even in the Minoan culture, at least among priests.

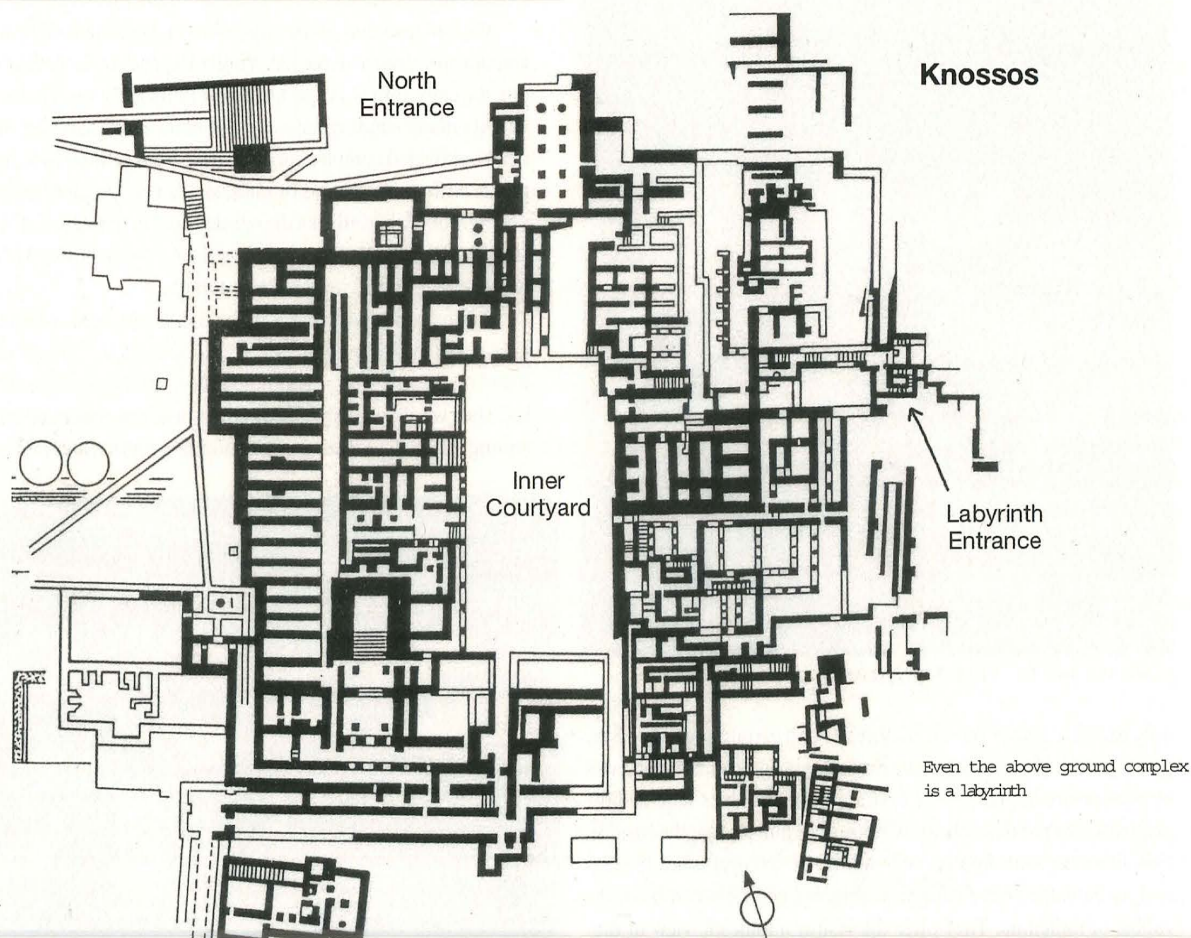
As mentioned, the complex itself is gigantic. The excavations stretch out over a half mile, and the central section is naturally the most impressive part. Most worth seeing are the original royal throne

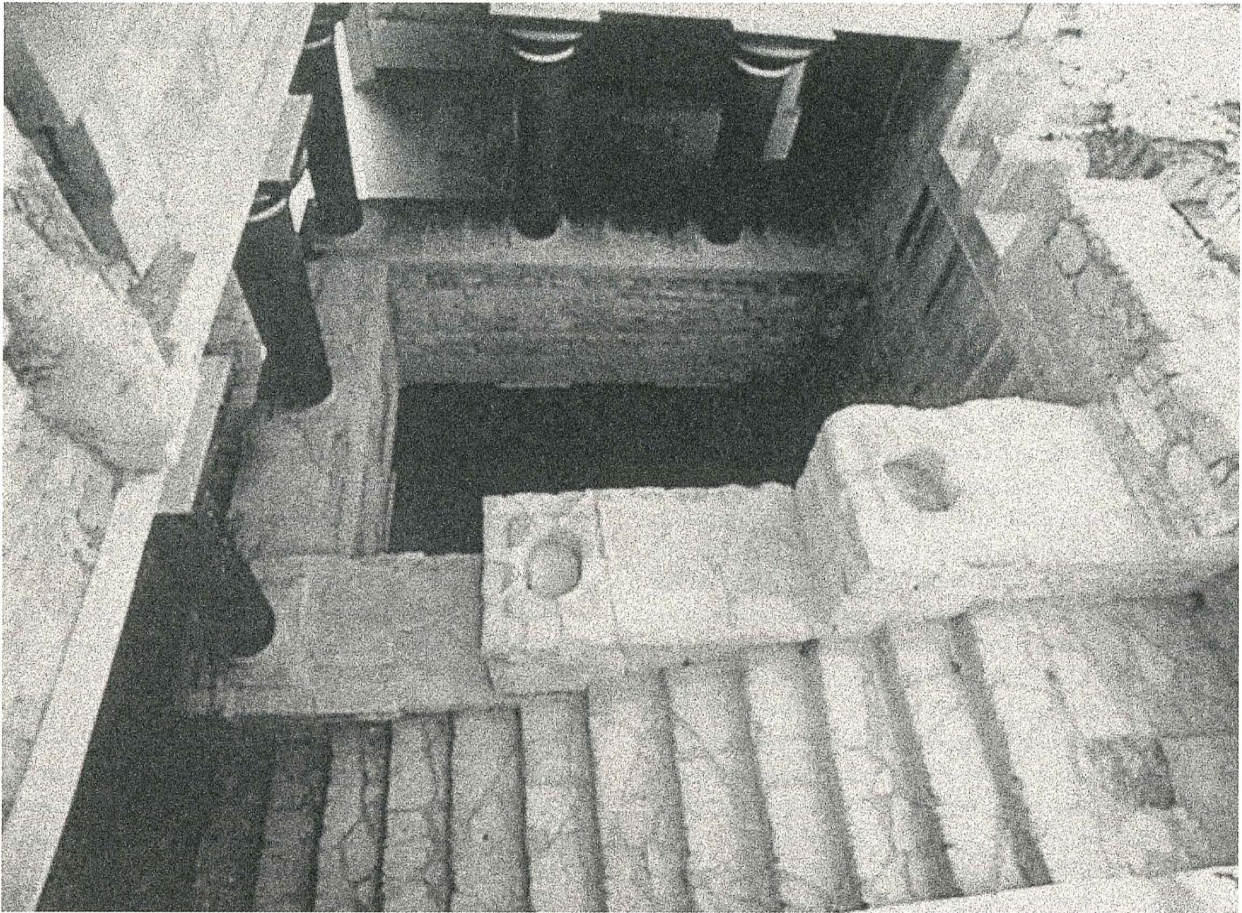
of King Minos, the enormous, larger than man-sized *pithoi* (storage jars, similar to amphorae) in the pantry area, the great staircase, the Hall of Colonnades, and the Hall of Double Axes, with many axes carved into the wall. Archaeologists say that the double axe (a double-bladed axe) was a royal or ritual weapon of the Minoans. Another theory claims that the origin of the concept of a "labyrinth" is on view here—the Greek word for double axe is "labrys."

Labyrinth of the Minotaur

The investigators will surely set their sights on the newly discovered entrance to the Labyrinth. While Sir Arthur and the other archaeologists have forbidden entry to this area, Ariana is not averse to investigating the Labyrinth. (The investigators would have to have very, very good reasons to persuade Sir Arthur, and outré stories of the doings of inbred fire cultists will cut little ice with the very pragmatic archaeologist.) Ariana, however, will surreptitiously obtain whatever equipment the investigators will need for a descent into the underground passages, even getting them a container of luminous paint with which to mark their path. Equipped in such a fashion with a modern "Ariadne's thread," they can make their way through the innards of the earth.

Ariana will not accompany the group. Although she'd like to, her absence would surely be noticed by the professors. So all that remains for her is to wish the venturesome investigators well. Only if the investigators remain really tenacious and lure Ariana with the





Portal of Honors: The Entry to the Labyrinth

promise of discovering new passages, solving mystical puzzles of antiquity, etc., is it possible that she will go down with them. On dramaturgical grounds, it's recommended to kill Ariana off in the first collapse. First, to emphasize the dangerousness of this final act, and second, to subject the investigators to pangs of conscience. If Ariana dies after they've talked her into coming, each investigator loses 0/1d2 SAN.

What the investigators don't know is that the five workers from Pasedaros went down into the Labyrinth several days ago. They met up with Sethos and have been looking ever since for the Disc of Aiglos, their key to long dreamt of power. A second exit has in fact been cleared. It opens into Arigothara Gorge, but has not yet been discovered.

The cultists have taken care that no interlopers come through the Labyrinth's entrance. They have built a sophisticated trap there which will collapse the entire entry complex.

The cultists have already discovered the hall in which the summoning of Cthugha failed millennia ago, and in which the Disc remains, melted into stone, keeping the Minotaur asleep.

The Final Events

The scenes in the Labyrinth are the high point of the story. The adventure assumes the investigators enter, have their way out blocked by the cultists' trap, and are forced to seek another exit. After two days of claustrophobic searching and exploring the alien, disturbing

Labyrinth, the investigators come upon the former summoning hall, where Sethos and his cultists are already hard at work trying to free the Disc from the floor. In the ensuing confrontation, the investigators can take the upper hand, though they can't prevent the Disc from finally being pried loose—even if they can guess the explosive consequences that will ensue. After their victory over the cultists, it quite quickly becomes clear that a far greater danger threatens them—the Minotaur, which, without the power of the Disc, is no longer held in a twilight limbo. It wakes and hunts the group. With a last, murderous flight from the Labyrinth, the adventure ends.

Just Gloomy Passages

When the investigators enter the subterranean Labyrinth, some 200 miles of twisting subterranean passages, the Keeper should provide a nightmarish, claustrophobic atmosphere: lights almost all the way out, candles, oscillating monotonous music, a muted speaking voice.

The Keeper should not pull out all the stops yet, though. About half a mile past the entrance (earlier the passage led over a ramp leading down, then it slopes slowly to the south), the cultists' trap is set off.

If the frontmost investigator succeeds with a *Spot Hidden*, he notices that the floor panel on which he's standing is slightly tilted and is sliding a block out of the wall. If he shouts a warning, everyone can roll DEXx3 or suffer 1d6+1d4 HP of damage from falling blocks of stone. Whoever succeeds in the roll still suffers 1d6 HP

of damage from falling rubble. One can escape this damage only with a successful *Jump* roll. If Ariana was persuaded to come into the Labyrinth, this trap offers a good opportunity to kill her off.

The entire complex of passages behind the investigators has collapsed. No one can get through. The investigators should conclude that they need to find another exit.

Spot Hidden reveals a piece of hemp rope—a component of the cultists' trap. With an *Idea* roll, an investigator will deduce from the fact that the rope is relatively new that people must have been here very recently. Because the Knossos entrance was guarded and forbidden, it's safe to assume that there must be more ways in and out of the Labyrinth.

This first part of the Labyrinth is laid out traditionally: passages nested within each other, dead ends, and intersections that all look alike. With a little spatial imagination and a good sense of direction, the investigators can find their way reasonably quickly (with *Navigate* rolls). Also, this top level is not all that large, and even investigators who are completely disoriented will take at most four hours to come to the center of this little labyrinth—an immense staircase that leads down into darkness.

On the first step of this spiral staircase, a symbol shimmers brightly in the light of the torches or lamps. Every investigator with more than 10% *Cthulhu Mythos* will recognize it as an Elder Sign. With a little thought, it will likely become clear to the investigators that the sign was more likely inscribed here to keep certain things from *leaving* the Labyrinth rather than to keep them out.

By the way: if the investigators have realized that the collapse in the entry area was no accident, and consequently know that another group must be ahead of them in the Labyrinth, they may look for markings on the walls in order to spare themselves the long hours of wandering around lost by simply following the earlier group. The cultists, however, have had no need of such indicators. Sethos, who can feel the Disc through a magical sense, has led them through the Labyrinth with the eerie sureness of a sleepwalker. Nevertheless, here on the top level, the cultists have left their footprints in the dust of centuries. As long as the investigators don't tramp around like a herd of cattle, they can easily follow the footprints (without even requiring a *Track* roll).

When they descend the great staircase, which gapes like a stone gullet out of the rock, the investigators enter the real Labyrinth. Here begins the nightmare made stone that Aiglos once had carved into the bedrock to facilitate the summoning of the Great Old One Cthugha.

Neither normal laws of physics nor those of earthly architecture apply here. The investigators will first notice this when they have followed the colossal stairs down for a long time. Hour after hour, it seems to stretch endlessly before them. Their footfalls echo sharply on each stone step, and what little light the investigators carry with them throws eerie shadows on the walls. The cultists' footprints have disappeared, because, oddly, there is no more dust on the stairs. This oddity doesn't particularly matter; there's no other way to go but down. After a long time, all conversation ceases, everyone is lost in his own thoughts, following the one in front of him, when suddenly one of the characters notices that for some time, they have been going *up* without anyone noticing a change in direction. If the investigators turn around, baffled, they each see stairs that lead down from above to below—by every law of logic, they must therefore be *rising*

downwards. The recognition that they're traveling up an apparently descending staircase costs 0/1d3 SAN.

But it gets worse. At some point, the stairs end then open up into a system of tunnels. And here the mental health of the investigators is given a severe test. "Up" and "down" are categories that dissolve here. "Forward" and "backward" are locked in eternal combat, mix together indivisibly, and space itself becomes a variable that follows no known physical laws. Marking a path under such conditions becomes patently pointless.

So it can happen that the first investigator in line turns a corner, only to then immediately appear behind the last one in line! Or that the investigators will be walking down a rift in the earth which upon closer inspection appears to be a man-made passageway, while the tunnel that they followed the whole time turns out to be the real fissure in the stone coming down to the meet the passageway!

The very sight of the passageways may give even the most hardened investigators headaches at the very least, as the walls shrink in the distance, but the floor and ceiling do not.

Moreover, it's possible that, without visible cause, part of the group will be walking along the ceiling of the passageway and suddenly come upon the other investigators *from the front*. Because the passageway gives no indication who's really upside down, the investigators must decide who will follow whom. Those who change their position feel as if their insides want to burst. Of course, this situation works equally well with characters walking along a wall, so that the investigators don't meet facing each other at a 180° angle, but rather at a right angle.

Investigators' stomachs will surely turn as they view one of their comrades standing on the other side of an enormous chasm in the rock and crossing it with an impossible, single step, as from the other character's point of view, the abyss was a tiny, meaningless crack in the floor. The investigators will be slowly disturbed if the size of the affected character remains small the whole time, in the shrunken scale of (in this case, correct) perspective foreshortening. And while it's fairly straightforward for mathematicians to calculate five-dimensional bodies, seeing them is something else altogether.

It must be noted that the disturbing characteristics of the Labyrinth can't be used consciously. If a character attempts to stroll along the wall of his own free will, his undertaking will come to grief, because the investigators are still part of a world in which certain laws apply. The Labyrinth creates its own reality and forces it upon the investigators; they can't do the same.

It would be pointless to assess a Sanity cost for each of these "impossible occurrences." It's much more a case of the Keeper's sense of how much his or her group can take. If the Sanity of the group has already sunk to a dangerously low level, it suffices for the Keeper to simply continue describing the bizarre irregularities and impose a single SAN roll for the totality of the experiences in the Labyrinth. As always, enjoyable gameplay should trump exact enforcement of rules. Otherwise, SAN losses for individual events can be imposed at the discretion of the Keeper, ranging from 0/1 to 1/1d3 SAN.

Along with the soul shredding experiences of the alien geometry of the Labyrinth, still other dangers lie in wait for the investigators. When they can't be certain which way is up and which is down, the investigators will be all too aware that they are penetrating

In order to more easily give a sense of the confusing characteristics of the Labyrinth, it can help for the Keeper to use impossible formulations. Some ideal combinations of words would be: “coming up from above,” “going down from below,” “descending around the corner,” “falling around the corner,” “falling to the ceiling,” “clambering up to below,” “falling straight ahead,” or even the proverbial “straight curve.”

The accompanying visual representation of part of the Labyrinth (Appendix C) should not be taken to represent the Labyrinth as it actually is. It is an agglomeration of tunnels, passages, and shafts that follow a non-Euclidean geometry which can't be captured on paper—for which we should be thankful. The drawing merely reproduces how an ancient Greek artist attempted to represent the unfathomable. It should also assist the Keeper in graphically appreciating the impossibilities of the Labyrinth, in order to better express them to the players. It should be unnecessary to note that the drawing can neither function as an aid to navigation nor is it intended as a guide. Nor should it be provided to the players as a handout, as it will “demystify” the singularity of the Labyrinth. The goal of the Labyrinth chapter is not merely to get the investigators completely disoriented, but also to lead them into a strange world in which there can be no certainty about their next step. If anyone needs more inspiration, it can be found in the drawings of Maurits Cornelis Escher on whose work this “map” leans heavily.

the deepest of deeps, and that millions of tons of stone must be above their heads. A character with claustrophobia will sooner or later have problems. And as they journey into the center of the earth (and, more significantly, towards the Minotaur), another phenomenon presents itself—heat. It constantly grows warmer and warmer, but certain passageways have round holes out of which blast burning hot air. Every unfortunate character stepping into one of these streams of air has his flesh burnt away down to the bones (1d6 HP per round).

The passages of the Labyrinth constantly change their complexion and scale. Sometimes they're tiny tubes through which one must crawl, sometimes giant tunnels whose dimensions are lost in the darkness. Sometimes they're angular and clad with bricks, sometimes they're rounded and melted through the stone in some strange fashion. Other times, there are furrows on the walls, floor, and ceiling, which, with sufficient audacity, one can identify as the marks of monstrous teeth.

Thumps in the Dark

At some point, for the first time in hours (days? weeks?), sounds other than the eerie echoes of their own footsteps and screams reach the the investigators' ears. Long, protracted sounds groan through the passages, change over into a staccato of dull thuds, then fade away and swell anew. Placing or even identifying these sounds is impossible, as you'd expect in a place where you even can't be sure of up and down! But the longer the investigators move through the Labyrinth, the louder these thumping noises become.

The unsettling sounds are in reality nothing more than the blows of the cultists' hammers, distorted through the bizarre architecture of the Labyrinth. They have finally discovered the hall in which, aeons ago, the summoning of Cthugha failed, and where the Disc still rests, melted into rock, keeping the Minotaur asleep. And slowly, but unstopably, that very Disc is being hacked out of the stone.

Still, even these weird noises should not deter the investigators.

At some point (specifically, when the horrors of the labyrinth threaten to wear off), the investigators reach an enormous hall or cavern, in the stone of whose walls streams of lava pulse and spread dim, orange light. The walls are arched and meet in a massive dome more than a thousand feet in height. This was the place meant to be Cthugha's home on earth.

The heat here is so intense that ripples distort the air, creating a bewildering optical effect that combines with the pulsing light of the lava flows. In any case, the visual field is anything but empty. Skeins of once molten and now resolidified stone traverse the massive cavern everywhere at unwholesome angles—mute witnesses to the wrath of the Minotaur, whose heat melted the rock. In scattered spots on the walls, symbols and runes are still recognizable. They resemble those in the Gortys Caverns, but in many places the once liquid rock has flowed over the signs and made them unrecognizable.



The Disk of Aiglos

The thumping noises are finally recognized for what they are: hammers on stone. Their source must be somewhere in the cavern gaping before the investigators.

If the investigators venture on, they can make out the position of the hammering with a *Listen* roll and approach. They must pay very close attention to the flows of lava which snake across the floor. Stepping in one causes 1d6 HP of burn damage.

Finally, the investigators can see, hidden behind the dripped-stone columns, what the ominous hammering betokens. An old man with a striking gray beard stands regarding a group of men who have just stopped hammering and are now raising a glittering circular disc out of the floor.

Of course, these are Sethos and his cultists, who have just managed to hack out of the stone the Disc that Aiglos sunk here to subdue the Minotaur. And now the spell is broken.

But there's no evidence yet this has happened, and fate will run its course one way or the other. The investigators will likely attack the cultists, and this opportunity is more than propitious. The cultists will only be distracted from their reverent contemplation of the Disc if the investigators botch a *Sneak* roll. Otherwise the investigators have two free rounds in which to do something before the six cultists react. Presumably, the majority of the cultists could be quickly overpowered.

The Keeper should nevertheless play out an exciting battle with the cultists and create the impression that this is the climactic scene.

Sethos will sell his life dearly—freely using magic in order to escape. If defeat appears inevitable, however, he will jump on an investigator, wrap his arms around him, and cast *Self-Immolation*.

Five Cultists – Sethos's Fiery Assistants

STR 12	CON 12	SIZ 11	DEX 13	INT 12
APP 10	EDU 10	POW 14	SAN 0	HP 12

Weapon: Fist 55%, damage 1d3; Wrestle 50%, damage special
Skills: Climb 70%, Jump 55%, Sneak 58%
Spells: *Self-Immolation*

Sethos Kaiphalos – Cultist & High Priest of the Bringers of Fire

STR 10	CON 9	SIZ 11	DEX 12	INT 14
APP 13	EDU 12	POW 19	SAN 0	HP 10

Weapon: Ritual Dagger 50%, damage 1d4+2
Skills: Climb 70%, Cthulhu Mythos 33%, Jump 55%, Sneak 58%
Spells: *Boiling Blood*, * *Burn*, *Contact Cthugha*, *Self-Immolation*, *Voorish Sign*

* New spell, see Appendix B.

Description: Sethos is an old man, a charismatic, natural leader of the "old village sage" type. He carries the bloodlines of the Bringers of Fire, which gives him some powerful magic. He has learned many of the rituals of the ancient Bringers of Fire, but he knows that without the knowledge inscribed on the Disc of Aiglos, his mastery over fire must remain incomplete. In his insane desire for these secrets, he completely underestimates the danger the Minotaur poses. He knows that only the Disc currently keeps the Minotaur under control, but in order to gain the lore it contains, he's ready to remove the Disc from its current location without a second thought. Not only does he believe he can control the Minotaur with it, but he's planning to use it as

a weapon against his enemies, real and imagined, and to make all Crete atone for the long ago destruction of the cult. That even Aiglos, who already possessed the knowledge on the Disc, and who had a much greater following with him, didn't succeed in binding the Minotaur is of no concern at all to Sethos. Driven by his insane intoxication with forbidden knowledge, and his lust for power, he is long past the boundaries of reason.

The Minotaur Awakes

The cultists have been defeated, the dead of the wedding celebration have been avenged, but this not time for the investigators to catch their breath. From their limited understanding of the history of Bringers of Fire and the legend of the Minotaur, they should understand that the Disc served as a seal that was better left intact.

For the time the last cultist breathed his last (or slightly before, if you want to let the Minotaur slay some cultists dramatically), a tremor runs through the cavern followed by an unearthly snorting and growling, costing everyone present 0/1 SAN.

The investigators should instinctively grasp the idea they need to get the heck out of there and take to their heels. In case it doesn't occur to the players under the pressure of the moment, an Idea roll will prompt someone to take the Disc with them. It's only a little more than a foot across and will be no great hindrance while running. (And what kind of *Call of Cthulhu* character would leave such an artifact behind?)

The investigators run for their lives, chased by a horror that, somewhere outside their field of vision, has begun to hunt them. Because the cavern possesses multiple entrances and one is more or less as good as another, the investigators will have to take their chances and plunge anew into the monstrous passageways of the Labyrinth.

Given the nature of the Labyrinth, it's impossible for the investigators to have any idea if they're even going forward—but their only hope is to run and run.

The Keeper should play out the bizarre geometry of the passages during their flight as well, and give the players the feeling their flight is ultimately hopeless, since they have no idea where they're going and must constantly fear being directed by some fluke of fate right into the arms of the horror they flee.

And suddenly *it* is there, catching up with the investigators by melting its way through the walls of the Labyrinth—the horror from the stars beyond Fomalhaut. A being born from the depths of Cthugha that, in a laughably corrupted legend, became the Minotaur.

The investigators can't actually see it. It's black like the darkness of the passageways, absorbing light. It is the Minotaur's presence that inspires shuddering. The Keeper shouldn't attempt any exact description of this thing from out of the aeons. The players must feel that something indescribable stands before them, bearing within itself the heat of molten stone. Every round an investigator is within fifteen feet of the Minotaur, he or she loses one hit point to the heat.

The Minotaur is a solid mass of raw power, black lust and malice. It's more conceivable as an enormous mass of muscles, stretched to the point of bursting and swimming around the surface of its form-

less body. The muscles lick like flames around its only slightly bull-shaped body, but its heat comes from within. Seven horns crown a huge, black, eyeless, muscled skull. They strike out chaotically—horns of stone, smooth as steel, sharp as crystal. The investigators suddenly, instinctively know this is the Black Fire from the Shadow of Fomalhaut and lose 1/1d8 SAN.

The Minotaur – Living Flame of Deepest Black

STR 45 CON 26 SIZ 45
INT 7 POW 22 DEX 9

Hit Points: 36

Damage Bonus: +5d6

Movement: 15

Weapon: Horn (two attacks per round) 50%, damage 1d8+2+db; Ram 60%, damage 1d10+db

Armor: Five points of muscle

Skills: Scent 50%

Spells: *Inner Fire* (1 HP of heat damage per round to all within fifteen feet)

SAN loss: 1/1d8

Description: The Minotaur is the terrifying result of a failed summoning of Cthugha—instead of the Great Old One, a part

of his fiery essence was forced to earth. Torn from the burning chaos of Cthugha, the sole thought and purpose of this creature is to ignite everything in its immediate vicinity in a flaming inferno. Even the author of the *Book of Eibon*, who hinted of the existence of such a creature, knew no sufficient spell to summon or bind this order of being.

The Keeper should conduct the battle with the Minotaur mercifully. Fortunately, this monster is still quite disoriented after its aeons long sleep. It's probably sufficient for it to make one or two charges at the investigators, then race by them and disappear into the depths of the Labyrinth. It should be clear to the players they have no chance against this creature and during the two-round engagement it might be advisable to try mostly to Jump and Dodge out of its reach. The Keeper can use the Labyrinth's geometry to explain the Minotaur's disappearance; e.g., it can chase the fleeing investigators, who turn a corner to face an abyss, into which the Minotaur then falls up, until it becomes ever smaller and finally disappears.

In this way, the investigators can never feel entirely safe during the rest of their trip through the Labyrinth, because the Minotaur could suddenly reappear. Which, if the Keeper is particularly cruel, might just happen.



Finally, the Way Out

However it comes out, at some point the completely spent investigators suddenly reach a location with an Elder Sign carved into the wall. A couple short, quick steps, a last hard fall from the wall to the floor (because the Elder Sign is really, of course, on the floor, while the investigators were walking along the wall), and the investigators are back in the world with all the usual laws of physics. Daylight shines before them, and they emerge into fresh air in a small gorge, six miles southwest of Knossos.

After the Fire...

If, contrary to expectations, Sethos survives the fight in the Labyrinth and manages to flee, he'll try to escape into the nearby mountains. He no longer represents any danger—the experiences in the Labyrinth have finally extinguished his memories of his earlier life and goals. If he used any magic, he'll still be “burning” on the inside, and so the legend of “the burning ghost” who screams for his release on starry nights, will arise in the mountains of the southern coast.

The other cultists likely fell victim to either the investigators or the Minotaur in the Labyrinth. Without its leaders, the village of Pasedaros will sooner or later collapse and die out.

If the investigators return to the ritual cave in the Gortys Caverns again after the events in the Labyrinth, applying an Elder Sign directly before the shaft would be sensible, in order to finally seal off the

connection to Cthugha. The glyphs on the cave ceiling symbolizing certain constellations can be further researched. The Disc of Aiglos is the key to deciphering them. With *Astronomy* and some mathematics (a halved **Know** roll), the investigators can actually determine certain times of year in which the power of the Bringers of Fire has been or will become particularly powerful. The dates go back to 4000 B.C., but the following years (all A.D.) will likely catch the eye: 79 (Pompeii), 1509 (Great Earthquake of Istanbul), 1666 (Great Fire of London), 1755 (Earthquake of Lisbon), 1883 (Krakatoa Eruption), 1906 (San Francisco Earthquake), 1909 (Tunguska Blast)...

If the investigators turn the Disc over to Sir Arthur Evans, he will have it sent to the British Museum, where it will receive a place of honor in the Greek collection.

The entrance to the Labyrinth under the royal palace has never been reopened. Tons of stone have made the entryway forever(?) impassable. The exit that the investigators used will also not be found again, no matter how hard they look for it later. And if there were further entrances to the Labyrinth, Sethos likely knew best, but he's either dead or beyond good and evil.

In the end, the actions of the investigators have prevented a potentially dangerous villain, party to the ancient secrets of the Bringers of Fire, from doing great harm and have thereby removed one more Cthulhoid danger from the world. This realization brings the characters 1d6+1 points of SAN. Moreover, for learning about the Bringers of Fire, their history and lore, the Minotaur, and Cthugha, every character receives +3% *Cthulhu Mythos*.

Appendix A - Handouts

Handout 2 – The Legend of Theseus

The Legend of Theseus

Zeus kidnapped Europa and brought her to Crete. There she bore Minos, who inherited a love of bulls from her. Minos, King of Crete, wanted a symbol for his power, and so Poseidon, god of the oceans, sent him a white bull from the sea to sacrifice.

But the king found the bull too wonderful to slaughter. Poseidon conducted his revenge through Pasiphae, Minos's wife. Poseidon inflamed an unnatural passion for the bull in Pasiphae. With the help of Daedalus, an architect and alchemist, the queen arranged to mate with the bull.

Daedalus built a white cow of leather, in which Pasiphae concealed herself. Sewn into the white cow, she mated with the bull. Months later, she bore a son with a bull's head, the “Minotaur.” Daedalus built a subterranean labyrinth in which the royal son was kept prisoner. Over the years, the Minotaur grew large and strong.

Every year, he was nourished by seven beautiful youths and seven beautiful virgins who were sent into the labyrinth to be hunted and devoured.

Theseus, son of the King of Athens, heard about this injustice and wanted to bring an end to the business. With the help of Ariadne, daughter of Minos, he smuggled himself in with the sacrificial youths. She gave him a sword and a ball of twine along the way.

With the sword, he was to kill the Minotaur, and with the thread, one end tied to the entrance, he was to find his way back out of the labyrinth. At the end of the maze, he found the Minotaur and drew his sword without hesitation. A terrible battle ensued.

Finally, Theseus slew him by grabbing the Minotaur's head from behind and cutting off its head with a single stroke. With the help of the thread, Theseus emerged unharmed from the labyrinth, and thus was the horrific reign of the Minotaur brought to an end.

- 233 -

Handout 1 – Report of the loyal Abbot Sikta Popoulos, anno Domini 1758.

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Report I must of the pomps and works of Satan here in our land, and a work of Satan it was verily that kindled into wrath the fishermen of the south Coast and made them rise up in Judgment upon the idolators who have lived at the bight of Espasertarys for the one hundred years since they came to this land.

Idolators they are rightly called, for they reverence fire and not the Lord who instructeth us thou shalt have no other gods before Me.

But the idol-worshippers venerate not only the fire that the most infamous among them call forth between themselves, they also worship Demons of old with Unutterable Names such that I will not set them down here.

and they sacrifice great numbers of beasts in their grottos near Gortys and I dare say worse, for it came to pass that time and again Babes have disappeared from the surrounding villages. It is also said that the idolators crawl through age-old ruins and dig there in the sands as if seeking the relics of the Pagan sancts.

So did the Men of the villages travel to the cove of Espasertarys, and so did they arm themselves well, and nor did they fear.

Their priest Papa Joannes went himself with them and boldly carried the Cross at the fore against the pagan idolators, and the Lord God was with them, for they fell upon the village of the fire-worshippers like a surging tide and only a few there were who could flee to their unholy caverns, but there the brave men did not dare to tread.

Many alas of our men were struck down when the servants of fire called down upon them a rain of fire, and one of the first to fall was Papa Joannes, but verily vengeance is mine; I will repay, saith the Lord.

So did the brave men withdraw, for full half of them had fallen, but the merest few survived of the idolators.

and the old Man of the idol-worshippers whom they revered as like unto a Saint was slain, but before he was consigned to Hell, he uttered many imprecations and threatened us with a fate not only like unto that of lost Atlantis but like unto that of the ancient King Minos.

So did it come to pass in the year of our Lord one thousand seven Hundred fifty-eight.

Appendix B - New Spells

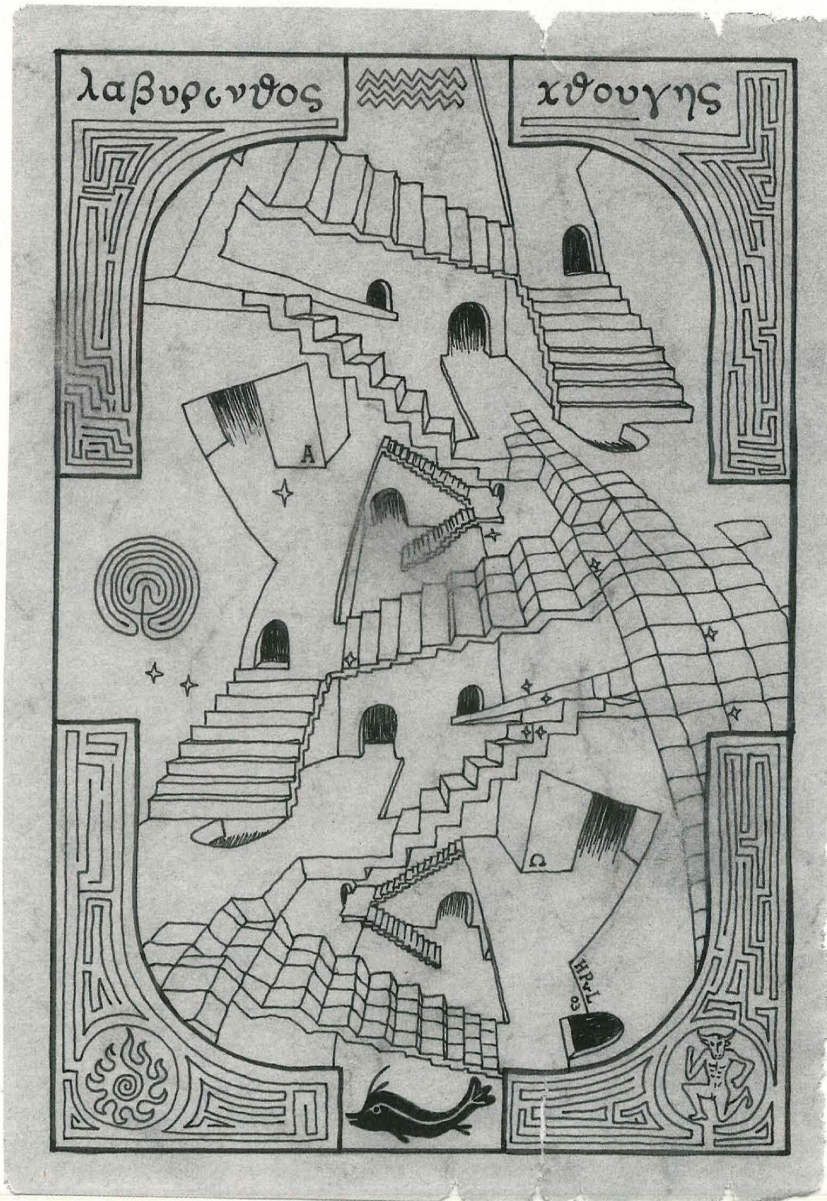
Self-Immolation – Ignites the caster’s body in leaping flames. The caster suffers 3d6 damage per round, people in a radius of up to six feet take 1d6 damage, and people between six and fifteen feet take 1d3. The spell costs one magic point and ends when the caster has been reduced to ashes.

Burn – Inflicts 1d6 points of burn damage by touch. The spell costs one magic point and is only usable once per hour. Prerequisite: the caster must possess the “Embers of the Ancestors” to a relatively strong degree; his bloodlines must reach back very far in the Bringers of Fire.

Boiling Blood – The caster fixes the target with his eyes, and must win a POW vs. POW roll (see the Resistance Table). If the roll succeeds, the victim cannot look away from the caster. Beginning in the following round, the blood of the victim begins to boil, inflicting 2 HP of damage per round until eye contact is broken. Under the influence of this spell, the victim is incapable of any physical or mental action, due to the excruciating pain involved.

This spell costs 1d4 magic points. **Prerequisites:** The caster must carry at least a trace of the “Embers of the Ancestors” and possess a POW of at least 13.

Appendix C - Map of the Labyrinth



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Appendix D

Ariana Mesotopolos's Statistics

Ariana Mesotopolos – Adventurous Archaeologist				
STR 8	CON 15	SIZ 9	DEX 13	INT 16
APP 15	EDU 16	POW 14	SAN 60	HP 12

Weapon: Fist 50%, damage 1d3

Skills: Archæology 55%, Library Use 25%, History 45%, Spot Hidden 55%, Excavate 65%, Brush Off Dirt 45%, Ignore Heat 40%

Pretty, 24 years old, graceful but resolute, laughs easily, suntanned, no fan of working indoors

Appendix E

Dramatis Personae

Because such a large number of individuals appear in this adventure, most of whom have very unfamiliar names, we here provide the Keeper with an overview of all the named non-player characters, alphabetical by first name.

Abû'l-Hurqah – Arab scholar who came across traces of the Bringers of Fire of antiquity and revived the cult

Ainos Aiglos – Chief cultist of the Bringers of Fire in ancient Crete

Alexander Powell – Professor, friend of the investigators; dies at his son Henry's wedding

Ariana Mesotopolos – Archæologist at Knossos

Sir Arthur John Evans – Excavator of the palace at Knossos

Elena Spazegottos – Daughter of Grigorios Spazegottos and bride of Henry Powell; dies at her wedding

Erui – Cultist in Pasedaros; follows the investigators across the Lasithi Plateau

Grigorios Spazegottos – Father of the bride

Heinrich Dunkelmann – Professor from Berlin, Archæologist at Knossos

Kostas Garanikolas – Attorney handling Powell's estate

Maria Spazegottos – Grandmother of Elena Spazegottos

Nathaniel Anderson – Professor, Archæologist at Knossos

Nikolas Eflantinos – Former suitor of Elena Spazegottos; Suicide assassin

Hester Pickwick – Professor; Archæologist at Knossos

Henry Powell – Son of Professor Alexander Powell; bridegroom of Elena Spazegottos; dies at his wedding

Petros Touplaki – Mayor of Kavrochori; wedding guest

Pilos – Cultist in Pasedaros; follows the investigators across the Lasithi Plateau

Pavlos Mantoklapes – Village priest; wedding guest

Sethos Kaiphalos – Present leader of the Bringers of Fire

Tolos – taverna keeper in Pasedaros; not a cultist, but loyal to the village if pressed

Appendix F

Greek for Beginners

Any Keeper who will want to portray the NPCs realistically will hardly be able to do so without occasionally dropping in some bits of Greek.

English	Greek	Pronunciation
Hello, also goodbye	Giasa/Giasou	YAS -as, or YAS -su
Hello, or goodbye	Chairete	HEH -reh-teh
Good morning	Kaléhmera	ka-li- MEH -ra
Good evening (from 4 p.m.)	Kaléhspéra	ka-li- SPEH -ra
Good night	Kaléhнита	ka-li- NI -ta
Welcome	Kaló orisate	ka- LOS o- RI -sa-teh
Cheers (sing.)	Giasou	YA -su
Cheers (pl.)	Giama	YA -mas
<i>Bon appetit!</i>	Kalé orexi	ka- LI OR -ex-i
How are you (formal)?	Ti kanete?	ti KA -neh-teh?
How are you (informal)?	Ti kani?	ti KA -nis?
Well/Very well	Kala/Polu kala	ka- LA / po- LI ka- LA ka- LA
Good	Kala	mi- LA -teh
Do you speak English?	Milate Agglíka?	ang-li- KA ? meh LEH -neh...
My name is...	Me lene...	NEH
Yes	Nai	O -hi
No	Oci	pa-ra-ka- LO
Please	Parakalo	ehf-har-is- TO
Thank you	Euxaristo	sig- NO -mi
I'm sorry	Sugnomh	pu IN -eh?
Where is...?	Pou einai...?	PO -so mak- RI -a IN -eh...?
How far is...?	Poso makria einai...?	thehx-i- A
To the right	Dexia	a-ris-teh- RA
To the left	Aristera	vo- ITH -ya
Help	Bohqeia	pro- SO -hi
Beware	Prosoci	pro- SEH -heh-teh
Look out	Prosecete	thehn KSEH -ro
I don't know	Den xero	FI -yeh-teh
Go away	Fugete	

These vowels are pronounced in the following way: a = ah, like "bah"; e = ay, like "bay"; eh = e, like "bet"; i = ee, like "bee"; o = oh, like "bo"; u = oo, like "boo".

A note to English speakers: There are no silent vowels in Greek. The -es ending is not pronounced "ess" as in English, but to rhyme with English "ace." (E.g., the priest's last name "Mantoklapes" would be pronounced mahn-toh-**klah**-pays.)

Also, note that Greek speakers will pronounce "Pasedaros" "Pasetharos" (with the *th* representing the sound in *then*, not in *thin*), so if you're doing a Greek accent, you might pronounce it accordingly.



Worlds of Cthulhu talks to ...

The Braincase Speaks ...

Stéphane Gesbert

Author and creator of Cthulhu Dark Ages

Give us some idea of who Stéphane Gesbert is. When and where were you born? Education? Interests and Hobbies? Marital status, kids, etc. Anything peculiar about yourself that you'd like to dismiss in advance...?

I am 39 years old, born and raised in Paris, France, by a German mother and a Vietnamese father. I have a MS in Applied Physics and a Civil Engineer's degree. After graduating, I lived and worked a year and a half in Canada, and ended up settling in the Netherlands. That was 12 years ago. Now I am married with 4 children. My interests include cinema and reading, science, and the meaning of life (largely unsolved to date – I keep that one for the grave). My hobbies are drawing, painting, and of course role-playing.

When and how did you first discover role-playing, Call of Cthulhu and/or H.P. Lovecraft? Tell us about your gaming group, and your gaming background and history...?

Officially, I discovered role-playing in 1977, when I bought the famous Dungeons and Dragons box (and an English-French dictionary) from the only shop that imported it.

In reality my *Call of Cthulhu* education started much earlier. To begin with, every summer I visited my grand mother who lived in a picturesque German town surrounded by wooded hills right out of the Brothers Grimm. I spent a great deal of time in those woods, alone or with friends, imagining things and "role-playing" like all kids do. At age 5, my father took me to the movies to watch a Japanese B film called "Latitude Zero" – I was terrified, but asked for more. My next memorable cinematic scares were the Morlocks in "Time Machine" and the monster in "Frankenstein". Later, I found "Dagon and other macabre tales" in my father's library – it still remains my HPL favorite to this day.

I spent a good deal of my teen age years dungeon-mastering my three best friends.

After a while we got tired of AD&D: monsters are so common that they lose all monstrosity, and the focus was too much on personal gain, be it money, hit points, or magical things ("Honey I'm home! I opened 3 doors today, killed 20 orcs, looted their gold, and I got a level raise from my DM"). We were ripe for something different, which we couldn't find in the shops. So we started improvising: I slowly drifted away from heroic fantasy towards medieval realism, and from fantasy towards horror. In the summer of 1982, we decided to create our own apocalyptic RPG, which would be called "L'An Mille" (1000 A.D.), but we got stuck in details and the project died.

I also tried Runequest and Star Wars, but never got beyond the first scenario in both. Fairy tale role-playing in a far away galaxy or in a fantasy world wasn't my thing anymore. I also had a GURPS period when I was floating in between systems.

I discovered *Call of Cthulhu* ("L'Appel de Cthulhu") the next year, and played fanatically – this time as Keeper – with a new group from my math and physics studies.

When and why did you decide to create what is now called "Dark Ages"? Do you have any particular education or background to lend to the concept? Did it begin simply as a diversion for your own gaming group? Or did you have bigger plans from the beginning?

I think the seeds for Cthulhu Dark Ages were already sown back in '82, when our "1000 A.D." RPG project died, and I started playing *Call of Cthulhu*. The marriage between medieval horror playing and *Call of Cthulhu* should have been consumed then – but somehow I was too blind to see it. Instead, I kept on playing *Call of Cthulhu* with the new group and improvising killer medieval scenarios for my old group of friends. The system I used for my 1000 A.D. scenarios was a patchwork of rules excerpted from GURPS, 40 generic spells and spirit magic inspired from RuneQuest, and animal encounter tables and stats drawn from my own bibliographic research. I had no medieval bestiary, since I improvised new horrors with each scenario.

In fact, *Cthulhu Dark Ages* is a kind of accident that was waiting to happen: I first switched from GURPS to the BRP system in '94. I had always liked BRP for being compact and not slowing down the game, as well as not getting in the way of atmosphere! Elric! gave me the final excuse with its medieval expression of the *Call of Cthulhu* rules (I found RuneQuest too system-heavy): I began adapting the CoC/Elric rules to my needs, and rationalized *Call of Cthulhu's* Greater and Lesser Grimoires into a magical system called the Old Grimoire. At that moment, it dawned on me that I could also blend *Call of Cthulhu's* Mythos horror in the Dark Ages, and not just the BRP system. As I started on the bestiary, which mixed Mythos and mythological horrors, the Cthulhu/Dark Ages marriage was finally consumed.

Tell us how Dark Ages first came to be published. Did you send it around? Was it "discovered" by someone? What was your experience dealing with Frank and Pegasus Spiele?

In 1996, I had written the core of "Cthulhu Dark Ages", and my best friend prompted me to submit the *Call of Cthulhu* supplement

– that’s what it was – to Chaosium. Lynn Willis rejected CDA, mainly arguing that the idea was not commercially viable.

I then tried Pagan Publishing, but they simply ignored me completely. I then decided to create a “*Cthulhu Dark Ages*” web site in order to make the files available for download. After a slow start, interest grew steadily, and eventually Frank Heller of the *Cthuloide Welten* magazine e-mailed, proposing to make a special issue out of CDA. I worked hard on the illustrations and on the scenario, which is an adaptation of a 20-year-old non-Mythos scenario of mine. “*Cthulhu 1000 A.D.*” came out in Germany in October 2002.

What did you think of its first edition publication? Should have been bigger? Should be expanded upon? What about the design and presentation?

As far as the contents go, the *Cthulhu 1000 A.D.* supplement is just as I had hoped it would be. Ideally, I would have liked to add short introductory scenarios, but I never found the time to develop them. What makes Pegasus’ *Cthulhu 1000 A.D.* different from the crowd, and something you find back in other publications of theirs, is the attention to layout, graphical design, etc. It looks great. Chaosium was sensitive to that aspect of the book and tried as much as possible to reproduce it in *Cthulhu Dark Ages*.

What do you think of the new, English language edition published by Chaosium? How about the MULA supplement, “The Abbey?”

To begin with, I was very surprised by Chaosium’s idea to make a full-blown RPG out of the supplement. Surprised, thrilled, and a bit nervous. I saw potential pitfalls on the way to the BRP/CDA merger. As it turns out, the seams are showing in quite a few places (it’s a pity that Chaosium didn’t give me the chance to review the

draft), but overall I love the book, despite the inconsistencies and omissions.

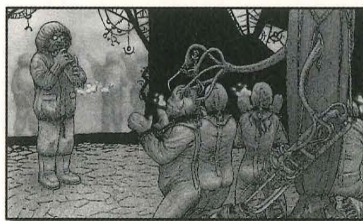
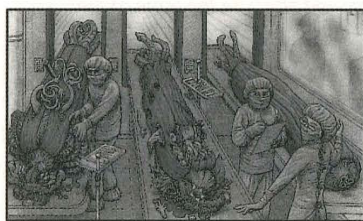
I haven’t had the chance to read “The Abbey” but from the description I think it is a great – and early – addition to CDA. Will the Abbey develop into a Dark Ages version of *Delta Green*? Who knows?

Do you see a long-lasting future for CDA? Are you planning to write more for the setting?

I certainly hope so. So does Chaosium as far as I can judge. The marriage of the Mythos and the early Middle Ages is one made in heaven, or rather hell, as far as the players are concerned. I think that CDA fits Sandy Petersen’s views on *Call of Cthulhu* well: doom-laden, horror is a Great Old One and background a lesser servitor, and it’s OK to borrow ideas and imagery from movies and books (as long as one doesn’t breach copyrights).

In my opinion, the success or failure of CDA will depend on the support it gets from Chaosium in terms of supplements, source books, and most importantly of all: scenarios. I also hope to see reprints of the rule book where imperfections are smoothed and padded out, so that keepers don’t need the main rule book to play the game. The accessibility of CDA for non- *Call of Cthulhu* players is essential if Chaosium intends to capture players from the other side, e.g. D&D3e.

Currently, I’m collaborating with Kevin Anderson on a campaign for CDA called “Pagan Call”. I also have a few scenario ideas I’d like to develop if I find the time.



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Cthulhu Dark Ages Errata

Errare humanum est
By Stéphane Gesbert

Frequently Asked Questions

Wasn't *Cthulhu Dark Ages* originally a supplement?

The original text – written in English – was indeed a supplement to *Call of Cthulhu*. So was the published German translation “Cthulhu 1000 A.D.” Chaosium published *Cthulhu Dark Ages* as a stand-alone role-playing game. This version contains rule material from *Call of Cthulhu*, *Elric!*, *Stormbringer*, etc.

Does “Dark Ages” really refer to the era 950-1050 A.D.?

Yes and no. There is no absolute definition of “Dark Ages.” Here “Dark Ages” refers to the poorly documented era around 1000 A.D., marked by political turmoil and social change, which announced the middle ages *per se*. The entire period after the fall of the Roman Empire can be said to be a “Dark Age.” 950-1050 A.D. is also “dark” because it saw the birth of the Greek *Necronomicon* and its subsequent dissemination!

Why is there no “What is role-playing?” section?

The book seems aimed at people who are familiar with role-playing. Novice keepers are referred to the *Call of Cthulhu* rule book: please read the Introduction, the Example of Play, and the Keeper's Lore.

Aren't Dark-Age Investigators doomed at the outset?

Cthulhu Dark Ages and *Call of Cthulhu* share Sandy Petersen's dark vision: they are games of mood and horror. Most Mythos creatures are too terrible to be defeated using the combat system. For routine monster bashing and character growth, go play *Dungeons & Dragons*.

Without Psychoanalysis and insane asylums, how can indefinitely insane investigators recover?

After 1d6 months of rest and private care at home or in a monastery, an investigator should have regained enough self-control to be released into the world. At the Keeper's discretion, add 1d3 Sanity points per month of unbroken spiritual care by a well-intentioned priest. Conversely, lose 1d6 Sanity points per month of seclusion in the hands of insane or perverse guardians.

If in 1000 A.D. *Mi-Go* and *Deep Ones* are roaming the world more freely, and peasants are more likely to believe in the supernatural, should sanity rules work the same?

Yes. I don't think that believing in the supernatural makes one more prepared against an “actual” supernatural event or encounter. In *Cthulhu Dark Ages* as in modern times, Mythos encounters are so

rare that nobody can be prepared for the horror of it. Remember that in *Cthulhu Dark Ages*, the incredulous are preserved: perversely, it is the “believers” (i.e. people who succeed an Idea Roll) that succumb to temporary insanity.

Is an investigator's minimum age 15 whatever the EDU?

You can rule that the minimum age is EDU+6 years.

Isn't calculus in the Accounting skill an anachronism?

“Calculus” is a Latin word meaning pebble. Pebbles were used with the abacus, a calculating device, to perform additions and simple multiplication.

Should illiterate characters get EDU x2% base chance in Library Use?

You may assign 01% base chance to illiterate characters.

Some rules are sketchy, why isn't there more detail?

The level (or lack) of system detail in *Cthulhu Dark Ages* is similar to that in *Call of Cthulhu*. For instance, Potions is no sketchier than the “modern” Pharmacy skill. It is true however that Dark Ages sciences and skills are often unfamiliar to us, and sometimes warrant better definitions and more explanation for in-game use.

Can't a character Dodge and attack in the same round?

In theory, a character can attempt any 2 of 3 actions in a single combat round: attack, parry, or dodge. However, dodging missile attacks takes an entire combat round, therefore the dodger cannot neither attack nor parry in the same round. Note in passing that arrows, quarrels, and sling stones cannot be parried (thrown weapons can be).

How can shields be used against missile fire?

Carried for hand-to-hand combat, a small shield has a 15% chance to block a missile, a full shield 30%, and a large shield 60%. Knelt under, a full shield has 60% chance to block a missile, and a large shield 90%.

Should POW be allowed to increase?

It contradicts *Call of Cthulhu*'s pessimistic philosophy. Please ignore the “How Sorcerers Get That Way” section.

What distinguishes Mythos from non-Mythos magic?

As far as the game goes, only spells that explicitly address a Mythos creature or deity are called “Mythos spells.” By default, all other spells are non-Mythos or Occult spells. This distinction can be pretty nebulous at times, since many Mythos creatures and deities also have a

non-Mythos front. It is up to the keeper to choose the most appropriate qualifier based on circumstances.

Don't forget that insanity stemming from the casting of non-Mythos spells yields no Cthulhu Mythos knowledge.

Where can I find more information to prop up my Dark Ages?

Try Dark Age Keeper resources and downloads at www.yog-sothoth.com, or Google for specific questions. I recommend two books: "Atlas of the Year 1000" by J. Man and "The Year 1000" by R. Lacey and D. Danziger. The atlas covers the entire world, which offers exciting perspectives for "exotic" investigations, in the best spirit of *Call of Cthulhu*. The second book is a perfect primer to what life was like at the turn of the first millennium.



Thanks to Aitor Solar, Paul Maclean, Dan Harms, and the many cultists lurking at www.yog-sothoth.com.

Page 14 states that Magic Point regeneration is 1 MP/hour. Isn't that inconsistent with the rest?

Please ignore the 1 MP/hour rule: *Cthulhu Dark Ages* uses the same MP regeneration rule as *Call of Cthulhu*, i.e. full regeneration every 24 hours. Pro-rate the return of partial losses, e.g. one-fourth MP's every 6 hours (p. 12).

The Head Butt entry p. 15 mentions a "bar" and there is a reference to "firearms" in the Shoggoths entry!

Read respectively: "tavern" and "missile weapons."

What is a "targeted" spell (p. 19)?

"Targeted" spells match caster and target magic points on the Resistance Table to learn whether they succeed (see p. 80). Targeted spells cost less skill points because their success rate is less than that of "automatic" spells.

Are occupation money entries and incomes consistent?

Some variability is acceptable, but there are outliers: the craftsman/shopkeeper's money is too high with respect to his income rank and the scholar's is too low. I suggest attributing 1d3x100 deniers to the scholar, and 1d2x100 deniers +100 in product to the craftsman/shopkeeper.

What is the base % of Climb and Library Use?

Trust the skills definitions but not the investigator sheet. You can use the vintage sheet at: ad1000.cjb.net.

Why do horses never belong to the driver (p. 24)?

Ambiguous assertion. Disregard it.

In skills p.25, a Listen vs. Sneak match is resolved on the Resistance Table and by lowest-result-wins. Which is it?

I would go by the more orthodox Resistance Table match.

The Throw skill (p. 28) has a rule to determine the range of thrown weapons. Does it contradict Weapon Tables?

This is a mix-up. *Call of Cthulhu* relies on the Throw skill for the base chance and range of thrown weapons. Not so in *Cthulhu Dark Ages*: each thrown weapon is represented by a skill; trust the missile table (p. 45), and disregard the reference to knives, daggers, and javelins in the skill entry.

Is Syriac the same as Greek (Write Language, p. 28)?

No. The confusion comes from the original write-up, which listed "Syriac or Greek", meaning that both were used, not that the languages were the same. See also "languages written" in the glossary p. 67. In passing, add Gaelic to written languages pp. 28 and 67.

Is the upper diagonal of the Resistance Table reliable?

No. It should read 95% all along and not 85%.

What is a POT roll (p. 37)?

It is a typo: "requiring successful Potions rolls to..."

Hospitals are mentioned pp. 16, 26, and 39. Hospitals?

Good point. There were neither "hospitals" nor "doctors" as such in the Occident around 1000 A.D., and were only found in the Arab World. A few educated priests and monks could provide basic medical care at the patient's home or in monasteries. In passing, a dark-age Medicine base chance of 05% is too high. Please stick to a base chance of 01%.

Isn't the sample armor table (p. 40) inconsistent with the weapon and man-made obstacles tables (pp. 31, 45)?

Indeed. It contains inconsistencies and anachronisms (e.g. plate armor). Please ignore this *Call of Cthulhu* reference.

Is the cathedral the same as the bishop's palace (p. 60)?

They are different; replace the parentheses by commas.

What are the "eight disciplines" (p. 78)?

A typo. Magic is known as the eight discipline or art.

If the Old Grimoire is non-Mythos, where can I find the Mythos spells listed under Mythos books?

There is a bit of a mix-up between *Call of Cthulhu* material and the Old Grimoire, which is non-Mythos only in that it does not explicitly address Mythos creatures and deities. Firstly, change the opening sentence of Learning Spells (p. 78) as follows: "Learning a Mythos spell..." Similarly in casting Spells (p. 79): "Manipulating the forces of the Mythos and of the Occult..." Below: "Having the Mythos entity gnaw away..." The following additional paragraph may help:

"Keepers can easily compile a Mythos Grimoire using Old Grimoire spells such as Contact, Compel, and Dismiss. The only *Call of Cthulhu* Mythos spell currently missing in *Cthulhu Dark Ages* is Contact Deity."

Call of Cthulhu	Cthulhu Dark Ages
Call/Dismiss Deity	Contact Creature/Dismiss Spirit
Contact ...	Contact Creature
Contact Deity	Pray to Deity (new spell)
Summon/Bind ...	Contact/Compel Creature

Can spells change the POW characteristic or not (p. 80)?

Yes, see for instance Bless/Curse (Characteristic).

Why is the range of spells that rely on vocalization sight?

Please revert to "earshot" for: Bless/Curse, Compel, Dismiss, Enthral, Exaltation, Fear, and Soul Singing. Earshot spells can be cast within about 100 feet and the target of the spell must be able to hear the caster.

Does Curse Characteristic (p. 85) cost MP's or POW?

1d3 MP if failing to overcome the target.

Is the duration of Curse Skill Class (p. 85) one day?

No, 1d6 combat rounds.

Why does Demon Sight cost 3 MP?

Align Demon Sight with Demon Hearing and Bless Skill (2 MP per 1d6 duration and 5% increase to Spot Hidden).

What is "Temporary Sanity relief" in Exaltation?

A typo. Replace by "Temporary Insanity relief."

Page 98 states that creature abilities work like spells: does a werewolf lose 1 POW every time it changes form?

Oversight. Assume that werewolves, as well as vampires and goblins, use a temporary variant of Body Warp. The cost of it is 12 magic points (no POW loss), and typical duration is one night, after which the target changes back.

The Bestiary lists spells that I cannot find anywhere!

Some spells were renamed in the Old Grimoire but not in the Bestiary. The "Gate" spell known to Goblins is now called "Create Mystic Portal." The Mist (of Releh) spell said to resemble the Nameless Mist is renamed "Death's Breath." The Old One's and Lilith's "Steal Life" is "Curse POW" (causes aging and decay).

What are the rhino stats for the unicorn (p. 100)?

Move	15
HP	31
Weapons	Charge 50%, damage 1D10 + db 4D6 Trample downed foe 75%, damage 3D10
Armor	10-point hide
Skills	Scent danger 60%



Sciences

I limit the scope to the Occidental system of knowledge, known as the seven "liberal arts." They are called "liberal" because they were originally intended for the free man who had the luxury to seek pure knowledge, as opposed to applied sciences that serve some trade or industry. In the middle ages, the distinction between sacred and temporal knowledge blurred. For gaming purposes, the seven liberal arts are split into two "skills": the *Quadrivium* (physical sciences) and the *Trivium* (language sciences). For completeness, I also list medicine, law, and theology.

Trivium (01%): formally grammar, rhetoric, and dialectic. The *Trivium* covers the theory of language, knowledge of literature, and logic. In terms of skills, the student learns eloquence and practical logic, both useful to achieve success in political spheres. To resolve a heated debate or difficult negotiations, the Keeper can request a *Trivium* skill roll instead of Persuade, Idea, or even Status. A successful *Trivium* roll may be required in order to identify a particular classical writer or one of his books, before an effective Library Search. In effect, the *Trivium* starts where Read/Write Language and Persuade stop.

Quadrivium (01%): formally arithmetic, music, geometry, and astronomy. The common denominator of the *Quadrivium* is mathematics, which covers the theory of numbers, shapes, movement, and sounds. In terms of skills, the student can perform advanced calculations (divisions, fractions, areas, etc.), knows the position of stars and planets, and by extension is familiar with geography and architecture. The physicist can design musical instruments and ingenious war machines. In effect, the *Quadrivium* skill starts where Accounting and Repair/Devise stop.

Medicine (01%): as per *Cthulhu Dark Ages* rulebook. The keeper can request a successful Medicine roll as a precondition to brewing a specialized healing potion or an antidote.

Law (01%): the knowledge of canonical law, civil law codes, procedures, and by extension, of local customs. In combination with a high Status, the practice of Law can lead to great rewards. The skilled jurist has the ability to understand and edict charters, contracts, administrative capitularies, and diplomas. In another country, halve the chance for success with this skill.

Theology (01%): the "science of ultimate cause", often assimilated to wisdom. Theology also covers the knowledge of holy and apocryphal scriptures, ceremony lore, and dogma. Local heresies and folklore may be understood at half chance. The Theology and the Occult skills are complementary to some extent.

Potions (01%)

Here is a suggested outline for using the Potions skill:

- Find the ingredients:** allow one Natural World skill roll per day to find the required ingredients. Adjust upwards or downwards at the keeper's discretion, in accordance with availability.

2. **Prepare the potion/ointment:** requires one successful Potions roll for a POT 10 dose or fraction thereof. Preparing an herbal potion or poison takes 1D3 days. Preparing animal venom takes 1 day, and preparing an infectious agent takes up to 2 weeks. At the Keeper's discretion, a failed roll produces an ineffective potion or ointment, and a fumbled roll creates a mixture with unintended or even opposite results – or the maker accidentally ingests the potion!

3. **Ingest/apply the potion/ointment:** a potion takes one combat round to drink; applying an ointment to a weapon or to an unarmored person takes one minute.

Parameters like reaction times and potency (POT) vary greatly and are therefore left at the Keeper's discretion. However, there are general principles to be adhered to:

- ◆ POT is proportional to the dose. Remember that most poisons taste (very) bad.
- ◆ Do not allow POT ratings higher than 10 per successful Potions roll. POT 10 is the toxicity of a salad of fresh hemlock leaves, which contains little more than a few drops of the toxic agent *coniine*.
- ◆ Only fresh ingredients have full potency. Prepared ingredients typically have half potency.

Potions and ointments have a wide range of uses. Successful potions typically affect one characteristic, one skill class, or perceptions. Here are popular examples of potions that the keeper – and players – can elaborate upon:

- ◆ Increase/decrease all skills of one skill class by 5%.
- ◆ Emotional aberrations: aggression, fear, euphoria, hallucinations, increased libido, pain, and somnolence.
- ◆ Impairment of one sense.
- ◆ Poison/infectious agent: as per rule book.
- ◆ Poison antidote: requires an extra Medicine or Potions roll in order to first identify the poison. Proceed with ingredient finding and preparation as usual. In the end, subtract the antidote's POT from that of the poison.
- ◆ Antiseptic to clean wounds and fight off infections.
- ◆ Symptom relief against pain, fever, fatigue, etc.

Potions can be used as First Aid skill in cases of poisoning (restores 1d3 HP on the spot). In itself, it does not grant the ability to diagnose diseases.

Revised Costs

Listed prices are for new goods. Two factors that influence the price of an item are availability and quality.

Food (For The Body And Mind)

2 pounds (loaves) of wheat bread	1 denier
2 pounds of cheese	1 denier
3 dozens eggs	1 denier
Food, 1 day	1 denier
Food and lodging, 1 day	1-5 deniers
Horse fodder, 1 day	3-6 deniers
Book, regular (e.g. law book)	100 deniers

Clothing

Linen piece	12 deniers
Woolen pelisse – cheap	12 deniers
Hooded cloak or robe	60 deniers
Short cloak – superior	120 deniers
Double cloak, hooded – winter	140 deniers
Marten cloak, bonnet – noble	360 deniers

Tools

Bucket	12 deniers
Awl, plane, auger, file, pliers, shears, hammer, saw	4-24 deniers
Sickle, hand ax, pickax, spade	24 deniers
Swing plow	72 deniers
Plow (iron plowshare and colter)	140 deniers

Weapons, Shields and Armor

24 arrows or 12 bolts	12 deniers
Fine scabbard	72 deniers
Helm	200 deniers

Price updates for the weapon tables, pp. 44-45:

Hand-to-Hand Weapons

Cost	
Ax	40 deniers
Ax, Great	100 deniers
Knife, Small	10 deniers
Knife, Large	15 deniers
Lance	40 deniers
Mace	20 deniers
Spear, Short	20 deniers
Spear, Long	25 deniers
Sword, Short	120 deniers
Sword, Long	180 deniers

Missile Weapons

Bow	40 deniers
Crossbow	100 deniers
Sling	5 deniers

Shields

Shield, Small	25 deniers
Shield, Medium	60 deniers
Shield, Large	80 deniers

Miscellaneous

Resinous torch, lamp oil, candle for 2-hours worth of light	1 denier
Creeper rope, 30-ft	2 deniers
Fiber rope, 30-ft	12 deniers
6-persons tent, incl. 2 10-ft poles	360 deniers
Traveler's pack: outer wear, water-skin, knife, fishing line & hook, felt blanket, sack, flintstone & iron, whetstone	240 deniers
Hungarian or Moorish-type saddle	200+ deniers

Warrior gear: war-horse, saddle,
horn, sword, spear, helm, chainmail,
shield 2,400 deniers

Daily Wages

Farmer, priest, servant 1-3 deniers
Craftsman, sailor 3-5 deniers
Guard, cleric, mercenary 5-12 deniers
Warrior, merchant, maître-d'oeuvre 12-24 deniers

Animals

Farm dog 12 deniers
Sheep 12-15 deniers
Cow 24 deniers
Mule 36 deniers
Sow 12-54 deniers
Ox 24-108 deniers
Horse 240+ deniers
War-horse 600 deniers
Young slave, boy or girl < 3,000 deniers
Freeman or -woman's life
(e.g. ransom) ±15,000 deniers

Vehicles

Wheelbarrow 12 deniers
Two-wheeled cart 120 deniers
Four-wheeled wagon 240 deniers
Four wheeled cart (leathered) 360 deniers
Four-wheeled carts in the Dark Ages lack a pivoting beam. Ox carts covered with leather are watertight.

Constructions

Commoner's hut 24 deniers
Commoner's house 120 deniers
Short wooden bridge 140 deniers
Fishery 160 deniers
Timber hall 240 deniers
Water mill 270 deniers
Small farm with land 2,400 deniers
Earth and timber castle: tower,
moat, stockade, ditch, bailey and
gatehouse 12,000 deniers

Boats

Rowboat 120 deniers
Raft 12 deniers
Viking Drakkar 9,000 deniers
Norse Knorr 3,000 deniers
Merchant boat
(rowboat/pump optional) 12,000 deniers
Byzantine merchant ship
(incl. rowboat) 24,000 deniers

Natural Disasters
& Occult Events

Here are a few additional milestones worth mentioning:

before 1000 Introduction of the camshaft in medieval industry.
ca. 935-975 Roswitha of Gandersheim writes six plays, which make her one of the first Occidental playwrights.
975-976 Great famine in England.
976 First usage of Arabic numerals in Occidental books.
986 Great pestilence among English cattle.
987-996 First French beer-mill.
989 Terrifying star (Halley's comet) brightens the night sky for three months. Many Occidental cities, incl. Rome, are devastated by fire. Heresies outburst in Sardinia.
996 First record of sugar cane import into the Occident (Venice).
1000 Chinese perfect gunpowder formula for fireworks.
1010 First human to fly: Brother Elmer jumps off the tower of Malmesbury Abbey and with the aid of wings, flies 125 paces before breaking his legs. Brother Elmer also foretells the Norman invasion.
1008 First known novel: "the Tale of Genji", Japan.
1014 A great sea-flood comes to England. It drowns settlements and countless people.
1040 Hemp-mill reported.
1041 Bad weather and various diseases destroy English crops and cattle.
1041 Chinese alchemist devises a movable-type print.
ca. 1050 Articulated flails.

Classic Spells

Enchant

Range: touch	Duration: permanent
Cost: 1 POW	
Sanity: 1d4	Resistance Table: yes

Enchants a device or artifact with one spell known to the caster. The target is then considered "magical." Each Enchant involves a blood sacrifice and at least a day of preparation.

Usage of a magical artifact conforms to standard spell casting procedures and conditions. In particular, the wielder of the item must spend magic points or POW, and Sanity in order to activate the spell.

Pray To (Deity)

Range: indefinite	Duration: until granted
Cost: at the Keeper's discretion	
Sanity: as per deity San loss	Resistance Table: no

Appeals a specific deity (e.g. as identified by its True Name). The term "deity" is shorthand for a disembodied spirit with POW 10 or higher. The object of a prayer can be temporal (e.g. worldly goods or godly intervention) or spiritual (e.g. the answer to a question).

The deity may not grant the object for an hour or a day or more (if ever) – the caster does not know when, and must continue praying.

Whether the object of the prayer is granted or not (at the keeper's discretion), the caster who seeks union with the deity is always subjected to a Sanity roll as per the deity's Sanity loss statistics. Other prices to pay like sacrifices and expiatory exercises are at the keeper's discretion.

There is no guarantee that a deity – read “the Keeper” – would rather grant the object of the prayer than trick or even harm the caster (e.g. insanity, death, or worse), especially if the caster were to offend the deity through arrogance, pretense, or profanation.

The Keeper should prepare the effects of prayer with great care, the guiding adage being: “the ways of the deities are impenetrable.” Always prefer subtle natural causes that contribute to the desired effect (e.g. tweak the outcome of die rolls or have a NPC alter the course of action), instead of overt supernatural intervention (e.g. lightning bolts). If the prayer object is spiritual, e.g. some information or the deity's wishes, bestow it by means of an unwary messenger, a scary vision or a disturbing dream.

Pray is the Dark Age variant of *Call of Cthulhu's* Contact Deity spell type. This spell is likely to be the first and only spell available to zealous priests and cultists of a deity.

Classic Mythos Deities

The following deity entries paraphrase to a large extent the corresponding entries in *Call of Cthulhu*. However, *Cthulhu Dark Ages* stresses the invulnerability of these deities by avoiding listing physical characteristics such as hit points and weapon damage. As far as human opponents are concerned, the deities are infinitely powerful. They cannot be destroyed; at best, deities can be temporarily dispelled or sealed away by great sorcery.

CTHULHU, Great Old One

“A monster of vaguely anthropoid outline, but with an octopus-like head whose face was a mass of feelers, a scaly, rubbery-looking body, prodigious claws on hind and fore feet, and long, narrow wings behind. This thing... was of a somewhat bloated corpulence... It lumbered slobberingly into sight and gropingly squeezed its gelatinous green immensity through the black doorway...” – *“The Call of Cthulhu”*, Lovecraft.

“Who can open the doors of its face? There is terror all around its teeth. Its back is made of shields in rows, shut up closely as with a seal. One is so near to each other that no air can come between them... When it raises itself up the gods are afraid.” – Job 41:14.

Cthulhu – or Leviathan as he is known in the Scriptures – is one of the “giants” who “fell from the sky” when primal chaos still reigned on earth. If we are to believe the Revelation, something vanquished him and cast him in the tomb city of R'lyeh, deep beneath the surface of the ocean. There he lies in wait, neither living nor dead. When

the stars are right, the city will rise and he will wake, freed to walk the world until everything has been consumed.

Great Cthulhu's body form is not fixed. He can warp and modify at will, extending new limbs, reducing his body's size to enable flight, or elongating a single limb or tentacle to enable to writhe through yards of corridor.

Entire tribes are recorded as worshipping Cthulhu, such as degenerate Inuit of Greenland. He seems to be worshipped among sea-folks, or beings that live near the sea. The deep ones as well as the Cthulhi (star-spawn of Cthulhu) serve him. Though in millennial sleep, Cthulhu is known to send horrifying dreams to mortal men, which may have tipped some people into madness.

ATTACKS & SPECIAL EFFECTS: each round, Great Cthulhu can kill up to four investigators within reach of his claws or facial tentacles. Resistance is useless. Great Cthulhu is effectively invulnerable, being able to fully reform within 15 minutes of having been destroyed!

GREAT CTHULHU, Leviathan

The physical characteristics of Cthulhu are too vast to be meaningful.

INT 40 POW 42 Move 24 stride/20 swim/16 fly

Other names: The (Coiled) Serpent, Kutulu, Kthulhut, Tulu, Thu Thu, Lotan, Yamm, Tiamat (Chaldean chaos-dragon), Kul (Syrian water spirit).

Weapon: claws or tentacles 100%, damage hideous death.

Armor: rubbery scales so tight that nothing can come between them. Additionally, he regenerates any damage within 15 minutes at most.

Spells: knows hundreds of spells but not summoning spells related to Yog-Sothoth, his avatar, and his servants.

Sanity loss: 1d10/1d100 Sanity points to see Cthulhu.

NYARLATHOTEP, Outer God

“Who he was, none could tell, but he was of the old native blood and looked like a Pharaoh... Into the lands of civilization came Nyarlathotep, swarthy, slender, and sinister... And where Nyarlathotep went, rest vanished, for the small hours were rent with the screams of nightmare...” – “Nyarlathotep”, Lovecraft.

“Loki is handsome and good-looking, of bad spirit and very unstable in his ways.” – Snorri Sturluson, “Gylfaginning, XXXII.”

Nyarlathotep is the soul and the messenger of the ultimate gods, himself the archetype of the trickster god: he is a thief, an adulterer, a shape-shifter, and a conjurer. Several prophecies state that someday, Nyarlathotep will destroy the earth. It is written that in the last battle, “the Wolf [Yog-Sothoth] will swallow the sun, ... the Serpent [Cthulhu] will walk the land.” Then Nyarlathotep, in the form of a black fire giant, “casts fire on the earth and burns all the worlds.” Nyarlathotep claims to have a thousand different forms or “Masks”, of which only a few have been described. The human form of Nyarlathotep – the Dark Man and Father of Lies – is his best-known Mask, one that resembles the Judeo-Christian Devil, Satan. In this form as well as in others, Nyarlathotep is worshipped by numerous cults, spread across the world. Nyarlathotep is also known and

feared by all Mythos creatures, chiefly the Miri Nigri (see Dark Ones) who refer to him as being their Father and occasionally make strange artifacts for Him.

ATTACKS & SPECIAL EFFECTS: in human form, Nyarlathotep may try to corrupt or trick his foes by appearing as a friend, and is generally reluctant to reveal his supernatural powers unless pressed. Nyarlathotep usually reacts to challenges by summoning “monsters” to carry off or otherwise dispose of foes. When in human form, Nyarlathotep can be slain by normal physical means. If so slain, after collapsing the body begins to quake and swell, bursting to release some monstrous form, which rises from the split corpse and disappears into the sky.

NYARLATHOTEP, The Dark Man

STR 12	CON 19	SIZ 11	INT 86
POW 100	DEX 19	Move 12	HP 15

Other names: Nyarlat, the Devil, Satan, the Messenger, Loki, Hermes, Lug, Thoth, All-Seeing-Eye.

Weapon: any weapon 100%, damage as per weapon.

Armor: none.

Spells: knows all spells; he can summon wild beasts and monsters at the rate of 1 magic point per POW point the creature has; he may summon a Dark One or a servitor of the Outer Gods at the cost of a single magic point.

Sanity loss: no loss to see the Dark Man. In many of his other 999 Masks, 1d10/1d100 to see Nyarlathotep.

YOG-SOTHOTH, Outer God

“This time it was... a force of personality which at once confronted and surrounded and pervaded him, and which in addition to its local presence, seemed also to be a part of himself, and likewise to be co-existent with all time and coterminous with all space. There was no visual image... It was an All-in-One and One-in-All of limitless being and self...” – *“Through the Gates of the Silver Key”*, Lovecraft.

Yog-Sothoth dwells in the infinite-dimensional Void between the Spheres that compose the universe. Yog-Sothoth is intimately linked to the Nameless Mist. Yog-Sothoth’s dark energy is invisible, yet everywhere present, maybe less than a hair’s breadth away, *tugging at the threshold*. Yog-Sothoth can only break into our world at certain times (e.g. August 1st). When this happens, he appears as a congeries of radiant globes that expand at a prodigious rate through the air and burn all life in a flash. Because of this, Yog-Sothoth is not knowable to most mortals, except indirectly through his intersection with our four (according to some, eleven) dimensions, which are the 12 Ancient Ones that guard the First Gate to Limbo, and chiefly among them his avatar Tawil at’ Umr.

ATTACKS & SPECIAL EFFECTS: instant, permanent, and infinite destruction.

YOG-SOTHOTH, the All-in-One

The characteristics of Yog-Sothoth are infinite.

Other names: Iog-Sotot, All-in-One, One-in-All, Beyond-One, the Key and the Gate, Lurker at the Threshold.

Weapon: Sphere Touch 100%, damage death.

Armor: none, but only magic can affect Yog-Sothoth.

Spells: as many as wanted.

Sanity loss: 1d10/1d100 Sanity points.

SHUB-NIGGURATH, Outer God

“Iä! Iä! Shub-Niggurath! The Black Goat of the Woods with a Thousand Young! “ – *“The Whisperer in the Darkness”*, Lovecraft.

Shub-Niggurath is rarely met, but is often referred to in rituals and spells. It has been guessed that she is a perverse fertility deity. In one of her few descriptions, Shub-Niggurath is said to be a colossal cloudy mass from which protrude many-jointed “hooves” and gelatinous coils. In one instance, Shub-Niggurath appeared as a cloaked figure. She is worshipped extensively and often summoned to accept blood sacrifices in exchange of abundant harvests, fecundity, and magical spells.

ATTACKS & SPECIAL EFFECTS: each coil can catch an investigator per combat round, and whip him or her to the goddess’ body. Half an hour later, Shub-Niggurath can bud off one of her “young” (see Goblins). It is unclear what happens to victims who go down into the goddess’ body, but some have suggested that they suffer the same fate as Shub-Niggurath’s favored worshippers: to be reborn in her “vagina” as young of the Black Goat. Shub-Niggurath may trample beings of SIZ 60 or less in her path, which averages 10-20 yards across.

SHUB-NIGGURATH, the Black Goat of the Woods

Shub-Niggurath’s body is too gooey to have noticeable physical characteristics. She is effectively invulnerable.

INT 21	POW 70	Move 15
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Other names: Black Goat, Shupnikkurat, Heid, Hecate.

Weapon: gelatinous coil 100%, damage dissolution, followed at best by a re-birth as an immortal *Goffnn Hupadgh Shub-Niggurath*; Trample 75%, damage 11d6.

Armor: Shub-Niggurath has no armor, but her mist body is immune to physical weapons.

Spells: all spells pertaining to the Outer Gods.

Sanity loss: 1d10/1d100 Sanity points.

Did you know that...

Star-spawn of Cthulhu are also called “Cthulhi.”

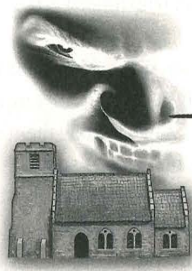
Dimensional Shamblers live in the same alternate dimension where Yog-Sothoth dwells (i.e. Limbo and the Ultimate Abyss). Wizards summon them on Earth using a ritual that requires a dagger of pure metal.

Gugs worship the Other Gods, and give special service to the Nameless Mist.

The Hounds of Tindalos (or Tind’losi Hounds) can contact metaphysical allies in our time period, e.g. “satyrs” (Goblins), to help them gain access to a prey.

Shoggoths are also called Shaggoths.

Excerpted from Daniel Harms’ Encyclopaedia Cthulhiana



Cthulhu Dark Ages:
The Vampire of Schwarzbrunn

By Stefan Franck

Translated from the German by Bill Walsh

"And there are gates that have connected two places for æons, and the one may be here while th'other lies afar or in other worlds. Guard thyself before these gates, for thou knowest not what lurketh 'pon th'other side!"



The path leads down from the hills and winds around a large, odd-shaped boulder. Suddenly, a small village in a clearing in the woods appears below. This must be Schwarzbrunn, the journey's destination. And somewhat behind the village, deeper in the basin formed by the hills, sit several buildings surrounded by a wall—likely the monastery of Schwarzbrunn. Everything is still, a strange, oppressive feeling hangs in the air.

The inhabitants of Schwarzbrunn have sought help from the authorities because, as they allege, a blood-drinking monster is murdering their children. That was in June of this *anno Domini* 998, six months ago. Now charcoal gray clouds are already crossing the heavens. The snows will come soon, the days are dark and bleak. Whose fault is it their cry for help remained unanswered into Decem-

ber? This question will become pressing if the population of the village has been exterminated in the meantime. Now the village is still, unnaturally still. Indeed, just after noon, a village should be alive with goings-on, but down below, no one is to be seen. A strange oppression grips the hearts of those who have been sent to help—perhaps a half a year too late.

Background

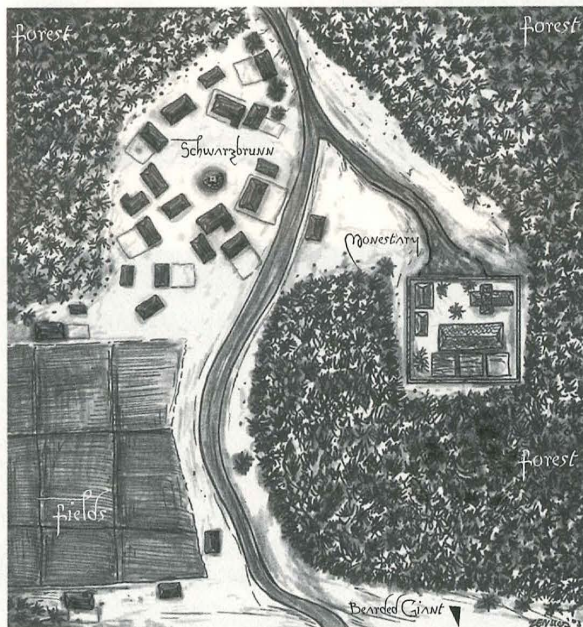
In the monastery the characters saw from the hills, there is a gate to Ghatanothoa's prison, the mountain of Yaddith-Gho on the continent of Mu, sunken beneath the waves of the Pacific. This gate has been kept closed since time immemorial by regularly repeating a ritual, because every solstice brings about the possibility that alien horrors will cross the gate into the known world of men. The danger doesn't actually threaten every year, as the stars must be right; nevertheless, magicians of good will always conduct the ritual every year at both solstices, because they cannot determine if the current constellations will permit Ghatanothoa to burst through the gate.

And so it would have continued, perhaps forever, if the completely unscrupulous monk Waldemar had not taken up metaphysical studies and learned of the gate while seeking knowledge of the nature of the world. He then had himself transferred to the monastery of Schwarzbrunn in order to open the gate and to learn from the Great Old One everything to which a servant of the Christian God would have no access.

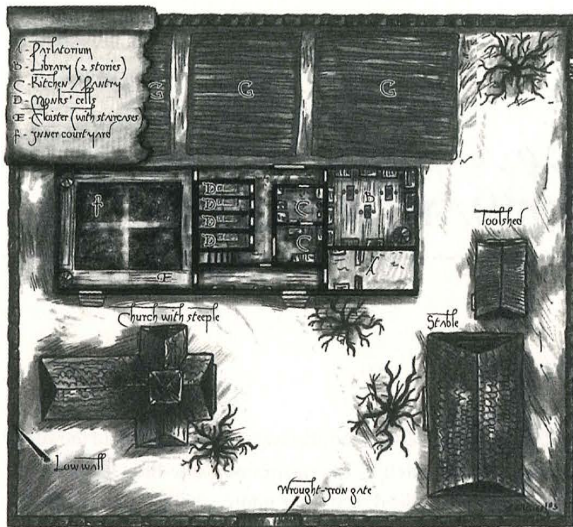
He knows nothing of the ritual or the regular cycle of openings—which will allow traversing the gate in this very year of 998 A.D.—and is attempting to force open the gate with a gruesome rite for which he requires human blood. Half a year ago, at the last solstice, he murdered three children in order to use their blood. The villagers' reaction took more potential child-sacrifices out of his reach, and he failed that summer. Now, six months later, another solstice approaches and the power of Ghatanothoa grows. He requires new sacrifices.

In the Village

There is nothing noteworthy about the houses—they're completely typical wooden peasants' huts. They are all deserted at the moment, though they're obviously still lived-in. All the men are currently searching for the missing children while the women have fled to the monastery. The monk Waldemar, not wanting to fail again for lack of sacrifices, has abducted four children and hidden them in a cave. (The exact sequence of events is laid out in the timeline in the appendix.)



Players' Map of the Surrounding Area



The monastery of Schwarzbrunn

In the Monastery

Sooner or later, the characters turn to the monastery. This monastery, dedicated to St. Benedict, is encompassed by a wall of about a man's height, an enclosure rather than a defense. The gate is wrought iron, and the brick buildings behind it are gray and forbidding on a bleak winter afternoon. To the right is a small stable, from which the breathing of a horse can be heard. To the left, a small church reaches up into the slate-colored sky—the tallest building to be found. Across from the gate is the main house of the monastery, a long two-story building with sickly ivy climbing its walls. Towering over the courtyard are several ancient elms whose leafless boughs reach for the sky, like skeletal fingers.

When the characters arrive, the monk Benjamin comes out of the stable where he's just fed the horse. He sees the group and hurries to the gate to welcome them. He'll hurriedly invite them in, and then sink to his knees on the spot to pray with them. Afterwards, he'll exchange the kiss of peace with them. The rules for receiving guests require these rituals. ("As soon as a guest is announced, therefore, let the Superior or the brethren meet him with all charitable service. And first of all let them pray together, and then exchange the kiss of peace—for the kiss of peace should not be offered until after the prayers have been said, on account of the devil's deceptions. In the salutation of all guests, whether arriving or departing, let all

humility be shown. Let the head be bowed or the whole body prostrated on the ground in adoration of Christ, who indeed is received in their persons.")

In the conversation that will surely follow, Benjamin will initially regard the characters with some suspicion, but as soon as they explain their mission, he'll elatedly invite them in. While leading them into the main house, he'll relate that the series of murders ended in the summer, shortly after they sent for help, after the death of the third child. Three days ago, though, four children disappeared, and the entire village is searching the woods for them at the moment. Anyone not able to help has retreated to the monastery seeking the protection of Our Lord Jesus Christ. After this explanation, and many questions about the hows and whys of their journey, he leads the new arrivals into the *Refectorium*, the monastery's dining hall, where many of the villagers and some of the monks are gathered.

The characters are presented with the very image of despair. Besides the women, only very old men resigned to tragedy and very young boys trying to look brave are here. In the corner, a baby cries, but the others are silent and stare into nothingness. The monks are trying to make their guests as comfortable as possible, but gloom has gripped them as well, and they go about their daily tasks in silence. When the characters enter the hall, all eyes turn to them, showing only distrust—which turns to joy as soon as Benjamin declares that these gentlemen have come to clear up the children's murders. In the process, he conveys to the gathering all the information he's learned from the characters.

The group is quickly offered a meal which is very rich, considering the season, with relatively fresh fruit and a hearty stew. While eating, they can pursue their first inquiries.



It's not easy to populate an entire village and a whole monastery with memorable characters. Consequently, it's recommended to use as few monks and peasants as possible, keeping the rest in the background. The Keeper will have problems playing too many NPCs, and the players will have trouble keeping them all straight. As a result, in this scenario certain interlocutors have been designated for the group. One of these is Benjamin. Whenever a player says he's going to look for a monk to ask him something, he'll find Benjamin.

If a monk with broader authority is needed, or if the characters would like to use the library, the Abbot Winfried can step in. If they want to talk to a villager, they'll run into Hagen, who discovers little Elsbeth and will therefore already be known to the characters.

This gives the group three principal interlocutors, a very manageable number. Don't forget about the rest of the inhabitants of Schwarzbrunn, of course, but keep them on the periphery, like extras, insofar as they don't bring themselves into the spotlight, like the Guardian *Fabian* or the cultist *Waldemar*.

Journal Inquiries

The Condition of the Bodies

The characters will probably attempt to learn as much as possible about the past June's child murders, which will confront them with the villagers' fear and superstition. Most of them believe that a werewolf (a "wolf-man") who revels in the blood of children is loose. All the children were in fact found drained of blood, with, in each case, the carotid artery opened. Many relate that these wounds were inflicted by claws, while some claim they were bite wounds. The children's flesh, to the contrary, was undamaged, at least when the body hadn't been lying in the woods too long. No one found any other wounds on them. (Waldemar slaughtered the children like animals, hanging them upside down and opening the carotid artery. He did not cut their throats, but just made a cut in the carotid. He took the bodies down and dumped them in the woods, which is why no traces of blood were found around them.)

The monk Benjamin who greeted the characters can say more about the condition of the bodies. As the monastery's healer, he examined the bodies. In fact, there were no additional wounds on the first two victims last summer (they didn't defend themselves until it was too late), while the third dead child showed some bruises and contusions. If asked, he can confirm that, aside from the single wound on the throat, he could find no further wounds.

He describes the wounds on the throats as having been inflicted very precisely—although the cuts weren't large, the bodies were almost completely drained of blood. If the characters ask if perhaps the blood was sucked out, Benjamin will regard them silently for a long time, and with an Insight roll, they can see that they've spoken his thought aloud. Nodding deliberately, he concurs: "That's what must have happened, may the Lord have mercy upon us!" and crosses himself. (Keeper tip: a Roman Catholic makes the sign of the cross with his right hand in the following order: forehead, chest, left shoulder, right shoulder.) Each throat evinced only a single wound less than an inch across, not two holes.



The Circumstances of the Murders

Anyone present can provide information about the circumstances of the murders. The first child, Hiltraud, was found on June third, lying bloodless in a bush not far from the Bearded Giant. They'll be happy to explain that this is a large boulder with the shape of a stooped, bearded giant which lies about a mile south of the

monastery. Many of the boulders in the surrounding area are said to be the remains of a whole army of giants who plagued this area long ago. The founder of the monastery defeated the giants by the grace of god, turning them to stone. Thereupon, the monastery was founded to the glory of God, "praised be His name."

The second child, Christian, was found four days later, on the seventh of June, once again not far from the Bearded Giant. The circumstances were almost identical. At this point, parents forbade their children to go out after dark and admonished them not to wander far from the village. Nevertheless, on the eleventh of June, another child was found murdered, little Jeremias. His body was found further south, about another mile beyond the boulder in question.

The dates given won't agree with the date of death, with the exception of the last child, because the villagers report the day they found the child, not the day of the murder. Nevertheless, the Keeper should let it slip that the children were being sought for some time. If the characters ask when exactly the children disappeared, after some brief calculations, they'll get the correct dates (see the timeline in the appendix).

After the third murder, children weren't even permitted out of their houses, and even then, none of them were left unwatched. No further deaths occurred, and after a few months everything had quieted down so much that things returned to normal. Children no longer seemed in danger. Until three days ago, when four more children disappeared! Maria, Elsbeth, Friedrich, and Eberhard went into the woods together and haven't been seen since. Since then, most of the villagers have been combing the woods while those who can't help wait in the safety of the monastery.

Bernhard von Wilhelm

Bernhard von Wilhelm founded the monastery after he prevented Ghatanothoa from breaking out with the help of friends and companions of the Guardian. As the area was Christianized, the Guardians were no longer revered as holy, but rather persecuted, and so the last Guardian of the Portal to Yaddith-Gho died in the year 750 without a successor. When the stars were right thirteen years later, minions of Ghatanothoa broke out of his undersea prison, broke through the gate, and sowed fear and death among the population of the surrounding area.

Only when Bernhard von Wilhelm, sent by the Church to investigate, worked together with those who kept alive the memory of the task of the Guardian, was the gate successfully closed. Bernhard was smart enough to recognize that someone had to keep the portal secure as Guardian and so he had the monastery built. Since then, one monk in the monastery has served as Guardian, even if he only dons his Guardian garb before the solstices in order to carry out the ritual that keeps the gate closed.

The players shouldn't learn this background at first and indeed shouldn't even investigate in this direction.

An Unhappy Homecoming

When the characters have informed themselves sufficiently, or if they take too close an interest in the monastery's founder, a loud clamor arises outside.

A group of men comes to the monastery; they've found Elsbeth dead. The uproar is naturally great—many burst into tears. The men who found Elsbeth had to contend with their discovery the whole way back. Their faces are stone, and they're in no mood to hold long conversations. If the characters press them, they'll explain very reluctantly that they found the child not far from the Bearded Giant, bloodless, like the others before. She was lying deep in the bushes, hidden. They had probably passed her by on the previous days.

Then they'll drink large quantities of beer and remain silent for the rest of the evening, staring darkly into space and barely reacting when addressed. The monk Benjamin has the dead girl brought into the washroom in which he'll prepare her body for burial. He forces himself to think as practically as possible and occupies himself with the necessary arrangements. "It will have to be quick. The ground will freeze soon," is one of the comments which may make him appear somewhat coldhearted, but this dispassionate manner is how he copes with the tragedy.

The characters may accompany him, of course—and lose 0/1d3 SAN. Elsbeth, in life a girl of nine, lies on a small table. Benjamin begins to wash her. A woman brings in a shroud that's too big for the little body. An examination of the corpse can only be carried out by a character who possesses *First Aid*. He'll discover the wound which opened the carotid artery, as well as traces left from the two days the body has lain in the woods, mostly a number of bite wounds from wild animals. The child is pale and seems to be completely without blood. If a *First Aid* roll succeeds, it can be determined that there are some abrasions visible around the wrists (an *Idea* roll concludes she was bound). With a hard, or halved, *First Aid* roll, the character will discover the imprints on her ankles (from which she was hung).

Meanwhile, it's gotten very late. The monk Waldemar comes into the room and says that he'll keep the deathwatch. The characters are given cells in which they are accommodated, two to a room. They're brought some supper—in case they still have an appetite.

Loci Eventorum

The Village of Schwarzbrunn

The village consists of little more than ten or so almost identical houses. They all have only a single story with a large living and work room and an adjoining stable, as well as a bedroom directly adjacent to the stable, where there's also a small pantry. The walls are made of wood, the floors of packed earth. To speak of wealth is out of the question.

The Monastery of Schwarzbrunn

The church is the tallest building. It has a cruciform foundation. Its interior has no ostentatious decoration, but there are a few pictures and statues.

The right-hand transept is interesting. In it is an altar dedicated to St. John the Baptist (the altar in the left transept is dedicated to

St. Benedict). Under this altar are the ritual chamber and the Gate to Yaddith-Gho. If the characters search the church, they can discover the chamber. A successful *Spot Hidden* or *Track* roll allows the character to notice two parallel grooves in the floor leading from the right side of the altar, parallel to the wall. The whole altar is on rollers, and over time, they've worn tracks into the floor.

The rollers are locked and even if the characters push with all their might against the altar, it won't move. In order to release the brakes, they have to first take the picture of St. John the Baptist on the front of the altar out of its frame (a *Spot Hidden* roll to find to that it can be done, and a *Repair/Devise* roll to figure out how to do it). Behind the picture is a little door about eight inches square. In the hollow behind it is the handle of a lever that disappears through the floor of the space. Pulling the lever upwards releases the latch and the altar can be pushed—when the handle is released, the rollers immediately lock again.

Pushing the altar aside reveals a staircase leading down to the ritual chamber. The stairs extend some fifteen feet below the floor, and at their foot lies a natural cavity of about twenty feet in diameter. The floors and walls are rough, and the ceiling vaults to a dome only about eight feet at its highest point. Around the sides, one can no longer stand upright. The characters enter the chamber on the southeastern side and have to duck a bit upon entering.

Two chests sit right next to the door. In one of them, they find the red ritual cowl, which is fairly old. In the other chest are the sorts of objects you might expect to find in the witch's kitchen of a black magician: black candles, chalk, exotic varieties of herbs, incense burners, phials with strange liquids (which have no effect if drunk or applied topically, except perhaps to lend a pungent smell). In addition, the group can also find a Greek translation—unfortunately fairly incomplete—of the *R'yeh Text*. (See the rulebook for information.) One chapter marked with a book mark is dedicated to the Great Old One Ghatanothoa. An excerpt describing the spell *Call Ghatanothoa* is reproduced in the appendix.

Otherwise, the chamber is completely empty. With a more exacting examination, if the characters *Spot Hidden*, they discover five flecks of wax describing a circle around the middle of the cave.

The stable is across from the church and has space for five horses. In the toolshed north of the stable there is also a well.

The left section of the main house is completely taken up by a cloister around a neatly tended inner courtyard. Narrow spiral staircases lead up on all four corners. There are some windows to the outside. Rows of vaulted Romanesque windows overlook the inner courtyard. Nocturnal forms can easily sneak in and out of the main house without being seen.

The actual living area of the main house can be entered from either floor, by means of a door—one on the north side and one on the south. The southern one is on the ground floor and leads directly into the Entrance Hall, through which the characters will enter the main house. From here, one can also reach the Parlatorium, the only room in which the monks are allowed to speak to each other and which also functions as the Refectory, or dining hall. In addition, the door directly across from the entrance leads into a bent passage from which a staircase on the left leads up to the second floor. Behind the stairs are some cells as well as the northern door to the cloister.

The monastery of Schwarzbrunn belongs to the Benedictine Order founded in the sixth century A.D. Originally, it was a very strict order, not only mandating silence but forbidding personal property.

These rules would likely drastically complicate running the adventure, so the Rule of Benedict is no longer strictly observed in the monastery of Schwarzbrunn. The Keeper can allow personal objects in the monks' chests to arouse suspicion, as well as letting the characters speak with the monks outside the Parlatorium.

A Benedictine monk wears a black, sack-like hooded cowl called a *cuculla*. It covers the whole body, leaving only the feet free. The wool for these garments comes from black sheep; they were first dyed only in the eleventh century. Naturally, Benedictines must be tonsured as well.

As far as the course of the monks' day goes, in the Schwarzbrunn monastery the Rule of Benedict isn't followed exactly, as well. The Night Office from 1:00–2:00 a.m. (Matins or Vigils, Latin *Vigilae*) is omitted. The rest of the course of the day corresponds to standard Benedictine monasteries:

At 4:00 a.m., the half-hour Morning Office prayers at sunrise (Lauds, Latin *Laudes*) are offered in the church. Thereafter, the monks go back to sleep.

Around 6:00 a.m., the monks rise and meet for the prayer of the first hour of the day (Prime, Latin *Prima Hora*).

At 6:30, they meet in the Parlatorium, continue praying, and divide up the daily work at a meeting called Chapter.

From 7:30 to 8:15, the morning Mass is celebrated.

Until 9:00, the monks work or pray meditatively.

The prayer of the third hour of the day (Terce or Tierce, Latin *Hora Tertia*) and another Mass last from 9:00 until 10:30. Thereafter, the monks work until 11:30.

At 11:30, the prayer of the sixth hour of the day (Sext, Latin *Hora Sexta*) is held.

The monks eat at noon, and then rest.

At 2:00 p.m., the prayer of the ninth hour of the day (Nones, Latin *Hora Nona*) is held.

The monks then work until Vespers or Evensong (Latin *Vespera*).

At 5:30 p.m. is a light evening meal (Collation) followed by a prayer.

At 6:00 p.m. the monks meet for the prayer before retiring (Compline, Latin *Complin*).

Around 7:00 p.m., the monks retire to their cells to study, pray, or sleep.

On the right side of the hallway are the Kitchen and a Pantry, as well as the Library. The pantry is the only room with a cellar beneath it. The entrance to a fissure in the earth which Ghatanothoa created with an earthquake (see below in the Conversations section) is hidden in the cellar. It is entered through a narrow crack in the southern wall through which a person of Waldemar's corpulence (SIZ 13) can just squeeze through. In front of the crack is a large, false wine cask that completely conceals it. The front face of the cask can be removed to enter the crack. Waldemar spent three months on this camouflage.

On the second floor of the main house, the library reaches up from the first floor. Over the Parlatorium are more cells. Above the first-floor cells are some administrative rooms, like, e.g., the abbot's study, as well as a washroom.

Behind the main house near the herb gardens are two small outhouses.

The Subterranean Fissure

This crack in the earth reaches from the pantry cellar of the monastery to underneath the boulder called the Bearded Giant, a good mile distant. It's very narrow and twisting, with many corners and niches in which shadows seem to lie in ambush for incautious characters. Approximately a half mile from each end, the passage momentarily widens somewhat. A crude enclosure built of boards is at this location. An adult can easily tear it apart, but the children trapped inside haven't been able to manage it. That may stem from their pitiful condition: they haven't eaten in days and only get enough water to keep them from dying prematurely. In addition, they're completely terrified and are living in their own filth.

A few steps further, barely out of sight of the slapped-together prison, is Waldemar's sacrificial site. A rope hangs from a crag above, the floor shows traces of dried blood, and on the ground is a large copper bowl, engraved with occult symbols—which are mostly covered by encrusted blood.

By the time the characters find this hiding place, likely only Maria will remain here, awaiting her rescue, or her fate.

The passageway ends a half mile or so further, directly under the boulder. Waldemar can only use this exit during the nights of his ritual murders, when he has direct contact with the Great Old One, and thereby has enough POW to lift the boulder with a *Levitate* spell so that he can slip out.



The Hunt for the Murderer

Overview

The Keeper's major task is to structure the time between December eleventh, the day after the characters' arrival, and December twenty-second, the big finale on the winter solstice, in order to slowly build tension. It's a relatively long period of time to fill up. Searching the library and reading books can fill up whole days, especially because daylight is short this time of year. In addition, anyone who joins the monks in their daily prayers and Masses will barely have any time for investigations.

The characters must initially recover from the horror of Elsbeth's murder. They can settle into the monastery and familiarize themselves with local conditions. They'll surely want to head out to the Bearded Giant. In addition, they will have plenty of opportunities to interact with the villagers and the monks. In this first act, the characters should also see the "red monk" for the first time. In reality, this is Fabian, Guardian of the Gate.

The second act begins with the next murder, as tension grows, and the villagers' reaction to a family of Jews passing through will pose an additional distraction. All the while, Ghatanothoa's power is growing, because the solstice is close. His power will manifest itself in visions and nightmares which will draw suspicion onto the "red monk." Ghatanothoa can't identify the Guardian himself, but why not set the characters upon him?

The third and final act leads up to the finale. The characters will identify the "red monk" and take him out, only to find that they've played into the hands of the real enemy—the Great Old One. Hopefully, they'll be able to prevent the fifth child's being killed and Walde- mar's being able to carry out his ritual. Nevertheless, the gate will be opened, giving the characters a more than unpleasant surprise.

Recovery

The morning after the arrival and the discovery of the dead girl, the previous day's events seem like a bad dream. The characters' sleep within the holy walls was deep and heavy, and they awake to see the woods under a light fog which forms unsettling shapes among the trees. But they can make out the disc of the sun through the dreary gray, though it will likely be midday before it drives away the last remains of the morning damp. A clear, beautiful day lies ahead.

The characters have many possibilities for proceeding, but only a few can be sketched out here. They can doubtless raise their standing among the villagers by taking part in the (fruitless) search for the missing children. In the process, they may visit the Bearded Giant, but even if they (correctly) guess that the entrance to an underground passage may lie beneath it, they'll have no luck in moving the boulder weighing several tons. A day with a search party will not produce any results, other than ensuring a deep sleep the following night, since searching in the winter woods is strenuous. In order to imbue the search with a little more variety, the Keeper can work in encounters with animals, a strange white shadow between the trees (a persistent patch of fog), or the discovery of the remains of some old scraps of cloth that have nothing to do with the events. Of course, the characters can also converse extensively with their companions, because each search party is normally composed of five to six people (not including the characters).

Investigations in the village (only possible in the morning and evening, because otherwise everyone has too much work that needs to be accomplished in the meager daylight hours) won't produce any notable payoff. The characters can get a more exact picture of the abduction, which may provide a renewed opportunity for them to notice the regularity of the sequence of events.

CONVERSATIONS

The Villagers

The group can learn from Beben that on December fifth—less than a week ago—the earth shook. Some of the villagers think, as a result, that God wants to punish them like the Egyptians of old: Weren't the punishments the death of children, earthquakes, and bugs? "Think about the worms that were in all the pantries in the spring!" And they're braced for more. A monk can of course step in at this point and list the correct plagues in their proper order: First, the waters turned to blood, then frogs, gnats, flies, pestilence among the Egyptians' cattle, boils, hail, locusts, darkness, and as the last and most horrible plague, the death of all the first-born children of Egypt in a single night.

A black mood has taken Schwarzbrunn. Characters with Insight will notice that many of those present are under such pressure that a single spark could be enough to cause violent emotions to break out. The Keeper can demonstrate this, for example, by having a small argument turn into serious brawl in the blink of an eye. Apart from that, the characters will hear a number of superstitious hypotheses explaining the children's abduction and murder. Most are agreed upon the opinion that it's a werewolf, an evil man who can turn into a wild wolf with the help of a magic belt and then attack people in order to feast on their blood. A character well versed in *First Aid* can of course state authoritatively that that the wounds were not inflicted by a wolf.

In the Monastery

In the monastery, the characters can speak with the monks. They don't know any more about the children who have disappeared than the villagers, but despite it all, they still possess hope. "The Lord moves in mysterious ways," will be a frequent refrain, and the characters get the feeling that the loss of the children has some deeper meaning to them. The characters will later note the monks weren't all that far off. Unfortunately, the monks' boundless trust in God will not be rewarded.

In the monastery's Scriptorium, which doubles as a library, there are several standard works on the occult (easy or doubled *Library Use* roll to find them), but no Mythos books.

If the characters look for information on werewolves, they will find *Schwarzbrunn Handouts 1, 2, and 3*, in 1d10 hours. The contents of *Schwarzbrunn Handouts 2 and 3* could also be tales told by the villagers, in which case they won't be found in the library. On the other hand, if the characters are specifically trying to verify the villagers' stories, then they can find the handouts as confirmation.

If one of the characters takes an interest in the history of the monastery, he'll be pointed to the monastery's chronicle. This multi-volume, constantly growing work primarily records births and deaths as well as listing the monastery's activities, like what

books are copied, which buildings are renovated or expanded, how many tithes are received, as well as recording commerce, visitors, and so forth. In addition, it contains descriptions of singular events and natural phenomena, a rich source in case the characters decide to pursue the parallels to the Biblical plagues of Egypt. The foundation of the monastery should be described in the first volume, but as they will find out, the corresponding pages have been torn from the book!

Not least, this baffles Abbot Winfried who also serves as Librarian. He doesn't know exactly what it contained. There was supposed to be an introductory preface by Bernhard von Wilhelm, the monastery's founder, but no one can remember much about it. The only possibility for learning more about it is by sending a messenger to Bistum, where a copy is kept. In the interest of good relations, Bistum will surely place it at Schwarzbrunn's disposal. The trip there and back should take long enough that the book only becomes available to the characters shortly after the next murder.



The red monk hastens through the snow

The Red Monk

In the period following, perhaps the characters will set up night watches, or perhaps one of them will wake with a start from an unquiet sleep. In any case, the relevant character will believe he's heard a noise outside. Looking out the window, he'll see a form in a red monk's cowl, with the hood pulled over his head. The figure sneaks from the main house over to the church and disappears quickly around the corner.

Anyone who tries to follow witnesses a vision springing from the growing influence of Ghatanothoa. The character will probably come out of the main house and then sneak across the courtyard to the church.

The elms sway in the night wind—it's cold. In the distance, the plaintive howl of a wolf sounds, and the character involuntarily turns in the direction of the sound. As he turns back around, the trees seem to have grown larger, while the church seems shrunken. The whole courtyard seems strangely distorted, its dimensions shifting further and the trees shooting up into the sky, their branches and twigs as thick as towers, pushing walls and stones aside and wriggling through the air with an eerie life of their own, as if seeking blood to drink. They keep coming closer. They want the character...

Every character in the courtyard at this point sees the same thing and suffers a loss of 1/1d6 SAN before blacking out. Anyone watching from a window simply sees the character in the courtyard

suddenly take a few steps backwards and then tumble over with a pained sigh, lying motionless.

This vision is brought about by the imminent arrival of Ghatanothoa.

The characters should not discover the ritual room tonight. If they search the church and are about to discover it, they'll be interrupted by a monk who has heard strange sounds coming from the kitchen and wants them to investigate. He will severely reprimand the characters for the sacrilege of taking apart an altar and toss them out of the church. If they hesitate, he'll threaten to call the abbot. He cannot be convinced that the children might be hidden in his church.

Then, when the following dramatic events ensue, the characters will be diverted from the church for the time being.

Uproar in Schwarzbrunn

With the discovery of the next dead child, Eberhard, on the thirteenth of December, the atmosphere explodes. He's found in a completely different location than the others, about a mile north of the monastery. If the characters have previously given indications that someone from the village or monastery may be responsible, boundless mistrust reigns, quickly giving way to nasty accusations and brutal confrontations. No one dares approach the monks, who try, insofar as they can, to settle the differences. They have little success.



Nightmares & What Follows

The characters are plagued nightly by bizarre nightmares. Again and again, they see the mighty elms and in their shadow the lost and lonely shape of a little child. As the child reaches out its hands imploringly, the surroundings slowly tint red, and a stentorian chant resounds out of the void. The child falls to its knees and covers its face while the chanting voices slide more and more out of time until each sings on his own, creating a dreadful cacophony, swelling to a deafening roar, as a gloating laughter rises above the din.

The characters wake bathed in sweat, despite the cold weather. They have never seen the child before. If they've had the missing children described to them, they can surmise that it may be Maria. If they describe the shape in their dreams to one of the villagers, he or she will recognize Maria. At this point, it will be clear that the dream did not merely come from their overstretched nerves—justifying a 0/1d4 SAN loss.

The characters will probably head for the elms and search them exhaustively. The trees have nothing to do the events, however. That said, a black crow can fly up during the characters' investigation, fly exactly five circles around a tree before landing on it, cawing angrily.

Shortly after Eberhard's remains are found, the messenger will arrive with the chronicle of the monastery from Bistum (*Schwarzbrunn Handout 4*). If the characters haven't yet noticed the missing pages, then ignore the above. They will not be missing, in order that the characters will have the information at their disposal at this point.

Scapegoats

As soon as drama allows, a traveling family (father Samuel, mother Esther, and three children, Samuel, David, and Ruth) arrives in Schwarzbrunn on a horsecart. They're traveling to visit relatives in the south to celebrate Hanukkah together—a Jewish festival commemorating the rededication of the Temple in Jerusalem after the victory in 165 B.C. over the Hellenic Seleucid empire. They are obviously Jews. And even if violence among the villagers has remained relatively restrained to this point, it's obvious at first sight that this family's life is in danger. They themselves don't seem to notice, as they're used to general animosity and have had a long trip behind them. In the beginning, the hostility is relatively subtle. They're willingly taken in and fed, but the characters will notice immediately that—metaphorically speaking—the knives are being sharpened.

Whether and how the characters help the family strongly depends on the group, and all the possibilities can't be gone into here. The village will gather into a lynch mob after dark, armed with torches, scythes, carving knives, and threshing flails, driving the family out to hang them on the spot. It shouldn't be easy for the characters to rescue the family, but in the end, they should succeed, because opportunities for successes in this adventure are few and far between. If the family is successfully rescued, all five of them will naturally thank the group profusely. Samuel the father will mutter something like, "Such a strange time, when children disappear everywhere." Asked what he means, he explains that a dead child was found in a neighboring village as well, and, if he's not mistaken, he was found on the third of December after having been missing for a day. He shakes his head sadly and adds, "The world has gone mad." The group thus has the opportunity to learn that the most recent series of murders had its origin in the neighboring village.

On the Trail of the Red Monk

Searching the Cells

The characters will likely search for the red monk. No one in the monastery has ever seen or heard of him, though. If the characters compare each of the monks with the figure in the night, they can hardly differentiate one from the other. Waldemar alone seems to

be somewhat too fat. But even then, it's hard to say exactly, as it was dark and the robe was cut very loosely.

The monks will all object strongly to a search of their cells and accuse the characters of suspecting these unblemished servants of the Lord—"praised be His name!"—of damnable child murders. The abbot will strictly forbid this invasion of their privacy. If one of the characters nevertheless succeeds in Persuading the monks or if they rummage through the cells in secret, they will discover nothing, apart from a few personal belongings. Fabian, the red monk, keeps his personal items in the ritual chamber under the church, while Waldemar possesses nothing that could draw suspicion onto him. He wasn't able to bring the books that he studied previously with him, as they were the property of his former monastery. After reading the pages covering the origins of the monastery in the chronicle, he destroyed them (if they're missing at all).

If the characters weren't successful at concealing their search of the cells, they will no longer enjoy any support among the monks, unless one of them can command respect on the basis of his position as a higher ranking religious official.

A Recent Vision

If the characters don't yet suspect the red monk as the child murderer, then they'll have a further vision caused by Ghatanothoa's nearness. When they return to the monastery on the evening of December eighteenth, as they're closing the gate behind themselves, they will hear a child's cry for help from behind the northern wall, clearly outside the monastery grounds. Presumably they'll immediately turn around and run along the walls (rolling against DEXx4 not to slip on the boggy ground), only to see a figure clad in red disappearing into the nearby woods. Chasing him comes to naught. If one of the characters successfully *Tracks*, he will be able to make out some human footprints, but they disappear in the woods. If he succeeds in a hard, or halved, roll, he can also determine that the prints are already several hours old.

Further Investigations

The characters will surely try to find out who the red monk is. If they have heard about the child murder in the neighboring village from Samuel, they will presumably try to learn who wasn't in Schwarzbrunn during the time in question. There were exactly two monks missing: Fabian, Guardian of the Gate, and Waldemar were absent. Waldemar was sent out to collect an outstanding tithe and committed the murder while doing so. Fabian was supposed to transfer some completed books to Bistum, and on the way purchased some of the final paraphernalia needed for the solstice ritual (which the characters likely saw him take to the ritual chamber under the church a few nights later; if so, they suffered a vision in trying to follow him. See above in the section *The Red Monk*). Needless to say, either of them could have been at the crime scene at the time in question.

The characters should not be able to watch all the monks all the time. The monks will notice such an attempt very quickly and protest vehemently. The only way to account for the monks' comings and goings is by staking out the courtyard. Theoretically, two people on opposite corners could keep the main house under surveillance. If the players have this idea too early in the course of the adventure, the Keeper can always let them nod off with some frequency (e.g., with CONx5, CONx4, etc., rolls in order to keep from falling asleep,



which will inevitably happen at some point). At first, they won't even notice that they've nodded off for a couple minutes. To explain the extreme sleepiness, the growing proximity of Ghatanothoa can be cited, as it seems to have all sorts of effects on the human spirit.

The Third Victim

On the night of 17–18 December, Waldemar kills the third of the missing children, Friedrich. The child's body doesn't need finding, as it's suspended from the church steeple, with a rope around the neck, as though he had been hanged. In fact, Waldemar bled him to death like the others. If one of the characters has been keeping watch outside, he nods off and only wakes up when the murderer is back in his cell. Depending on his location, he'll see something unidentifiable hanging from the steeple, or he'll hear a strange noise from the direction of the steeple. The discovery of the body in the middle of the night and in a holy site like the church leads to a loss of 1/1d4 SAN. If no one is keeping a night watch, the characters will be awakened by the monks who insist they witness the abominable blasphemy outside.

An Investigation of the Church

Meanwhile, the characters should make another attempt at investigating the church, with respect to the moveable altar. If they haven't followed this lead yet, all of the characters will have the same nightmare the following night, once again instigated by Ghatanothoa's nearness. In it, the dreaming character stands in the church and the stentorian chorale sounds around him. This time he thinks he can make out alien, blasphemous syllables and scraps of words in it. The church is only lit dimly by a few candles and fleeting figures constantly seem to disappear between the columns. Suddenly, a loud crunching noise comes from the right transept, accompanied by a peculiar gurgling. The character is unbearably afraid, but against his will, he walks through the flickering light towards the sound. His hand slides over the wood of the greasy pews, feeling as if it's running through warm blood. But he cannot pull his hand off, and slides it down the pew, as he's drawn closer to the roaring and gurgling. Finally, he can see into the transept where a pillar of water suddenly collapses and flows over him in a huge wave.

Then the character wakes up with the salty taste of blood in his mouth (he's bitten his tongue in his sleep). The water apparition in the transept should hint at the altar picture of St. John the Baptist.

It will become apparent if the characters follow this cue from Ghatanothoa, who wants to get them to stop Fabian's ritual.

In the ritual chamber, there aren't in fact any clues to the identity of the red monk, but the characters probably won't need an Idea roll to decide to post a guard down there. He will only need to wait until the red monk arrives and then overpower him. Fabian will show up at some point, in order to complete the final preparations for his ritual.

If the characters don't have this idea, then they can observe the red monk sneaking into the church again at night, this time noticing a silver ring on his right hand. If they don't catch him on the spot, they'll later be able to identify Fabian on the basis of the ring. However it happens, a confrontation with the Guardian is inevitable.

Fabian will naturally try to flee when he's caught, but the characters can easily catch him and overpower him. At this point, Fabian should die one way or another, for example, by hitting his head against a wall during a struggle—if the characters don't simply kill him themselves.

The Finale

Waldemar's Unmasking

The supposed villain is dead, but the last missing child, Maria, still hasn't been found, and no one still has any idea of where she's being held. The villagers' and monks' excitement at the characters' "success" is correspondingly subdued.

Shortly after the characters' announcement, Annegret, the Guardian's confederate in the village, will approach them. She will confide in them that she is utterly sure Fabian could not have been responsible. When she's asked for substantiation, she tells them of the former Guardian's task. As proof, she can produce a letter from the monastery's founder, Bernhard von Wilhelm (*Schwarzbrunn Handout 5*). Now the characters will finally know what what is really going on, and can get an idea of what the murderer is trying to do with his child sacrifices. Presumably, this will lead them back to Waldemar, since he's still the only one except Fabian who wasn't in the monastery during the time of the first murder. That alone should suffice to pose him a number of uncomfortable questions, and if sufficient pressure is exerted (and the abbot doesn't intervene), there's a chance he'll finally confess.

The more exciting variant is surveilling the monastery during the night before December twenty-second (the day of the solstice), when the murderer must strike one final time in order to accomplish the fifth murder. One of the characters will assuredly discover the figure sneaking through the dark halls and hopefully not strike immediately—because Waldemar will artlessly assert he needed to visit the privy or that he was terribly hungry and wanted to pinch something from the pantry. Otherwise, he'll lead them straight away into the passageway and further to Maria, whose murder the characters will hopefully prevent. If he's discovered early on, he'll nevertheless try again to get to Maria that night through the wine cask in the pantry cellar, in order to complete the summoning of the Great Old One. The characters can still nab him. Of course, if he's caught

This scenario can be the hook for a campaign stretching over several centuries, as is described in the Outlook section). If there's no interest in continuing, then the characters should have at least a chance of successfully completing the ritual because otherwise the end of the scenario will be very unsatisfying if it can't be resolved with a follow-up adventure (not provided here).

in the monastery, he'll be much more careful on his second attempt at sneaking out.

Even Waldemar's unmasking, Maria's rescue, and the jubilation of the villagers won't remove the characters' most pressing concern: having killed the Guardian, they need to make up for their horrific mistake by ensuring that the gate stays shut. Annegret wasn't initiated deeply enough in the details of the ritual to simply replace Fabian. The characters should try and conduct the complicated ritual



on the basis of Annegret's description. But they will not succeed in reconstructing the complicated ritual in the brief time remaining. They'll be able to cobble together part of it, figure out which symbols have to be drawn on the floor, and in which order the herbs must be burned. They will also get the pronunciation of the necessary chant, and Annegret will think she remembers the melody. Some die rolls should heighten the tension. But, in the end, it will fail.

The Ritual

The characters sit in a circle in the ritual chamber, the black candles flickering between them. The pungent smoke of the exotic herbs draws tears from their eyes. The monotonous chant seems to have taken possession of their bodies, as they sway in time almost spontaneously. The strange symbols, sigils of diverse demons, form a strange snake-like trail across the floor, almost seeming to live and writhe. Is it merely an illusion generated by the twisting tendrils of smoke? All the participants fall into a trance, the steady chant seeming to fill the world; the candles flicker as if in a draft that seems to come out of the middle of the circle. The symbols blaze up brightly. The earth shakes, the spell casters are gripped by vertigo, as the stones underneath them appear to spin.

The chant breaks off as if by command. The candles burn steadily again, and most of the smoke seems to have lifted. Unsteady glances are exchanged: Did it work? The signs and symbols sit quietly again and the floor once again seems as solid as before. But then the middlemost stone in the circle begins to become transparent. Subtly so, but one can see through it, apparently looking onto distant vistas, onto a remoteness lit by a dim twilight. Cyclopean stones lie there on the other side, blocks of stone high as towers, at the foot of a huge and frightening mountain. But the stones look shattered and scattered helter-skelter across the ground. Strange, green, shimmering plants sway slightly in an imperceptible wind. Then a strange being floats through the scenery—a hideous fish!

Suddenly, everything becomes clear. The vista, becoming ever clearer, is under the sea, rather than the heathen god's palace they might have expected. The stones in the chamber floor are now almost transparent and the sound of the waves is audible. Drops appear as if by condensation around the circle in the floor, drops that run together in rivulets, and the rush of the water becomes louder.

By now, it should be clear to the characters that the ritual has failed and only a swift flight can save their lives. The sea water will break into the ritual chamber, flooding it and the monastery. Even nearby Schwarzbrunn will not be spared. Anyone who escapes the flood will be standing on the shore of a lake a mile and a quarter across. Then the water, reeking of salt, will rise no further. An object



appears from the waves—is it a table, or an alien thing from the depths of the sea? Wherever it came from, it's obviously not alive, and quickly sinks again into the dark waves.

If the characters succeeded in saving Maria, then they've earned 1d6 Sanity points. If they've warned (and, conceivably, awoken) all the inhabitants of Schwarzbrunn, e.g., by ringing the church bell, or risking their lives running from house to house, then they've earned a further 1d6 Sanity points.

Outlook

A salt-water lake is all that remains of the monastery and village of Schwarzbrunn. Many places change over the course of time and the earth is constantly in movement. What aeons ago was a connection between one realm and another is now a one-way track into nothingness, because one of the lands sank to the bottom of the sea.

It's horrifying that so many innocents had to die for this nothingness, murdered by a man heedlessly striving after knowledge.

Perhaps the characters will ask themselves, how two hundred years ago strange monsters could have come into this world—however, they will likely not pursue the question. We know better. We know that Ghatanothoa can indeed still use this gate. Of course, he must first dive through the sea to reach it, but one trapped on the ocean floor is not bothered by a swim through a lake. We also know that no one remains to close the gate. What then?

The Great Old One will not immediately cross over this time. Nothing will hurry Ghatanothoa. The time will become ripe. Maybe it will be almost a thousand years until he finally uses this path—in the 1920s. What, after all, are a thousand years to a being out of infinite time...?

Appendix

People in the Monastery

Benjamin, 39, Monk and Healer				
STR 8	CON 11	SIZ 10	INT 14	POW 11
DEX 8	APP 7	EDU 13	SAN 75	HP 11

Damage Bonus: n/a

Attacks: Fist 50%, damage 1d3

Skills: Craft (Cabinetry) 45%, First Aid 60%, Other Language (Latin) 55%, Medicine 50%, Write Language (Latin) 60%



Description: Benjamin is the first monk that the group will encounter. He should serve as a conversational partner for the characters and always stands ready to help with word or deed. Benjamin is relatively small and thin. Even his face appears quite bony. In combination with his slightly protruding eyes, he gives the impression of a skull. Even his teeth, thanks to their size, fit this image.

Even though Benjamin's appearance is enough to send a shiver down the spine, upon acquaintance, he obviously a friendly and companionable person, who would rather join in than look on. He's very chatty and constantly asks questions about the characters' provenance and the world "out there." In the monastery, he works primarily as a healer but also enjoys caring for the animals or working in the library. He only tries to get out of working in the gardens.

Winfried, 57, Abbot and Librarian				
STR 8	CON 9	SIZ 11	INT 13	POW 14
DEX 8	APP 10	EDU 15	SAN 80	HP 10

Damage Bonus: n/a

Attacks: Fist 50%, damage 1d3

Skills: Examine Penetratingly 65%, Other Language (Latin) 80%, Organize 75%, Scripture 90%, Theology 60%, Write Language (Latin) 80%

Description: Winfried is abbot of the monastery and functions simultaneously as the librarian. He sees himself as a father to the monks and acts as such. He can always take command of a room with a single look from his gray eyes. This may initially give the impression that he is feared, but it's more respect that brings conversations to a halt when he enters a room (and even that is somewhat secondary, as the monks are ashamed to be caught talking outside the Parlatorium). He is indeed strict, but just, and as such is prized by most monks and all the villagers.



His outer appearance is also very cold: he speaks very little and when he does, his voice is raspy. His nose is sharp and his lips very thin. His head is completely bald and shows a few brown age spots.

Waldemar, 36, Monk and Ghatanothoa Worshipper

STR 14	CON 13	SIZ 13	INT 15	POW 16
DEX 10	APP 11	EDU 14	SAN 0	HP 13

Damage Bonus: +1d4

Attacks: Fist 50%, damage 1d3+DB; Knife 50%, damage 1d4+2+DB

Skills: Act 75%, Cthulhu Mythos 15%, Other Language (Greek) 45%, Other Language (Latin) 60%, Occult 65%, Write Language (Greek) 45%, Write Language (Latin) 60%

Spells: *Call/Dismiss Ghatanothoa* (see below for spell description), *Levitate*, *Voice of Ra*

Description: Waldemar is the "newcomer" in the monastery, having only been there five years. It's actually not uncommon for monks to move to a different monastery. Waldemar has settled in well in the meantime and is well-liked, because he never shirks any task, a characteristic which allows him to avoid suspicion. He's actually the most popular of all the monks, and it's an open secret that he sometimes helps himself to extra rations when a meal hasn't satisfied him.



None of the monks know that Waldemar has been delving into the occult for some time, or that he's learned that a portal to unimaginable knowledge must be somewhere in the monastery. Through his research, he's learned of the gate and a ritual which can summon the Great Old One Ghatanothoa, which is exactly what he tries to do in this adventure, in the belief that Ghatanothoa will bestow unlimited knowledge upon him.

Fabian, 49, Monk and Guardian

STR 11	CON 11	SIZ 13	INT 12	POW 14
DEX 12	APP 13	EDU 13	SAN 55	HP 12

Damage Bonus: n/a

Attacks: Fist 50%, damage 1d3

Skills: Art (Calligraphy) 90%, Cthulhu Mythos 10%, Other Language (Greek) 90%, Other Language (Latin) 90%, Teach 50%, Write Language (Greek) 90%, Write Language (Latin) 90%

Spells: *Close Gate* (see below for spell description)

Description: Fabian is a lanky, tall monk with dark hair and dark, deep-set eyes. He blinks unnaturally often, which may initially confuse a conversational partner. Fabian is withdrawn and spends most of his time in the Scriptorium, copying manuscripts. He's universally praised for his beautiful calligraphic hand. In addition to his job, Fabian saves the monastery and the surrounding area anew every half year. He is the Guardian who casts a spell in the ritual chamber under the church each solstice, keeping the gate shut and preventing Ghatanothoa from crossing through. In the meantime, Fabian has been seeking an apprentice. He had in fact chosen Friedrich, one of the boys who disappeared. Consequently, he'll be shattered to see Friedrich hanging dead from the church tower. If a character is watching him closely, his shock can be easily misinterpreted.



Some other monks live in the monastery who can be called *Ludwig* or *Michael*, etc. Their jobs may be, for example, maintaining the herb garden, copying manuscripts, bookkeeping, or the monastery's buying and selling. A description of medieval monasteries is given in the *Cthulhu Dark Ages* rulebook beginning on page 55.

People in the Village

Hagen, 31, Self-Confident Peasant

STR 15	CON 14	SIZ 11	INT 10	POW 11
DEX 12	APP 12	EDU 8	SAN 65	HP 13

Damage Bonus: +1d4

Attacks: Fist 60%, damage 1d3+DB

Skills: Art (Play Flute) 60%, Craft (Farming) 75%, Predict Weather 50%, Tell Scary Stories 65%

Description: Hagen found Elsbeth's body. The characters will need to speak with him, if they wish to inquire further. As a consequence, Hagen will serve as their source of information in the village and will soon shed his taciturnity. When the group first encounters him, he's still too shocked by his discovery to handle talking much. He prefers to give himself over to drink.

On the following day, he'll be very hungover and will consequently present an unpleasant aspect, with bloodshot eyes and tangled hair, but he's already more communicative. From the third day on, he's a virtuous farmer who has worked hard his entire life and will continue to do so for some time. He has both feet firmly

on the ground, but when he speaks about the murders in the summer, and now about Elsbeth, his voice sinks and he crosses himself. He looks unsurely from right to left and whispers about werewolves.

Hagen is powerfully built, but not particularly large. His skin is weathered and a scar runs across his right cheek. In addition, he hobbles a bit. Asked about his injuries, he'll dramatically tell of a mounted messenger who came through here eight years ago and whose horse reared up in panic—first, a hoof hit Hagen in the head and he fell to the ground unconscious, then the horse landed on his leg, breaking it. He recuperated in the care of Benjamin the monk and has almost completely recovered. He was tremendously lucky, although, of course, he's never been paid any recompense. Everyone in Schwarzbrunn (except for Waldemar, who's only been in the monastery for five years) can confirm the story.

If the characters ask around in the village, the people will become unsure and will relate the story to the current events—and the rider's horse will suddenly become pitch-black and flames snort from his nostrils...



Annegret, 48, Mother and Confederate of the Guardian

STR 12	CON 15	SIZ 10	INT 11	POW 16
DEX 11	APP 11	EDU 9	SAN 50	HP 13

Damage Bonus: n/a

Skills: Craft (Farming) 50%, Cthulhu Mythos 8%, First Aid 60%, Teach 60%

Spells: *Close Gate* (see below for spell description), which she has only mastered incompletely.

Description: Old Annegret is the Guardian's ally in the village. She has borne six children and lost three of them (two died in the cradle, one from the gripe). She has seen much and will pitch in when necessary. At first, she's not much interested in the characters. Such gentlemen are very suspect, and she knows the secrets of the gate and that strangers can't be trusted. The knowledge must be protected specifically from them—at least for as long as possible.

She has already begun initiating her fifteen-year-old daughter *Maria* as her successor. Consequently, the girl has had horrible nightmares recently and characters keeping watch at night can be distracted by the the girl's screams. Annegret will quickly allay their fears, ascribing it to the child-murders. And looking into her steel-gray eyes and at her tightly pressed lips, only a very strong-minded person will dare object.



Spells

Call Ghatanothoa

This abhorrent ritual calls the Lord of the Volcano from the floor of the ocean, not far from R'lyeh, to a chosen area. No particular buildings or facilities are needed, but the blood of five people must be sacrificed over the course of five days. The blood of children, which contains more life force, is particularly powerful. If one concludes the ritual on a solstice, it increases the chance of the Call's success (and reduces the chance of success of a Dismissal) by 10%.

Like other Call/Dismiss spells, it costs a variable number of magic points and 1d10 SAN. The spellcaster can use the magic points of the sacrificial victims—double the number from children up to the age of sixteen.

Close Gate

By means of this ritual, a gate that has been opened by a magician or by oneself—or one that's about to be used—can be closed. As many magic points must be spent as would be necessary to use the gate (see the spell *Create Gate* in the rulebook).

If anyone attempts to use a gate while it's being shut, then a POW vs. POW roll on the Resistance Table will decide who succeeds. If the would-be user loses, the consequences can be fatal. Perhaps (Keeper's decision), he's hurled completely out of the known space-time continuum, perhaps he lands somewhere between the two gates. This spell costs one Sanity point.

Timeline

This timeline should serve as a guideline, but it doesn't have to be slavishly adhered to. If the group is too occupied on December fifteenth, for example, the arrival of the Jewish family can be postponed. The dates of the children's murders can't be moved, however, because they're important for the *Call/Dismiss Ghatanothoa* spell that *Waldemar* wants to cast.

Date	Event
Remote Antiquity	The gate is created.
Stone Age/Bronze Age	A cult develops around the gate, keeping the gate closed by means of regular rituals.
750 A.D.	The last Guardian dies without a successor.
763 A.D.	The stars are right and minions of Ghatanothoa cross over into our world.
765 A.D.	<i>Bernhard von Wilhelm</i> is sent to scrutinize the occurrences and to take measures.
766 A.D.	<i>Bernhard von Wilhelm</i> and some old friends of the last guardian succeed in reconstructing the ritual and closing the gate.
771 A.D.	<i>Bernhard von Wilhelm</i> has collected enough material to have a monastery built over the gate. Only he and one man from the village are initiated into knowledge of the gate. They ensure that the lore is always passed down to two people.

Circa 980–990

The monk *Waldemar* pursues metaphysical studies and learns of Ghatanothoa and the gate. He develops a plan for obtaining overpowering knowledge about the nature of the universe through Ghatanothoa.

13 December 993

Waldemar has himself transferred to the monastery of Schwarzbrunn and begins his search for the gate (in vain).

Circa 998

The stars align in a position favorable to Ghatanothoa. He can begin to cross over into our world through the gate when it opens.

June 998

Waldemar wants to open the gate at the summer solstice.

1 June 998

Waldemar kills *Hiltraud*, a girl from the village, for the blood he needs for his spell. Second murder, of *Christian*.

6 June 998

11 June 998

Third child-murder, of *Jeremias*. The village beseeches the authorities for help.

16 June 998

Waldemar is forced to break off the ritual because of the heightened attention of the villagers.

2 December 998

Another child is killed by *Waldemar*, but he chooses one from a neighboring village so that it doesn't come to the attention of anyone in Schwarzbrunn.

5 December 998

Ghatanothoa opens up a crack in the bedrock with an earthquake, creating a passageway from the monastery to the boulder called *the Bearded Giant*.

7 December 998

In order avoid failing again because of a shortage of sacrifices, *Waldemar* kidnaps four children at once. He hides them in the recently created passage.

7 December 998

Elsbeth, the first of the four children, is killed and her body hidden in the woods.

10 December 998

The characters arrive in the area. The villagers find *Elsbeth's* body.

12 December 998

13 December 998

The second child, *Eberhard*, is killed.

15 December 998

Eberhard's body is found in the woods.

17 December 998

The Jewish family arrives.

Friedrich is murdered, and that night his body is found hanging from the church steeple.

22 December 998

The big finale.

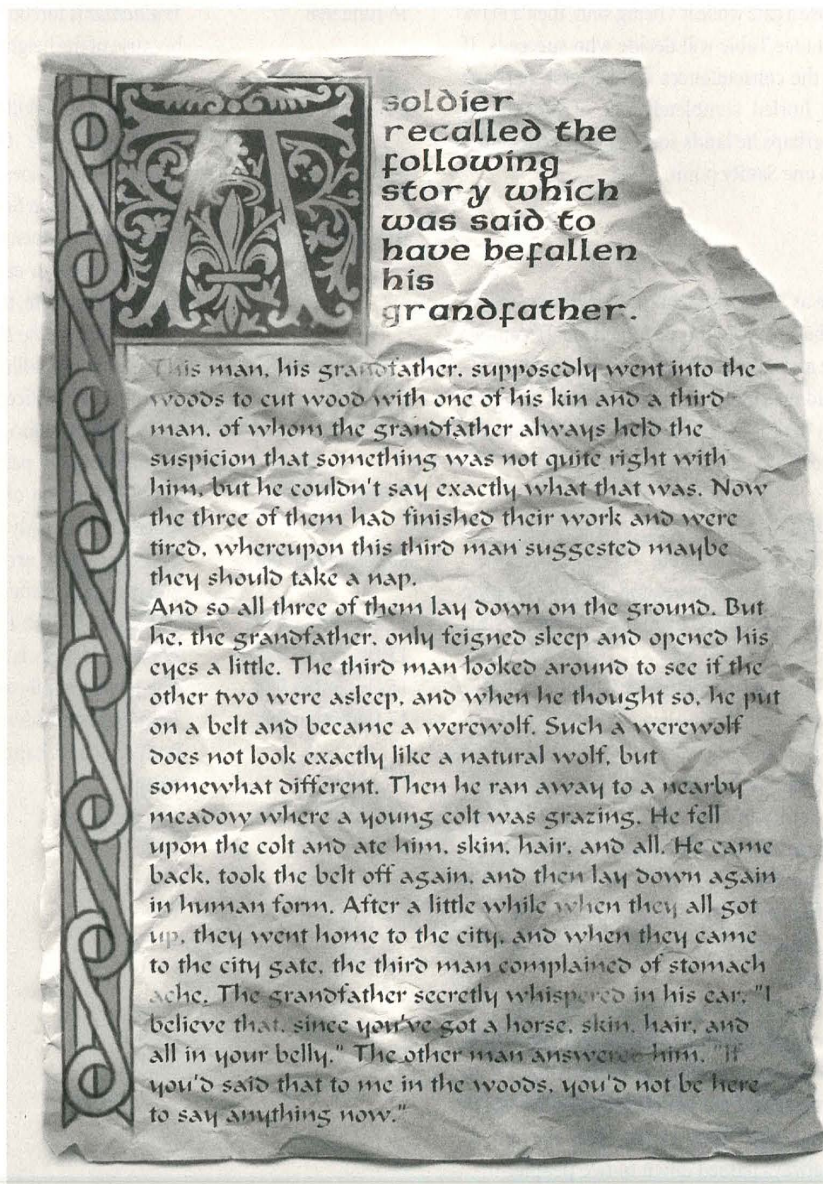
Handouts

Overview of the Handouts

Nos.	Condition and Location	Language	Research Theme	Type/Information
1	Good. Monastery library	Latin	Werewolves	Book excerpt
2	Good. Monastery library	German	Werewolves	Book excerpt
3	Good. Monastery library	German	Werewolves	Book excerpt
4	Good. Bistum library Transported in winter (possible moisture marks)	German	Monastery's founding	Book excerpt very old (c. 150 yrs.)
5	Old and greasy, writing already very faded. Provided by Annegret	German	(Is provided)	Letter, very old (c. 200 yrs.)

Notes to the Handouts: Handouts 1–3 “actually exist.” Handout 1 goes back to the *Satyricon of Petronius Arbiter*. Handouts 2 and 3 are classical German legends which were later recorded by the *Brothers Grimm*.

Schwarzbrunn Handout 2: The Werewolf



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Schwarzbrunn Handout 1: Niceros recounts

SAGRICON OF PEORNIUS ARBICER

When I was still a slave, we lived in a narrow street; the house is Gavilla's now. There, as the gods would have it, I fell in love with Berendius, the tavern-keeper's wife; you all knew Melissa from Barentum, the prettiest of pretty wenches! Not that I courted her carnally or for venery, but more because she was such a good sorceress. Nothing I asked did she ever refuse; if she made a penny, I got a halfpenny; whatever I saved, I put in her purse, and she never choused me. Well, her husband died when they were at a counting house. So I moved heaven and earth to get to her; true friends, you know, are proved in adversity.

It so happened my master had gone to Capua, to attend to various trifles of business, so seizing the opportunity, I persuaded our lodger to accompany me as far as the Fifth Milestone. He was a soldier, as bold as hell. We got under way about first cockcrow, with the moon shining as bright as day. We arrive at the tomb; my man lingers behind among the gravestones, whilst I sit down singing, and stark counting the gravestones. Presently I looked back for my comrade; he had scripped off all his clothes and laid them down by the wayside. My heart was in my mouth; and there I stood feeling like a dead man. Then he made water like all round the clothes, and in an instant changed into a wolf. Don't imagine I'm joking; I would not tell a lie for the finest fortune ever man had.

However, as I was telling you, directly he was turned into a wolf, he set up a howl,

and away to the woods. At first I didn't know where I was, but presently I went forward to gather up his clothes; but lo and behold! they were turned into stone. If ever a man was like to die of terror, I was that man! Still I drew my sword and let out at every shadow on the road till I arrived at my sweethearth's house. I rushed in looking like a ghost, soul and body barely sticking together. The sweat was pouring down between my legs, my eyes were set, my wits gone almost past recovery. Melissa was astounded at my plight, wondering why ever I was abroad so late. 'Had you come a little sooner,' she said, 'you might have given us a hand; a wolf broke into the farm and has slaughtered all the cattle, just as if a butcher had bled them. Still he didn't altogether have the laugh on us, though! he did escape; for one of the laborers ran him through the neck with a pike.

After hearing this, I could not close an eye, but directly it was broad daylight, I started off for our good Gaius's house, like a peddler whose pack's been stolen; and coming to the spot where the clothes had been turned into stone, I found nothing whatever but a pool of blood. When eventually I got home, there lay my soldier a-bed like a great ox. While a surgeon was dressing his neck, I said at once he was a werewolf and I could never afterwards eat bread with him, not to speak of killing me. Other people may think what they please; but as for me, if I'm telling you a lie, may your guardian spirits confound me!

Schwarzbrunn Handout 3: Livonian Legend

When Valerius is past, a boy with only one leg limps around and address all who have given over to evil, of whom there is a great number, and bids them follow. Some of them wander and lag behind, so another, large, tall man is there, who drives them on by beating little chains braided together. He scourges the people so horribly that even long after one can see spots and scars on their bodies, which they find very painful.



As soon as they raise themselves up to follow him, it appears that they lag aside their former shapes and are transformed into wolves. A couple thousand of them come together, the leader with the iron scourge in his hand at the fore. When they are led onto a field, they fall upon the livestock horribly and tear to pieces whatever they can grasp, whereby they do great damage. Out to harm men is forbidden to them. If they arrive at a river, the leader plunges in his rod or scourge, parting it, so that they may cross on dry feet. When twelve days pass, they lag aside their werewolf forms and become men again.

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Schwarzbrunn Handout 4: On the Foundation of the Monastery of Schwarzbrunn

Given the year of our Lord 771 the fifth day of September this I write of the founding of the monastery at Schwarzbrunn that the belief in our almighty Lord may become strong in our hearts and not weaken. For only belief in him can deliver us from evil as he has delivered us from evil. In memory of this is laid today the foundation stone of the monastery. Think upon the struggles which we have endured and know that only he has delivered us and can deliver us. He who is Lord over man and beast, who may know how great his power is over the unbelievers and the pagans who everywhere attempt to appropriate their idols and reap only sorrow and affliction. In memory of the lost souls the dead and the unfortunates who could not live to see the founding of this holy place may the Lord have mercy upon their souls.

To the monastery shall belong ten acres of land to be purchased from the men and women of the precinct of the Niederwald who in addition shall bring the usual payments in the service of the Lord and who will have henceforth have a haven in the monastery for the redemption of their salvation. This document of foundation shall be entered in the chronicle of the monastery as well as sealed in the foundation stone so that it will last until the last judgment when he shall divide men by good and evil.



Bezeugt von Wilheim
 geschrieben at Schwarzbrunn
 in the precinct of Niederwald

Schwarzbrunn Handout 5: Letter of Bernhard von Wilheim

Given the year of Our Lord , the eleventh day of July. This Letter is to my successors so that the Lore may never be Lost. Know then of the battle that we fought against the invisible servants of the Prince of Elsewhere wherever his terrible domain may lie:

Anno Domini was I summoned to the precinct of Niederwald in order here to determine what pagan cult had brought about the death of many men: In fact I found the inhabitants to have the most sincere devotion to our Lord and to have completely renounced the worship of the false gods of their forebears: Nevertheless a horror was occurring in the precinct: What seemed at first to be common manifestations of ghosts was revealed to be horrors from elsewhere for the invisible servants of the prince were already multitudinous:

But in my blindness I thought only of ghosts when the objects began to Levitate: But soon I had to recognize that the unholy goings-on possessed a much more blasphemous demonic aspect when the malefactor caused the earth to tremble and tore it asunder and burned it completely:

All the exorcisms of the wise Father Umberto Vinculo seemed in vain against the events and I despaired of the fact that I could not stand at the side of the citizens of Niederwald:

Long did I fight thusly and had no success of my own doing until one night one of the inhabitants-his name is not relevant-made the most frightful disclosures to me: Whoever might have guessed that the piety of this righteous people should be its downfall? They would have banished the one who still knew about the damning horrors:

Without his protection however the invisible ones could cross into the world when the sun is at its highest and begin their demonic works: For there is a connection between here and the domain elsewhere where no man's foot has trod and no man's eye may see:

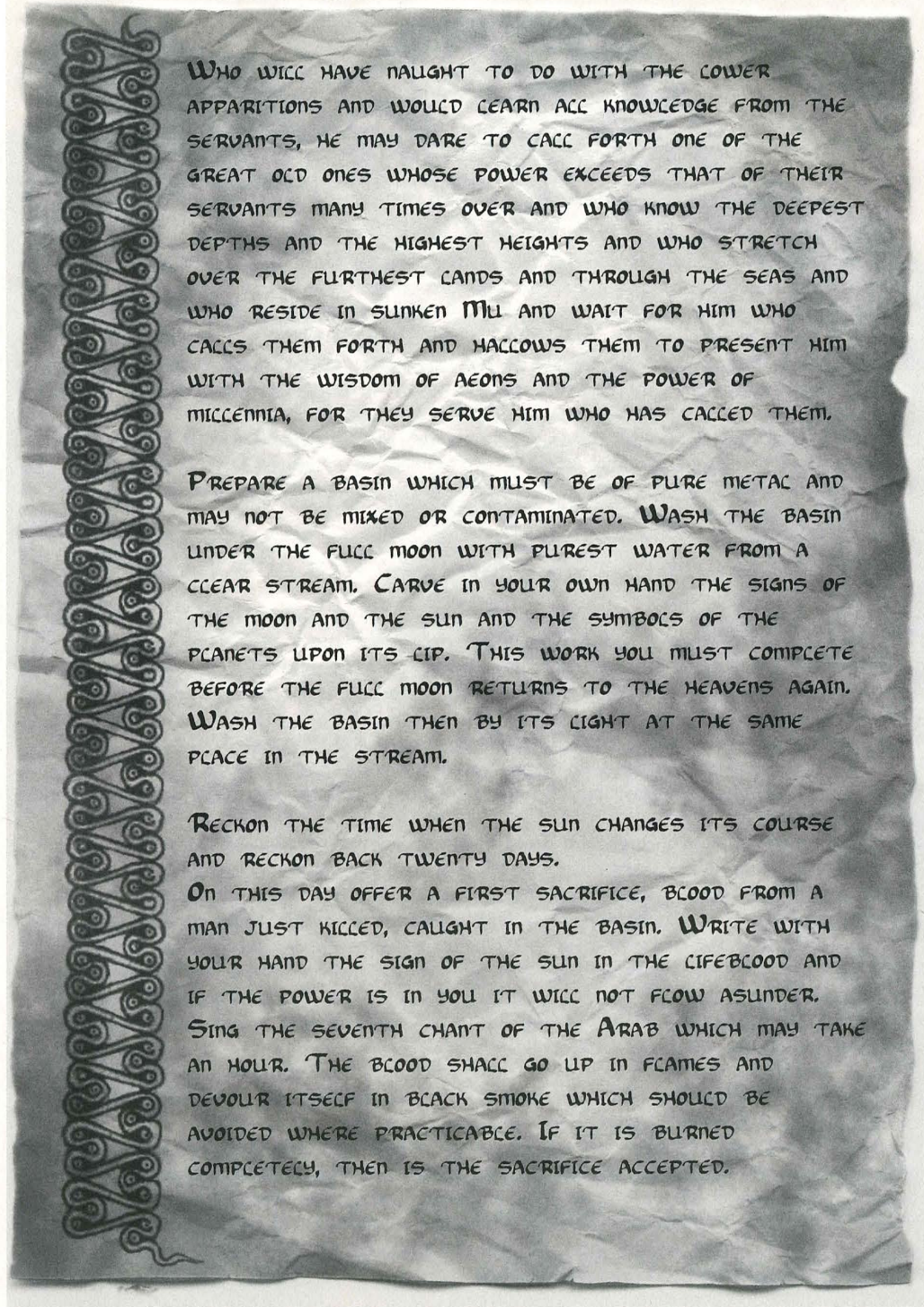
Long did I work together with my new confederate to reconstruct the ways of those who last knew it didn't last very long and we could begin our difficult undertaking: The black candles burned in the circle the air was pregnant with herbs of the Orient well-known to every exorcist and the sigils of the demons of the elements were inscribed in the circle around the entrance and that of the Demon of Night which lives in all things: We sat and sang the exotic chorale not created for the ears of man and which can only with difficulty be put into words: It is the chant of Akhar Ashar as it is found in the sinister Necronomicon the cursed work of the mad Arab:

In this fashion can the way be closed through which the invisible ones came into our world and their prince blasted and howled so that we would be taken by fear and alarm: But his power was broken:

Thus must the ritual be repeated every year when the sun is at its highest or lowest so that the way remains barred to them who come from elsewhere: I wish to build a monastery on this site a holy church above the dark hole and will appoint one of the monks as guardian who will complete the saving works without the knowledge of the others: In the village nearby however a friend of the guardian shall pass on the knowledge:

Bernhard von Wilheim
in the precinct of Niederwald:

Mythos Handout 1: The R'lyeh Text



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Excerpts from Mythos Books

R'lyeh Text, incomplete Greek translation. Reading the entire book costs 1d8 SAN, but adds 8% to *Cthulhu Mythos*. The spell *Call Ghatanothoa* is contained in the following passage. With it, the Great Old One can only be summoned, not dismissed.

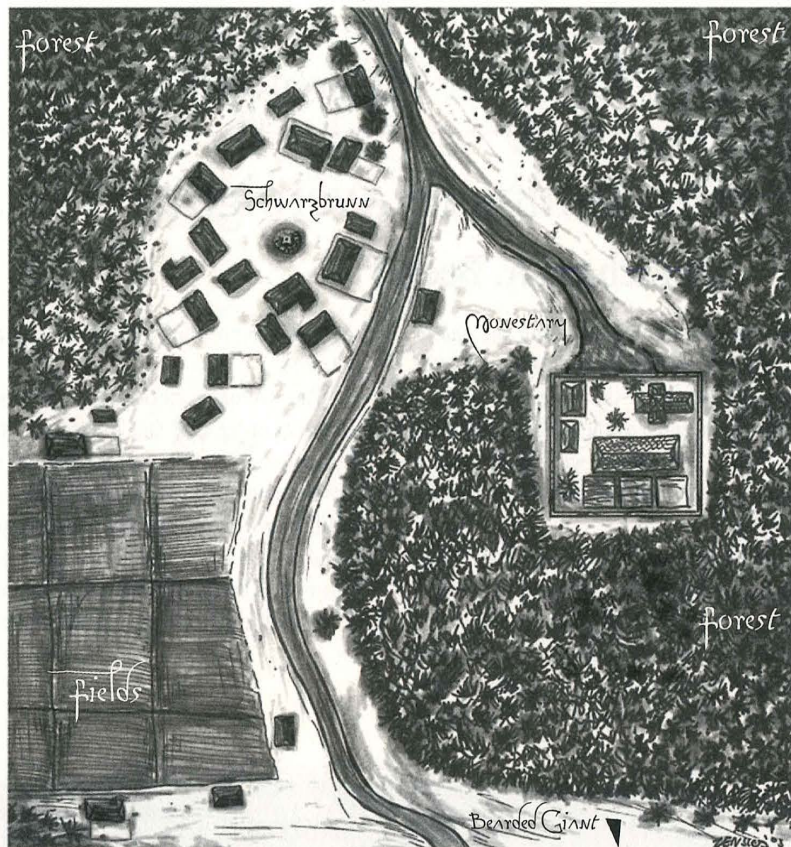
Note: Only someone totally inexperienced with the Cthulhu Mythos or very naïve could believe the *R'lyeh Text's* assertion that

the Great Old Ones are in fact ready to serve a human just because he's conjured them up. *Waldemar*, who has likely read this or a similar text, believed it and would have suffered an unpleasant surprise if his calling Ghatanothoa had succeeded. But perhaps it would have pleased Ghatanothoa to make the desired knowledge available to *Waldemar*. What human can foretell the motives of a Great Old One?

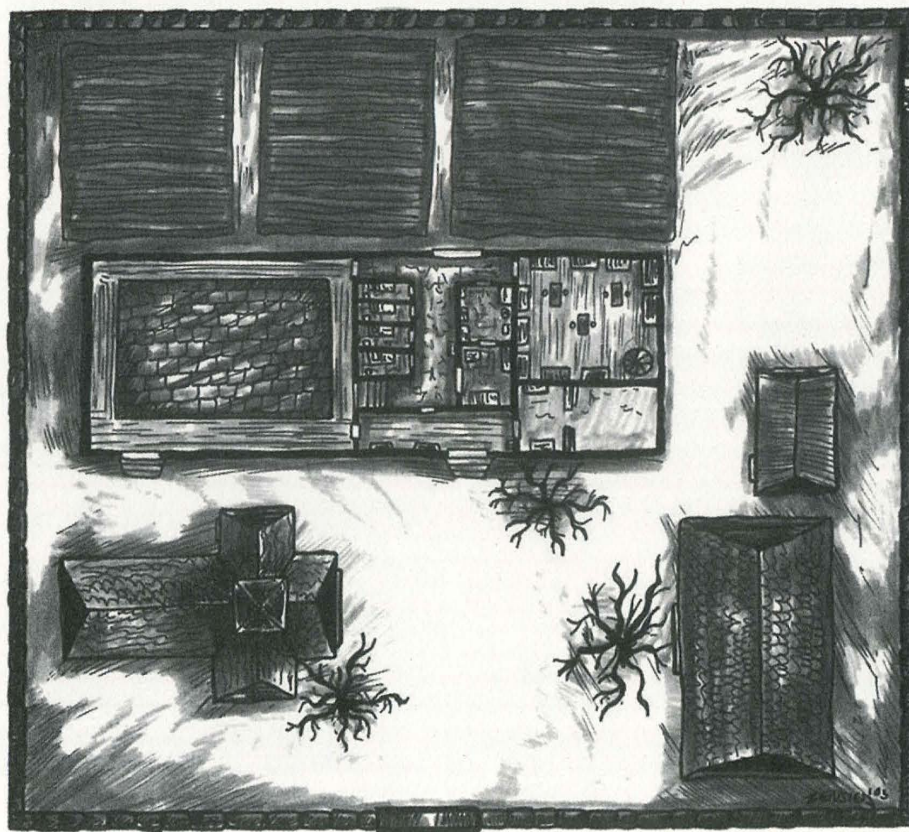
Continued on page 130.

Player Maps

Schwarzbrunn and environs



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The Monastery



Clark Ashton Smith's

Averoigne

On Gaming In Averoigne

By Richard A. Becker

With the recent publication of *Cthulhu Dark Ages* for the *Call of Cthulhu* fan, it is now possible to use official rules for gaming in the only Mythos setting from the era of the Lovecraft Circle – Averoigne, the region of France invented by the California Mythos fantasist, Clark Ashton Smith. This article will try to briefly address some of the background of Averoigne and some opinions on how to simulate his setting.

CAS was a Francophile, according to those who knew him; though he never visited France in his lifetime and was not fluent in the French language, Smith was a great enthusiast for French art and poetry. (It is said that Smith took the pains to learn to read and write French, and familiarized himself somewhat with its earlier forms, but that unfortunately he never heard French spoken at

any great length – and thus, his pronunciations were highly inaccurate.)

The Averoigne stories were published over years, and in no particular order. CAS fans today have guessed at what times they were set, more or less, but no one can really say (see Timeline). Fiction set in Averoigne is a great deal more stylistically similar to Smith's own other settings – long-lost Hyperborea, far-future Zothique, et. al. – than with, say, Lovecraft's Arkham and Innsmouth. Because Smith is so concerned with a certain atmosphere, we'll address how to invoke that atmosphere in gaming.

10 Rules of Averoigne

[NOTE: My friend, a medieval scholar who prefers to go by the nom de plume of "C" for the purposes of this publication, sent me this list of 10 guidelines she derived from reading Smith's Averoigne stories. Let them be a caution to all who would play in Averoigne...]

Here are some rules of thumb I have derived from my reading.

1. Nine times out of ten, holy water and prayers are totally useless against sorcery, monsters, demons, and magic of any kind, even when wielded by a cleric of undisputedly holy life. Don't even bother.
2. On the other hand, counter-sorcery usually works, if you know the right kind to use and have the proper ingredients on hand.
3. Overt physical resistance is, apparently, nearly as futile as applications of holy water. Monsters, demons, etc., inevitably can smack you flat without even half trying. Running away does work, about half the time. The other half the time, you're just doomed.
4. Curiously, however, even the most powerful of sorcerers seems to be afraid of tangling with the Inquisition. So we must assume that the Inquisition has some sort of enforcement powers that the ordinary cleric, even one of abbatial or episcopal rank, does not. It is not clear, though, what these powers might be, since I have yet to read a story in which the Inquisition actually *does* anything. It seems to function mostly as an off-stage bogeyman for sorcerous types.
5. If a creature is ugly or creepy-looking, it's definitely evil.
6. If it's beautiful and ostensibly human, especially if it's also female, there's about a 50-50 chance that it will be evil.
7. If it's beautiful, human, female and (mostly) not evil, it's a fair bet that she's the medieval equivalent of a Bond girl. Actually, even some of the beautiful females who are evil are the medieval equivalents of Bond girls. In these stories, beautiful females have one real purpose and one thing on their minds, and it sure isn't scholarship, much less fighting evil minions of nameless demons from beyond the stars. Repulsively ugly females often have the same thing on their minds, but that is presented as potentially much less fun for the hero of the story.
8. Even enchantresses, good or bad, are included in the above description, although sometimes they display glimmerings of mental activity. Such activity, however, is inevitably directed towards arranging fulfillment of the primary function alluded to in (7), generally with the hero of the story.
9. Paganism is fun. Unless, of course, it involves Druidic human sacrificial rites.
10. Stay out of the woods. Especially at night. The same goes for ruined castles and similar structures.

The Geographical Setting of Averoine

Arguments could be set forth that Averoine is a variant name for either Avignon (faux-Vatican of the “false Popes” of churchly dispute) or the Auvergne massif region of France. For various reasons, it is assumed for this article that Averoine is actually the latter.

Language in an Averoine Gaming Experience

Smith was a disciple of earlier authors including Baudelaire, Bierce and Dunsany, though his style clearly evokes more of the latter than the former. It is difficult to imagine a Keeper managing to speak in the same sort of exquisite language used by Smith’s droll narrative voice for any extended period, but wherever possible, it would be well to have a written description or two which employ a pastiche of the Smithian style. For example, rather describe the unknown egg of a repulsive parasite as merely “an orange-and-black egg coated in slime,” the Keeper might consider “a fulvous ovoid, speckled in obsidian, drenched in an odious mucoid serum.”

advanced technology and science (again, Renaissance rather than truly medieval) but if that equipment is lost then there is surely no place in Averoine to replace it.

The Tone of Averoine for Gaming

Tone is all-important to gaming in Averoine. It isn’t only Smith’s narrative voice that is cool and sardonic, but his characters themselves often have an amusing detachment (in their dialogue, at least) to the world around themselves. While it is true that many characters will end up shrieking in terror just as they would in Lovecraft or Bloch, it’s also true that many of them would comment on how “remarkable” it was to find a leech-like entity from beyond space and time devouring their arm, or how “surpassingly dreadful” it was to discover Tante Claire’s mutilated corpse in the pantry. For a Keeper, the theme here is also sly, cruel amusement: Rolling the same Sanity loss in both cases, a Keeper who would tell her Investigators that they “run shrieking from the room, gibbering in mindless fear” in Kingsport would probably say in Averoine: “Sadly, your sanity does not find itself well-used in this situation. You take the opportunity to excuse yourself from the room, leaving in great haste and with great noise, and without so much as touching the bottle of excellent claret on the table.”

The Description of Averoine Investigators and their Environment

Averoine is a somewhat fanciful and romanticized setting. It would actually be very impractical for real people of the time and place to go around dressed as colorfully as they would in a Smith story, or in such fine fabrics and baubles – but in Averoine, they should. In like fashion, castles should have fluttering scarlet-and-lemon pennants, flowering trees should carpet the road with blossoms in springtime, and in all other respects the land and its people should be a commingling of the lovely and the grotesque.

There is also cruelty, touching upon the French “contes cruels.” Characters in Averoine usually meet endings which are “sick jokes” – a goodly monk wrapped in the lewd embrace of an ancient voluptuary statue, or an honest burgher crushed under the toes of a dead Goliath. “Name” characters in Averoine should, wherever possible and necessary, meet a fate which is both unpleasant and poetic – truly, “poetic injustice.”

Equipment for Averoine Investigators

Certain items, such as spectacles for reading or possibly exotic and rare Chinese fireworks, might appear in the Averoine setting. Despite the Renaissance cast to the overall setting, one should not assume gunpowder to be present in Averoine. Think of Averoine as a backwater of France – a Gallic “Sleepy Hollow” (per Washington Irving). Investigators from “the big cities” like Paris, Toulon, Tours, etc., might have a few items of somewhat more

Apart from Smith himself, good influences for the ironic detachment useful in Averoine games would be the comic strips of Charles Addams and Edward Gorey, the introductory monologues of the old *Alfred Hitchcock Presents* television program, or many French comic books. It would also be profitable to contem-

The Historical Period of Averoine

According to local professional medieval historians of this author’s social circle, Averoine’s historicity is very difficult to establish from the stories. It is certainly not truly a “dark ages” setting, but should be more properly considered a (very) late medieval to mid-Renaissance French setting. Averoine’s time period is both quaintly archaic and somewhat sophisticated – very appropriate to Smith.

plate both French fairy tales and Lovecraft's Dreamlands setting – Averoiigne partakes of both, as well as Dunsany's Third Hemisphere.

The sense of cruelty is another matter entirely – influences for this might include the French Grand Guignol (wherever one may find suitable references), certain EC Comics stories, the wonderful Vincent Price Doctor Phibes and *Theatre of Blood* films, or even reliable old William Shakespeare's magnum opus *Titus Andronicus* (forced to eat one's children baked in a pie, indeed!).

Themes in Averoiigne

Smith was hardly a political man in his writing, but there are certain key themes that recur again and again in the Averoiigne stories and which would bear emphasis by the Keeper. Among these are:

1. Sex. Unlike so many other Mythos chroniclers, Smith did not avoid the subject of sex and did not immediately equate it with loathsome cancerous priapic parasites or the like. He did, however, assume that nearly any sexual encounter with the supernatural would end in a cruel and ironic doom for the mortal involved. (Corollary: While most beautiful women cannot be trusted in Averoiigne – as per sidebar – there are always beautiful women in Averoiigne.)
2. Drunkenness. A great deal of mischief probably would not occur in Averoiigne were it not for the Rabelaisian nature of the inhabitants and their very Gallic attachment to wine. (Particularly monks.)
3. The dubious nature of the Church. Regardless of how one might feel about the nature of religion in real life, the Mythos has never allowed for it to be efficacious, and Smith is among the most skeptical of all Mythos authors. Inquisitors are rarely other than fanatical, abbés are rarely other than corrupt, and priests are universally helpless before the powers of the Mythos and its denizens. The only exception to this are those clergy who have delved into forgotten Mythos lore – and they are almost without

exception overdue for the auto-da-fe (“test of faith”), a lovely euphemism for “burning at the stake.”

4. Sorcery is a viable path to knowledge in Averoiigne, though it should be noted that better than three out of four sorcerers in the stories meet their dooms in good time. Perhaps one should assume that Averoiigne's sorcerous population is winnowed out by Mythos contamination and that only a very few survive to reach the pinnacles of knowledge previously attained by Eibon of Hyperborea and maintain their human natures as well. Also, although we never actually see an effectual agent of the Holy Inquisition, Smith's sorcerers fear them as they fear little else – so surely there must be some.
5. The ancient world is not even as far away as drowned Atlantis, fabled Lemuria, lost Cimmeria, or all those half-worlds. The Romans were locked in a struggle with the Mythos as well, and they left almost as many trapped creatures of darkness as the Elder Gods. Generally speaking, disturbing a Roman ruin in Averoiigne is a very bad notion.
6. Poetic souls are generally a little luckier than others. Coarse and vulgar people are much more likely to meet an awful end in Averoiigne, though the beautiful are not exempt from hellish tentacles and fangs. Poets and philosophers, provided they have a dollop of good sense and a great deal of sly savoir-faire, are Smith's favored few, so the Keeper (and Investigators) may wish to bear this in mind while playing in Averoiigne.

Despite the Smith sense of fun in all these thematic elements, it should still be borne in mind – Averoiigne is a part of the same interwoven Cthulhu Mythos universe that supports the other Lovecraft Circle authors, from Derleth to Howard to Lovecraft himself. It is elegant and filled with dark amusement, but it is also the home of monstrous Outer beings. If the Keeper and Investigators are willing to add the pleasures of Clark Ashton Smith's style to their campaign, they may find that Averoiigne has its own horrors and mysteries to offer – as well as a few laughs.



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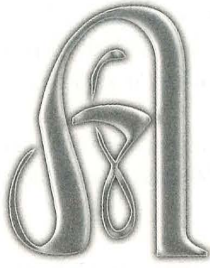
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“The End Times”



Clark Ashton Smith's

Dark Ages: Averroigne

Averroigne Occupations

By Dan Harms and Adam Crossingham

The following are occupations especially suited for a game set in Clark Ashton Smith's Averroigne, or for other Dark Ages games from the 13th century.

Alchemist – You seek the secret of transforming lead into gold, or the philosopher's stone that guarantees eternal youth. Some alchemists see this as an allegory for the salvation of the spirit, while others want a quick denier. You travel to gather rare components or to escape the wrath of a former patron.

Skills: Alchemy, Artes, Natural World, Occult, Other Language(s), Potions, Write Language. (*May gain Language bonus*). **Money:** 100 deniers plus lab equipment. **Yearly Income:** 1,200 deniers.

Anchorite – You may have fled into Averroigne's infamous woods, away from the fierce Inquisition that wants you to recant your faith or burn. Then again, perhaps you just to be at one with God's creation. Everyone fears the dark woods that give you shelter, but what will happen when the evil that lives in the woods with you comes forth?

Skills: Craft, Hide, Listen, Natural World, Occult, Religion (Roman Catholic, Gnosticism, Manichaeism, or Cathari), Sneak, one skill as a personal specialty that may include a spell. **Money:** 5 deniers. **Yearly Income:** 240 deniers.

Apothecary – You fill prescriptions and brew concoctions for the physicians in a town. You also are a dealer in spices, and you may even be employed by a noble to handle their use in the kitchen.

Skills: Appraise, Bargain, Medicine, Natural World, Potions, Status, two personal skills. **Money:** 300 deniers. **Yearly Income:** 1,500 deniers.

Ex-Crusader – You left Europe a proud and idealistic young man to fight for the glory of God in the Holy Lands, to support the Frankish kingdoms of Outremer against the Saracen hordes. You found the Moor an honorable opponent, in many ways more civilized than your fellow Franks. You learned different ways of living in Holy Land. Whether you bring them back with you is another matter.

Skills: Other Kingdoms, Other Language (Greek, Arabic or Hebrew), Own/Other Religion (any), Ride, Status, any two weapon or shield skills, plus one skill representing your exposure to new ideas. **Money:** 300 deniers, plus one weapon and one suit of armor. **Yearly Income:** 1,500 deniers.

Special: No SAN loss from viewing or inflicting violent death or its results. Initial SAN loss of 10.

Executioner/torturer – Your job is to destroy bodies, but you also know much about putting them back together. While you are feared, your job is often a lucrative one. You may relish your work or view it as a necessary evil. Perhaps you seek a criminal escaped from your care, or flee one who wouldn't stay dead.

Skills: Ax, Craft, First Aid, Insight, Listen, Medicine, Persuade, Status. **Money:** 500 deniers, plus one ax. **Yearly Income:** 3,000 deniers.

Special: No SAN loss from viewing corpses or undertaking legal executions. Initial SAN loss of 5.

Falconer – You work for a noble family, training their animals for the hunt. You are wise in the ways of both nature and the nobility. Perhaps you seek falcon eggs in the forest to add to your stock, or a new employer at the court.

Skills: Craft, Etiquette, Natural World, Navigate, Ride Horse, Status, Track. One weapon skill. **Money:** 300 deniers. **Yearly Income:** 3,000 deniers.

Gravedigger – You dig graves. Unsavory gravediggers often supplement their income by stealing from the dead or providing bodies to necromancers. You have a built-in reason for adventuring - most gravediggers in Averroigne quickly seek other occupations, if for no other reason than the stories their fellows tell.

Skills: Ax (Pickax), Climb, Club (Shovel), Conceal, First Aid, Listen, Occult, Spot Hidden. **Money:** 150 deniers. **Yearly Income:** 900 deniers.

Special: No SAN loss from viewing corpses. Initial SAN loss of 5.

Harlot – The Church talks all high and mighty about immorality and chastity but encourages you to sell yourself to men for pleasure because otherwise they'd ask for even kinkier things from the devil knows what. It's easy money, better than slaving away for a miserable master and a pittance, and some of your best customers are clerics. Some of them even claim that they're attempting to save you from sin! **Only available with Keeper approval.**

Skills: Bargain, Conceal, Fast Talk, Hide, Insight, Listen, Own Kingdom, Perform. **Money:** 200 deniers. **Yearly Income:** 1,500 deniers.

Inquisitor – You are a cleric dedicated to stamping out heresy and sorcery. Most of the strong-arm work, such as torture and executions, is performed by the secular authorities, leaving you free to prosecute and convert as you feel is appropriate. Unlike the image of your profession from later periods, you often run into uncooperative or hostile elements of the nobility, clergy, and peasantry. **Only available with Keeper approval.**

Skills: Insight, Occult, Other Language (Latin or regional), Own Religion (Roman Catholic, EDUx3%), Persuade, Ride Horse, Write Language. **Money:** 200 deniers plus holy books and manuals. **Yearly Income:** 2,000 deniers.

Kabbalist – You are a practitioner of Jewish mysticism. Your fellow Jews regard you as an upholder of conservative law, though they may suspect your occult practices. Outsiders know little or nothing of what you do, and you like it that way. You may be driven to overcome evil, or you may have departed your community due to internal conflict.

Skills: Accounting, Insight, Occult, Other Language (Hebrew), Own Religion (Judaism, EDUx3%), Persuade, Write Language (Hebrew). May take one spell as a personal specialty. (*May gain language bonus*). **Money:** 300 deniers. **Yearly Income:** 1,200 deniers.

Lady-in-waiting – You serve a noble lady or other important woman whom it is your job to accompany and entertain. You may be naïve and trusting of your friends, or a full participant in the intrigues of court politics.

Skills: Etiquette, Insight, Listen, Other Language, Perform, Persuade, Ride, Status. **Money:** 150 deniers. **Yearly Income:** 1,000 deniers and your board and lodgings.

Lost maiden – You love him, but sometimes he’s an idiot, like when he proposed that you meet him out here. It’s dirty, and you’ll have to ditch these people when you find him, and where is he, anyway? You may kill him, but you’ll have to find him first.

Skills: Bargain, Craft, Etiquette, Fast Talk, Insight, Persuade, Perform. One non-combat skill as a personal specialty. **Money:** 300 deniers. **Yearly Income:** 1,800 deniers, if you can get out of here.

Miner – You mine lead and other metals from the mountains on the edge of Averogne bringing valuable revenue to coffers of Averogne’s lords. The hills hold many secrets unseen by mankind in centuries. During times of war, you may be called upon to dig mines under enemy fortifications to cause their collapse.

Skills: Appraise, Ax (Pickax), Craft (miner), Listen, Natural World, Repair/Devise, Spot Hidden plus one skill of your choice. **Money:** 300 deniers. **Yearly Income:** 1,500 deniers.

Moneylender – In recent years, many Christians have come to this profession, but Jews remain important practitioners. Fortunately, most moneylenders have the support of the law, as the nobility enriches itself through its taxes on them. You may be seeking a skipped account or fleeing an angry mob.

Skills: Accounting, Appraise, Bargain, Dodge, Fast Talk, Insight, Persuade, Status. **Money:** 500 deniers. **Yearly Income:** 3,000 deniers.

Mountebank – You found out there was money to be made from medicine but you weren’t rich enough to go to university, so you

learnt all you know from an itinerant healer. It’s not much, and sometimes you have to exaggerate. Now you travel the land offering to cure all ills for a small price, but first you have to attract a crowd and make your sales pitch.

Skills: Appraise, Bargain, Fast Talk, Insight, Medicine, Natural World, Own Kingdom, Potions. **Money:** 200 deniers. **Yearly Income:** 1,500 deniers, if you keep moving.

Night Watch/Town Guard: You patrol at night, and keep the King’s peace by day. Sometimes you think you see things prowling the rooftops, other times dodging the contents of “Gardey Loo!” You hope that the Marshal doesn’t have another wolf cull in the forest. In the rain. Again.

Skills: Crossbow, Fist/Punch, Grapple, Law, Listen, Own Kingdom, Spear, Spot Hidden. **Money:** 200 deniers plus fighting equipment. **Yearly Income:** 1,800 deniers.

Pardoner – You sell indulgences, papers from the Church guaranteeing remission of sins. They do not provide permission for sinning, past or present, but many pardoners gloss over such fine theological distinctions. You may be seeking out sinners for sales, or returning to Rome for remissions.

Skills: Bargain, Fast Talk, Insight, Navigate, Other Kingdom, Other Language, Own Religion (Roman Catholic), Persuade. **Money:** 200 deniers, plus 200 deniers in indulgences. **Yearly Income:** 1,200 deniers.

Physician – You are skilled in the art of curing people. You may have studied at university in Paris, Oxford, Bologna, Padua or Montpellier, or studied medicine in a cathedral school. You may also be a Jew who has learned the trade outside of the university system. You still rely on the teachings of Classical Greek and Arab physicians supplemented with insights from Alchemy and Astrology. You may belong to a college of physicians, and you live in a city.

Skills: Alchemy, Astrology, First Aid, Medicine, Natural World, Other Language (Latin or Arabic, but also Greek or Hebrew), Potions, Status. (*May gain Language bonus*). **Money:** 400 deniers. **Yearly Income:** 3,000 deniers.

Rat-catcher – You catch rats. Maybe you met one who was too big.

Skills: Climb, Jump, Listen, Repair/Devise, Sneak, Spot Hidden, Throw, Track, one weapon skill. **Money:** 150 deniers. **Yearly Income:** 900 deniers.

Religious Order Knight – You are a noble who wanted to devote your life to God. Becoming a monk was too boring, so you joined a military order instead. You may be a member of the Knights Templar, Knights Hospitaller, Teutonic Knights or another, lesser order. You live your life by religious precepts but fight the good fight as well. As guardians of the Christian faith, the military orders have flourished and prospered, but some of your brothers aren’t as zealous as they should be.

Skills: Long-sword, Other Kingdoms, Other Religion (Islam or Pagan), Own Religion (Roman Catholic, EDUx2%), Ride, Shield, Spear, Status. **Money:** 400 deniers, plus horse and equipment assigned by order. **Yearly Income:** 3,000 deniers.

Sorcerer's Apprentice - You learn at the knee of a sorcerer or necromancer, attempting to find insight in alternatives to the Church's teachings. It's not that the Church is wrong, but you feel there might a greater truth that it isn't telling people about. It is this truth that guides you, defying your parents, that helped convince your master of your earnestness and risks the wrath of the Inquisition.

Skills: Alchemy, Astrology, Bargain, Occult, Other Language(s) (Arabic, Greek, or Latin). Two other skills are personal specialties (spells are allowed). (*May gain Language bonus*). **Money:** 200 deniers. **Yearly Income:** 900 deniers.

Stone mason - You are a member of one of the highest paid and most respected crafts in Christendom, requiring an apprenticeship of seven years. From your lodge where trade secrets are discussed, you are part of a vast fraternal brotherhood dedicated raising monuments to the glory of the Supreme Being all over Europe. Each cathedral is carefully planned and contains hints and messages of the Supreme Being's greatness visible only to the initiated.

Skills: Art (stone-mason), Bargain, Craft (builder), Craft (stone-mason), Occult, Religion (Roman Catholic, EDUx2%), Repair/Devise, Status. **Money:** 500 deniers, plus tools. **Yearly Income:** 6,000 deniers.

Summoner - You summon people to the ecclesiastical courts. Most are unwilling to come, so you must use any means available to aid in their arrival. Nonetheless, this is often a position of honor in the town. You may be seeking your quarry, or fleeing it...

Skills: Fast Talk, Grapple, Insight, Law, Listen, Sneak, Spot Hidden, Status. **Money:** 200 deniers. **Yearly Income:** 1,800 deniers.

Taverner - You owned a tavern where weary travelers and pilgrims come to rest. Perhaps your tavern was destroyed by something, or maybe you just heard the wrong story.

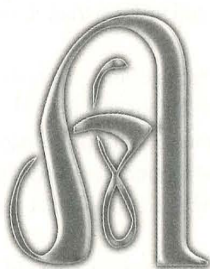
Skills: Bargain, Craft (brew beer), Fist/Punch, Insight, Listen, Own Kingdom, Persuade, Spot Hidden. **Money:** 300 deniers, plus tavern (if you still have one). **Yearly Income:** 1,500 deniers.

Troubadour - You have taken up the cause of chivalry and courtly love, and perform works you or others have written about love, chivalry, religion, politics, war, funerals, and the glory of nature in whatever court will receive you.

Skills: Art (music), Etiquette, Insight, Own Kingdom, Perform (sing), Perform (vielle or lute), Perform (dance), Persuade. **Money:** 250 deniers. **Yearly Income:** 2,000 deniers.

University student - You are a student at a university, a member of a band of brothers. During the day, you dispute and learn; at night, you carouse and clash with other students and the nobility. You may seek new sources of knowledge, or perhaps you run from a charge of assault or murder.

Skills: Knife or Sword, Library Use, Other Language (Latin, but possibly Greek or Arabic), Persuade, and any three of the following: Accounting, Artes (each counts as one of the three), Occult, Own Religion (Roman Catholic, EDUx2%), Write Language (each counts as one of the three). (*May gain Language bonus*). **Money:** 150 deniers, plus writing materials. **Yearly Income:** 1,500 deniers.



Clark Ashton Smith's
Dark Ages: Averroigne

Skills for Dark Ages: Averroigne

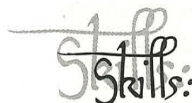
By Dan Harms and Adam Crossingham

Changes to Cthulhu Dark Ages skills:

REMOVE: Library Use, Science

ADD: Alchemy, Artes, Astrology, Etiquette, Law, Perform, Other Religion, Own Religion.

CHANGE: Accounting, Art, Drive, Medicine, Own Kingdom, Potions, Status.



Accounting (10%): Includes the ability to use proffer systems, tally sticks, counting tables or an abacus to understand and manage inventories, accounts and crop registers.

Alchemy (01%): A set of skills used in the pursuit of transforming base metals to gold, finding a life-prolonging elixir, a universal cure for disease and alkahest, the universal solvent. No one has succeeded in these yet, but that hasn't stopped people from trying. In the meantime, Alchemy can be used to identify substances, to create others (e.g. Greek fire, acid, glue), or can be used in the preparation of materials required for magical or medical ceremonies. Add to: Scholar template.

Art (01%) (choose a Craft specialty): A character with a high Craft can turn out a product that is serviceable and durable or handsome enough for everyday use. Art is necessary to turn out a product of high quality (such as Frankish weapons) or works of great beauty (the stone- and glasswork in many cathedrals). Roll Craft first to see if a product has been made successfully, then roll Art for the degree of skill. Add to: Craftsman/Shopkeeper, Monk/Nun templates.

Artes (Trivium or Quadrivium) (01%): This skill stands in for the Science skill which is an anachronism, and is based around the Trivium and Quadrivium (C:DA, p. 68). Much of this knowledge is theoretical rather than practical, but you can roll this skill in an academic debate, or to know about or impress a scholar. Add to: Monk/Nun, Scholar templates.

Astrology (01%): This skill covers the observation of the heavens, both for pure scholarly interest and for the impact of the stars and planets upon the earth. Astrologers should tread cautiously, as the Church fears they will confuse the influence of the stars with the control of human destiny. A character with this skill can note celestial phenomena and give some basic interpretation of their effects on people or events.

Astrology is also useful for casting horoscopes for particular people, places or times. The most useful skill for that practice is Insight (to give the customer what they want or need), but a successful Astrology roll can add +20% to the Insight roll. For horoscopes that accurately foretell the future, take the Augur spell (DA, p. 82) and substitute an Astrology roll for the POWx5% roll. Add to: Healer, Monk/Nun, Scholar templates.

Drive Animals (01%): As Drive Horses or Oxen, but can be expanded to more exotic beasts such as elephants or camels.

Etiquette (APPx2%): You have knowledge of manners for dealing with all walks of life. An Etiquette roll may leave a favorable impression on others or add to the usefulness of courtly and performance skills. Some villains may take this skill to highlight the difference between friendly speech and monstrous action.

Note that this allows the character to act in accordance with their social status. If you wish to imitate a person of a radically different status, make rolls for both Hide and Etiquette.

Law (05%): You have knowledge of both civil law, which covers Roman and Anglo-Saxon legal systems, and canon law, the law pertaining to the church. Halve the skill if you enter a different region (such as Northern Europe or the Muslim world). Add

to: Cleric, Guard, Mercenary/Brigand, Monk/Nun, Priest, Scholar templates.

Library Use (REMOVED): This skill is an anachronism in any Dark Ages game. Libraries have closed stacks open only to the librarian and his assistants, and the classification schemes for such libraries are idiosyncratic if they exist at all. If you would rather play Cthulhu naked than without Library Use, we suggest a starting percentage of 01% for the uneducated or illiterate and EDUx1% for everyone else.

Medicine (01%): Lower the base skill to this value.

Own Kingdom (20%): This skill may also be used to collect general information about an area, including rumors, the people who can provide information and favors (though convincing them of this might take other skills or coin), and news and gossip. Do not confuse with Status; the lord may not know as much about the area he governs as he might like.

Perform (05%): This covers juggling, dancing, singing, playing a musical instrument, tumbling, acting, or any other number of medieval entertainments. Each ability is a different Perform skill. Add to: Juggler/Minstrel template.

Potions (01%): Here is a suggested outline for using the skill, as well as some popular infusions your characters might want to make.

- 1) *Find ingredients:* If ingredients must be obtained, spend half a day and make a Natural History roll to find them. With a success, you can proceed with the brewing.
- 2) *Find other ingredients:* If you fail your roll to find ingredients, you can give up or try to find alternatives. For find other ingredients, take another half day and make another Natural History roll. If successful, you have found something not quite as good but that might be used; record the number rolled.
- 3) *Brew:* Work at least one day and roll Potions. Success means you have concocted your desired potion. Keep track of this roll.
- 4) *Complete:* If no POT is listed in the rule book, the potion has an effective POT equal to your Potions skill divided by 5, rounding up. In either case, if you used substitute ingredients, they will weaken or ruin the mixture. Divide the Natural History roll you made by five and subtract that number from the POT.
- 5) *Distill:* At the Keeper's option, you may choose to reduce the potion's POT to boost its other effects. More on this appears below.

Botching any of these rolls creates a mixture with wildly unintended results, at the Keeper's discretion.

Here are some suggestions as to what concoctions can be made with the skill. Some are to be ingested, while others can be smeared over the body or applied to a weapon. A potion takes one combat round to drink in the hand-to-hand section of the round; applying an ointment to a weapon or to an unarmored person takes one minute.

Poison (ingested or weapon): Use the guidelines given in the rule book for the poisons listed there. If manufacturing a new one,

the POT is determined as above. Normal onset times should be six hours for injected poisons and one hour for those ingested. If you want a shorter reaction time, lower the POT by one for every hour it is shortened (down to a span of minutes) or lengthened.

For those worried about the impact of poison use on the game, it should be noted that people in the Dark Ages (and most pre-modern societies) draw few distinctions between poisoning and witchcraft.

Antidote (ingested): For these, ignore the standard time rules – the potion maker has no doubt been trained to concoct these in a matter of hours. If successful, subtract the POT of the antidote from that of the poison, applying damage accordingly. A separate antidote must be produced for each poison.

Hallucinogen (ingested or paste): Onset time is one hour. If the POT overcomes the victim's CON, the effects last for one hour, with the exact nature of the visions chosen by the Keeper. For each point the POT is lowered, the effects will continue for an additional hour. The paste version is often used by witches who desire to have visions of the Sabbat (and who deliberately fail their resistance roll).

Disease agent: As per the rule book.

Numbing ointment (paste): When applied, the victim must immediately pit their CON against the ointment's POT or go into shock for 1-3 hours. Otherwise, for the next hour the person has immunity to pain. Pit the damage from a hit against the ointment's POT on the resistance table to determine if the person feels the pain. This may prevent the user from going into shock, but they may also have to make an Idea roll to realize they have been hit...

Love potion (ingested): This potion should only be allowed with the Keeper's approval. This inspires feelings of desire toward a person in the immediate area. The drinker must overcome its POT with their POW, modified by their feelings toward the person (with a 0 meaning the person was somewhat favorable to begin with). If they fail, they will behave as if they had a strong natural attraction toward the person, though they will not go beyond their normal bounds of behavior. After a few hours, the effect wears off, and the drinker may make an Idea roll to realize that their feelings were not natural (though some may not care).

Fury potion (ingested): The love potion's dark twin. The drinker must overcome the drink's POT with their POW or fall under the effects of a fury spell. Unlike that spell, they have no control over whom they attack.

Other Religion (01%): You have knowledge of a faith in which you were not raised. The same list of specialties as Own Religion also applies here. Save by special permission of the Keeper, this is not your current faith.

Own Religion (INTx2%, but may vary with profession): You have knowledge of the religion in which you were raised, including teachings, doctrines, permitted and proscribed behaviors, structure, famous events, feast days, and the like. Everyone in Averogne has this skill at a base level, representing attendance at worship services, but the learned may have it at higher rates.

This skill may be used to recall relevant information about a faith, or as an aid for recovering from insanity or regaining sanity.

Religion may be broken into the following specialties: Eastern Orthodox, Islam, Judaism, Paganism, Roman Catholicism, and various heresies (such as Catharism).

Do not confuse the Religion skill with faith, which is a personal choice on the part of the character. Add to: Cleric (EDUx2%), Hermit/Heretic, Monk/Nun (EDUx3%), Pilgrim, Priest (EDUx3%), Scholar (EDUx2%) templates.

Science (REMOVED): The disciplines of this period are not sciences in the sense we know them today. Use Artes for the Quadrivium and Trivium, Religion for Theology, and Law for the Law specialty.

Status (15%): Medieval society is highly stratified, though it is possible to move through the ranks. Use the following chart to determine appropriate character status.

Rating	Status
01-10%	Social pariah / leper / outcast
11-20%	Freeman / well-off serf / craftsman
21-30%	Respected member of the community / minor church official / somewhat successful merchant
31-40%	Wealthy farmer / priest of small parish / moderately successful merchant
41-50%	Landed man / priest of large parish / Wealthy burgher
51-60%	Baron / canon officer
61-70%	Viscomte / bishop
71-80%	Comte / archbishop
81-90%	Duc / cardinal
91-100%	King / pope

If a character gains Status in the course of the game, the Keeper must decide how this is reflected in game terms. If the character moves from one social status to another as the result of an experience check, the Keeper may provide them with danger (jealousy of neighbors) or opportunity (the lord they worked for on their last mission offers them a post), depending upon how the character has been played. On the other hand, the Keeper might let the player distribute the rolled points in another skill instead.



Cthulhu Now:

Project π

By Peer Kröger

translated from the German by Bill Walsh

Introduction

Sections printed in *italics* may be read directly to the players. They pertain to the actual course of the adventure. Sections not in italics are meant exclusively for the Keeper and can ruin much of the fun of the adventure if the players read them. The exceptions are the side boxes, which may be of interest to the players as well as the Keeper.

Prologue

You are soldiers! You are not just any soldiers, you are the best! The best of the best! You are Navy SEALs!

Uncle Sam has chosen to invest nearly four million dollars in each of you. He gave you the best training, the best equipment, and his trust!

Now you've got to pay some of this debt back. America needs you. The President has an important assignment, an assignment that no one but you can execute.

It demands your very special capabilities.

The Player Characters

In this adventure the players take the roles of elite soldiers. Finally they get the opportunity to really run riot and let their inner machismo hang out! They'll be able to let the lead fly in good conscience, calmly kick in doors, and have an alternative to running away—namely, leaving everything in rubble and ashes!

Pre-prepared characters are found in the appendix. We recommend playing the adventure with these characters. The players can, of course, create their own characters instead. For good gameplay, you can happily step outside the boundaries of reality portraying the characters. It's all about playing a group of ultra-hard, elite warriors here, not strictly pursuing the realities of such a situation. "Project Pi" is designed to run much more like an action movie than a real military operation. For similar reasons, we're not ruling out women characters, even though in reality women cannot qualify as SEALs. But, hey, anyone who's seen *Aliens* knows that women can be tough guys, too! Also, there's a "civilian" in the group. It'd be optimal if this character were a scientist or doctor who

was skilled with computers and could potentially assist the players with some of the biological and medical questions during the adventure. If you've seen *Executive Decision* or *The Rock*, you can imagine what such a collaboration could play out like.

Other interesting films which could give the Keeper a feel for the mood of the adventure include, for example, *Predator* and *The Abyss*.

The Best of the Best of the Best

The pep talk of the Vice Admiral in the Prologue has one point right: the Navy SEALs really are the absolute elite. Over years of training, they're formed into the most combat effective special unit of the U.S. military, which is always deployed when the going gets toughest. In order to be true to these high standards, the pre-made characters have extremely high statistics that no player character has heretofore ever been allowed to have. These SEALs have some skills with a value of 100%. Of course, it should be noted that a rolled 100 (00) is nevertheless still a failure.

In any case, these stratospheric skills will be of little use to the characters later on anyway. Against an atom bomb or Papa Cthulhu they're completely useless!

This adventure can end in a variety of ways, but in most cases, the characters will not survive, they'll desert, be thrown out of the Navy, or find some other inglorious end. The adventure can only be completed with some difficulty, and there's no master solution. Many different NPCs will pop up, (almost) all of whom are bent on foul play and wish to use the SEAL team for their own ends. As a result, the adventure is conceived of as a one-shot scenario (i.e., for a single play session, using pre-fab characters—our super-tough SEALs). We realize the idea of playing super competent commandos contradicts the entire philosophy of *Call of Cthulhu* and therefore include this reminder that this adventure is intended as a refreshing change of pace, not the foundation of a lengthy campaign.

Nobody's Perfect

Even Navy SEALs are not perfect. Every person has his weak points and a dark side, and these characters are no exception. For this reason, every character has a disadvantage that will make their lives

The SEAL Teams of the U.S. Navy are considered the toughest special operations unit in the world. In 1962, President John F. Kennedy charged the military with creating “unconventional” forces. The Navy’s response was to create the SEa–Air–Land Forces, the so-called Navy SEALs, out of their existing frogman units.

All SEALs are trained in years-long programs as naval commandos, parachutists, and marksmen. They master all forms of armed and unarmed close combat, and they are deployed in every type of terrain: they fight in the desert, in the jungle, and in cities. They are experts in long distance reconnaissance, guerilla tactics, and sabotage. There is nothing they cannot do. SEALs’ standard equipment for boarding maneuvers includes an H&K MP5N submachinegun (frequently silenced), a SIG–Sauer P226 semi-automatic pistol, a close combat knife, dive equipment, night vision equipment, and more. SEALs also vary their gear based on the demands of the particular deployment and their personal preferences. A SEAL can also carry plastic explosives, a rocket launcher, or a sniper rifle. Typical other weapons include M67 fragmentation grenades, the Remington 870 combat shotgun, the FN MK46 MOD 0 Minimi machinegun, and the M72A7 light anti-tank weapon (“LAW rocket”). Statistics for these weapons can be found at the end of the adventure.

Customarily, SEALs are organized in small, effective groups from one to two, up to a platoon of sixteen, usually in squads of eight or less, operating independently from the chain of command. These teams are put together based on the skills of the individual SEALs.

more or less difficult. The disadvantage must be kept secret from everyone else (not the Keeper, of course), since if it were to become known, in the least harmful case it’d mean the end of the SEAL’s military career. If played well, these “defects” can spice up the game considerably. Last, but not least, the disadvantages constitute a serious plot point. If the characters find out during the course of the adventure that they’ve each got a dark secret in their background which makes them unfit for the Navy, it may occur to them that they’re not so much elite as expendable. They’re right, because of course there are files on all the SEALs, including their dark sides, available to commanders. It wasn’t hard for the Admiral to entrust exactly these SEALs with the suicide mission in this adventure. After all, whom better to send than expendable, but absolutely loyal soldiers?

Background

Project Pi was a secret venture of the U.S. government. It was based upon intelligence reports out of Russia describing secret discoveries in the Barents Sea. The Russian military discovered the existence of the Deep Ones and developed a plan to use their bodies for the production of highly effective biological weapons. The nuclear submarine *Kursk* was successful on its first attempt at capturing a Deep One from the Barents Sea, nabbing one of the fish-men underwater. Admiral Dmitri Ochmorov, a high Russian official, condemned his government’s plans, fearing the potential for a new

Mottos: “We fight where others turn tail!” or “We do everything! We are Navy SEALs!”

Heckler & Koch MP5N Submachinegun

Caliber: 9mm Parabellum
Damage: 1d10
Base Range: 45 yards
Attacks: 2 or 25
Magazine Capacity: 30
Hit Points: 10
Malfunction: 98%

SIG–Sauer P226 Pistol

Caliber: 9mm Parabellum
Damage: 1d10
Base Range: 15 m
Attacks: 2
Magazine Capacity: 15
Hit Points: 8
Malfunction: 99%

Close Combat Knife

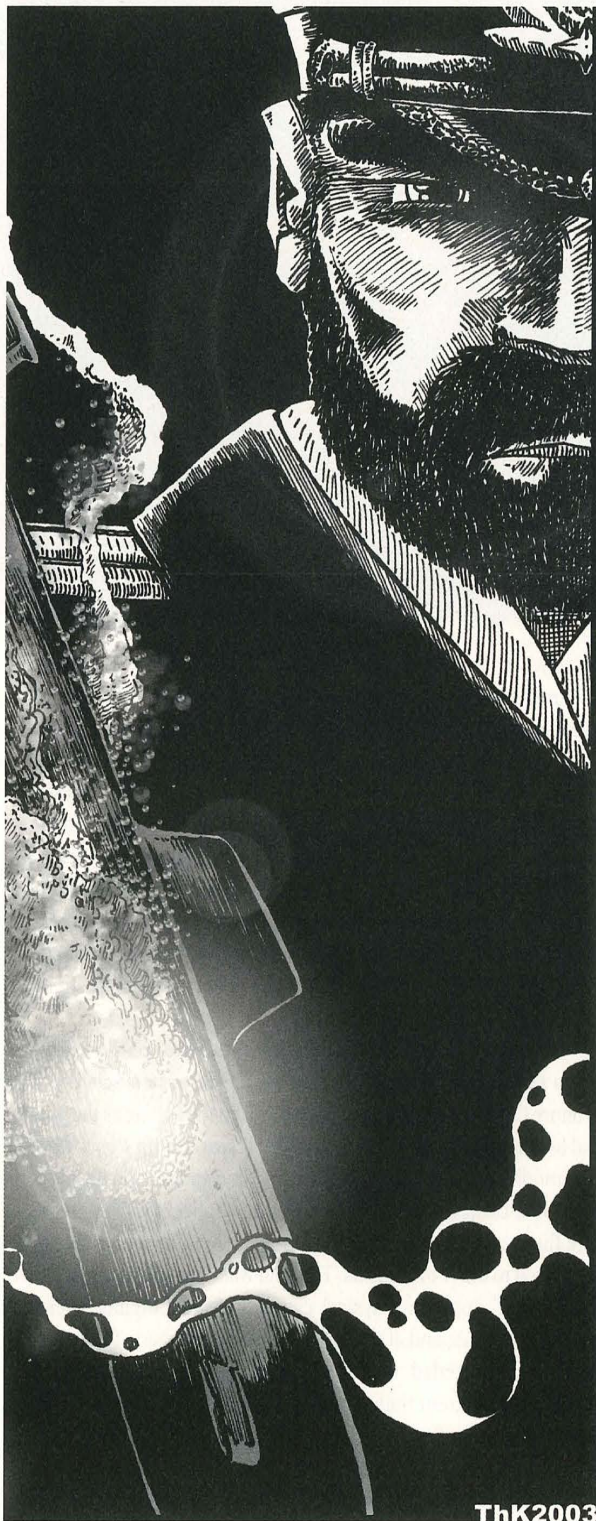
Damage: 1d4+2+DB

worldwide arms race or even war. He collected a few loyal marines around himself and seized a cutting edge nuclear sub, the *Potëmkin* (pron. pah–TYOM–kin.), in order to scuttle the government’s plans. He sank the *Kursk* and fled into the open seas. But it was already too late. The first Norwegian rescue divers who reached the *Kursk* reported horrible, fish-like beings in the wreck of the sunken submarine. Some of the divers didn’t survive the assignment, mentally, and have been confined to a sanitarium since. Two others told their story believably enough—interesting the U.S. government which laid great worth on their statements for the implementation of their own, very similar project, Project Pi. The divers were quickly recruited and called into the Project.

The U.S. government was trying, for its part, to secure DNA from Deep Ones. A research effort, led by the respected scientist Dr. Honore Clarke Spenser, identified an area in the Pacific as the potential location of a Deep One colony. The research ship *Roger Revelle* was modified for the demands of the mission and sent on its mission: capture a Deep One, extract its DNA, and splice it into some inactive flu virus strains. In this way, its genetic information could be conveyed to other organisms. The goal was originally to convey the Deep Ones’ superior physical capabilities to humans, creating stronger, tougher, and, if possible, amphibious soldiers. Transmitting the DNA succeeded without a hitch, although the effect was completely different than expected. Instead of improving its physical abilities, the first laboratory animal died, agonizingly, almost immediately upon being given the virus. Unknowingly, Project Pi had succeeded at what the Russians had originally been trying to do—creating a deadly new weapon!

Meanwhile, Admiral Ochmorov and his deserters had gotten wind of Project Pi and obtained the location of the *Roger Revelle*. But, to Ochmorov's surprise, when the *Potemkin* arrived, the *Revelle* appeared abandoned and dead in the water. Therefore, he didn't immediately sink the *Roger Revelle*, as planned, but sent some of his commandos on board to take a look around.

This is exactly when the player characters arrive.



ThK2003

The Virus

The virus is in the drinking water on board the *Roger Revelle*. Anyone ingesting it within a few hours begins to undergo a nightmarish, painful metamorphosis. They begin to bloat, their limbs swell, and their skin color changes to a sallow green as their body temperature keeps dropping. Their eyes become milky and begin to protrude. The internal organs begin to alter: this is most clear in the case of the lungs, which reconfigure themselves to breathe water. A sticky, viscous slime builds up in them, which initially will be coughed up in copious amounts. Within a few hours, the victim inevitably dies of asphyxiation.

In game terms, this means that an infected person shows the first symptoms in 2d4 hours. In the first hour after that, he takes a penalty of 10% on all rolls and must succeed in a CON x5 roll or collapse. Every additional hour inflicts a further 10% penalty and another CON roll: CON x4 in hour two after the symptoms' appearance, etc., until a CON x1 roll in hour five. If he collapses at some point, he must make a Luck roll. If he does not make a critical success (a rolled 01), he will lose one point of CON every ten minutes until it hits zero and he dies. If the critical success succeeds, he survives the infection and mutates into a creature similar to a Deep One. This transformation costs the afflicted character 1d4/1d20 SAN and 8 points each of INT, EDU, POW, and APP. The victim can no longer speak, but can henceforth breathe underwater.

Of the 59 people originally on board the *Roger Revelle*, fifty-six are dead. Most of them died from the virus, and a few others were dispatched by Spenser and the cultists. The three survivors, Spenser and two of his followers, have absconded with the mini-sub and are on the way to R'lyeh.

Operation Phoenix

During his research on the Deep Ones for Project Pi, Dr. Honore Clarke Spenser delved ever deeper into the secrets of the Mythos. He pored over ancient writings and compared long-forgotten passages. He gained knowledge hinting at inconceivable power: he read of Cthulhu, the sleeper in the sea.

His approach for waking Cthulhu again has nothing to do with sorcery, but stems from his ingenious, scientific mind: he wants to dive to R'lyeh, take a tissue sample from Cthulhu, and then clone him. He's not alone: he was able to persuade five of his colleagues and the military doctor Dr. Nathaniel Jones, and they consented to participate in his plan. They founded the Secret Fellowship of the Phoenix, so called because, as the mythical bird was born again from the flames, they want to wake dead Cthulhu to new life, created from his own flesh through cloning. Of course, financing such a bold venture is not easy, and so they used Project Pi to bring the necessary equipment and submersible vessel to R'lyeh. Spenser rushed his collaborators there and led the *Revelle* to the position where, according to his calculations, R'lyeh lies sunken. Then he just had to wait for an opportune moment. His original plan was to steal the mini-sub, dive down, take the sample, and then meet up later with Dr. Jones. But coincidence came to Dr. Spenser's aid: the sudden discovery of the virus enabled him to take over the *Roger Revelle* and wipe out (almost) all traces of his plans before continuing with Operation Phoenix.

And so far, he's succeeded—he has actually made it up to the point of approaching the sleeping Cthulhu. His plan foresees taking



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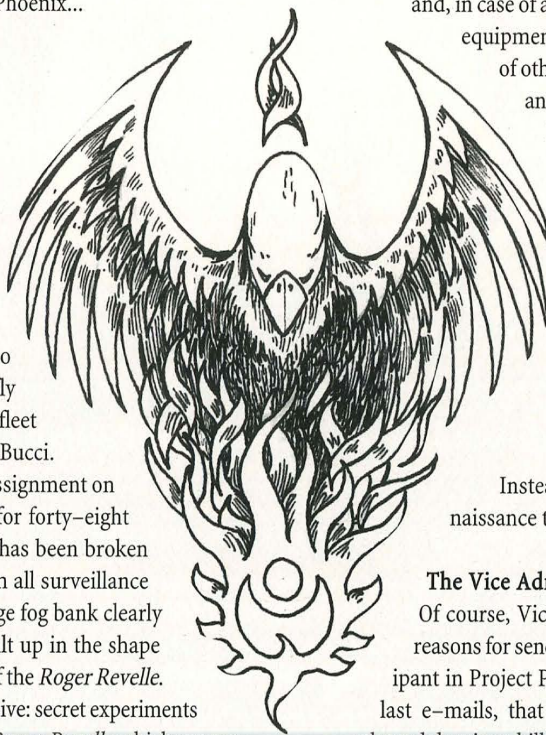
the tissue sample and then returning to the surface to meet up with Dr. Jones, who has used his influence with the Navy to have a frigate sent from the fleet to the rendezvous point. If they meet up, they will both tell a wild story allowing let them to get away with everything. Perhaps the SEALs will succeed in stopping the nefarious plans of the Secret Fellowship of the Phoenix...

And... Action!

The Assignment

21 May 200-, 14:23.

The players are, at the moment, on the high seas. They are patrolling as part of the Third Fleet in the Pacific and have been holding more or less the same position for about two weeks. The player characters are briefly informed of their mission by the fleet commander, Vice Admiral Matthew Bucci. The research ship *Roger Revelle*, on assignment on a secret mission, has not radioed in for forty-eight hours. Regular contact with the ship has been broken off and the ship has disappeared from all surveillance systems. The reason might be a strange fog bank clearly visible in satellite photos that has built up in the shape of a bell over the last known position of the *Roger Revelle*. The whole situation is extremely explosive: secret experiments were being conducted on board the *Roger Revelle* which cannot



be made public under any circumstances whatsoever. Of course, the Admiral doesn't describe Project Pi. Instead, he gives them a believable story about an alleged torpedo development effort. (See box.)

The characters are now sent to the ship to ascertain what's happened. Their assignment is to reconnoiter the situation on board and, in case of an emergency, to secure certain research equipment so that they cannot fall into the hands of other parties. They should proceed quickly and effectively, attracting no attention, and leaving no traces.

The characters must take into consideration the ship may have been taken by, among others, the Russians, the Chinese, terrorists, or even pirates. Because the secret research's government backing is covert, the Navy cannot simply investigate with the Pacific Fleet—that would raise questions and seriously endanger the Project.

Instead, they send a small, effective reconnaissance team—the player characters!

The Vice Admiral's Secret Motive

Of course, Vice Admiral Bucci doesn't relate his real reasons for sending the characters. He is a direct participant in Project Pi and assumes, based on Dr. Spenser's last e-mails, that some sort of accident on board has released the virus, killing the crew. Bucci is sending the player

characters on a suicide mission: he wants them to be infected with the virus on board the *Roger Revelle* in order to secure them as living carriers of the bio-weapon material. On their return, they'll be immediately quarantined and the virus will be isolated. If the virus doesn't kill the player characters, Vice Admiral Bucci will ensure that they will be unable to tell anyone about their mission. Securing the virus is the admiral's sole goal—everything else is secondary.

There are a few uncertainties in the fleet commander's calculations:

- ◆ The characters might not infect themselves
- ◆ The virus's lifespan is unknown
- ◆ The characters might not come back at all

Because of the unknown lifespan of the virus, the Vice Admiral will push for the quick accomplishment of the mission. In order to be sure the characters are infected, he sabotages their equipment. All the SEALs' breathing filters—part of their diving equipment—are defective. This sabotage has been done very skillfully and can only be discovered by a very exacting examination of the masks. The Vice Admiral's greatest concern is the SEALs might not make it back. Here he can only trust their training, and the fact there's really no alternative to returning. The only alternatives would be an agonizing death by starvation or dehydration at sea, or being killed by the virus. Bucci won't allow that to happen—should the characters not return after a while he'll either send another team, or decide that the *Roger Revelle* will be the Third Fleet's target in a thorough weapons drill!

Planning the Operation

The characters must prepare for the mission, but don't have much time to do so. The Keeper should place most any equipment they want at their disposal, within reason, as long as it's reasonably relevant. Indeed, in line with the action movie feel, it doesn't really matter if these items actually exist (yet). In these cases, you can assume

the U.S. government has a whole range of experimental high-tech equipment in its secret arsenals, to which the SEALs would have full access.

The characters can therefore stock up to their hearts' desire with weapons, the most modern computers, body armor, and electronic gadgets. At the same time, the Keeper should keep in mind one thing: the characters should not be given the ability to sink a vessel the dimensions of the *Roger Revelle*—they should have to improvise something in the case of emergency.

The players must also consider ways to locate the *Roger Revelle* in the fog bell and to approach the ship unnoticed. Larger ships are out of the question as a means of transportation. Helicopters and airplanes aren't suitable either, as the characters could at best parachute into the fog. Jet-skis or small speedboats are a good possibility—the latter could theoretically be camouflaged as rescue boats, while really being unsinkable miracles of technology chock full of high-tech electronics with plenty of room for the player characters.

If the players want to learn more about the *Roger Revelle*, they can find some basic information, for example, the technical data from the Appendix (Handout 1). Deck plans also exist, but they are not current: the *Roger Revelle* was completely refitted for Project Pi. Including the plans here would have hopelessly inflated the size of this scenario, so we're offering them for download on our website www.worldsofcthulhu.com.

If needed, the Keeper can also draw up a list of the names of the crew and scientists on board.

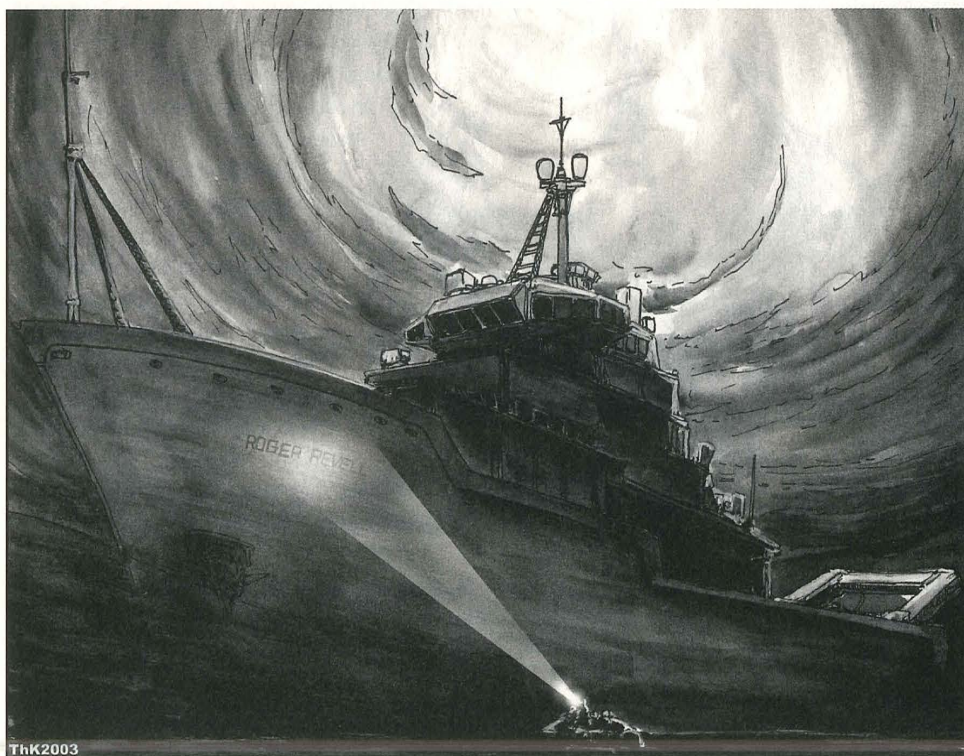
Into the fog
Into the fog

The origin of the fog is mysterious; it seems to have very little in common with normal cloud banks. It's unbelievably thick and seems

to glow slightly from within its depths. It has something to do with the secret that lies beneath it, in the depths below, where Great Cthulhu lies, sunken for eons, sleeping in his city of R'lyeh, dreaming of his return.

The characters certainly won't know this (yet). They will press on into the fog, in whatever way they've chosen. This provides the Keeper with the first opportunity to create a creepy mood.

In the fog, everything is deathly still. Not even the lapping of the ocean can be heard. The fog also disrupts most electronic devices. Communication with the fleet breaks off abruptly, and devices for determining position or



The Russian military has been secretly researching a new variety of high-speed torpedo. These weapons, called *Shkval* ("squall"), use the so-called cavitation effect. They produce innumerable small steam bubbles which reduce the friction resistance of the water, and can thereby reach speeds up to 500 kph (310 mph, 270 knots), quadruple that of traditional torpedoes—at least in theory. The technology is not fully mature, and the Russians have not yet moved beyond prototype studies. In well informed circles, it is surmised that a malfunction of one of these weapons caused the sinking of the Russian nuclear sub *Kursk* in the Barents Sea in August 2000.

Edmond Pope, a retired Naval Intelligence officer, was sentenced to twenty years in prison for espionage in Moscow in December 2000. He was convicted of trying to obtain information and plans for the *Shkval* torpedo for the U.S. (Pope was pardoned by Vladimir Putin after serving 253 days in prison and maintains his innocence of the charge.) This Pope incident reflects the highly charged atmosphere surrounding the development of this new technology.

locating the *Roger Revelle* go crazy. On the broadcast frequencies, there's only static—although if the Keeper likes, one or two phrases of Russian might come through the noise. Only the headset radios for communicating within the group remain functional—although with a constant undertone of static.

Sooner or later, the *Roger Revelle* appears out of the fog, a huge black wall suddenly towering over the SEALs.

When the characters board the research ship, they'll have their first encounter with the Russians, who have come aboard the ship from the other side, where the *Potemkin* lies a short distance away. The Russians want to take a look around the alleged ghost ship. In the thick fog, they are dark shadows. As soon as they're discovered, they will retreat to the *Potemkin*. Because their skills are fundamentally equal to the characters', they'll do so quickly and quietly. If they're worried, they will simply dive headfirst over the rail. Nevertheless, it could happen that one or two of them will be shot dead before they can withdraw. That aside, the Russians won't get caught up in a long firefight. They've staked everything on their mission, and every man counts! If the Russians suffer losses, the Keeper should try to

have the bodies fall into the sea and disappear into the depths; this will keep the story more mysterious and exciting for the players.

Exploring the Roger Revelle

After the encounter with the Russians, the SEALs have the opportunity to explore and secure the dark, dead ship. The most interesting areas on board are summarized later in the scenario. The Keeper should attempt to keep up the haunting mood the whole time. Now and then, mysterious noises can be heard from the engine room, caused by the two test gorillas who are hiding there. The engine room should be an early goal for the SEALs in any case, because the ship's electricity can only be restored from there.

In addition, the characters will quickly learn what sorts of experiments were really taking place on board the *Roger Revelle*, and that the Vice Admiral has sent them on a suicide mission. In drawing these conclusions, they will realize that Spenser has been playing a double game and has built some kind of cult. Spenser and two other men (Paul Taylor and John Powers), presumably also cultists, cannot be found among the corpses on board but have fled in a small submarine into the deeps and are on their way to R'lyeh.

The Russians Are Coming!

While the players check out the *Roger Revelle*, the surviving Russians on the *Potemkin* have a serious discussion. Meeting the characters hindered their exploration of the research ship. One group of the Russians wants to sink the *Roger Revelle* immediately with all hands. But the cool, logical commander eventually asserts himself against his comrades-in-arms and convinces them that it's important to find out what happened on board the ship and what the SEALs want there. After all, they can sink the ship at any time.



An End at Sea

The Russians will therefore make their way back onto the *Roger Revelle* at some point and will try to spy on the characters. Optimally, they'd like to capture one of the SEALs and listen in on the conversation of the other characters through his headset. They could also steal the boats or jet-skis on which the characters arrived, if it's possible without risk.

One way or another, the Russians will have the opportunity to eavesdrop on the characters and learn what a mess they're in and what a raw deal they've gotten. In addition, the Russians will hopefully get wind of the fact that Project Pi's leading scientist has taken off with the mini-sub. Because the Russians can't track the sub themselves, they will need the help of the SEALs to reach their goals. They will therefore attempt to open a conversation with them, although not at any price!

A Question of Conscience

If the Russians have captured a character, they first take him to the *Potemkin*. There he'll remain, locked up for a while, while the Russians further spy on the characters. Admiral Ochmorov will treat

Navy SEALs have the best equipment at their disposal. This includes the MK8 MOD 0 SEAL Delivery Vehicle, SDV for short. The SDV is an underwater vehicle about seven meters in length, powered by an electric motor. This torpedo-like vehicle enables completely silent movement. Another means of transport is the Rigid Hull Inflatable Boat. This is an extremely stable inflatable boat that can reach speeds of over 40 knots (45 mph).

the prisoner very amicably and will converse intently with him for a while. He will tell the character his story. Afterward, he will give the character the choice of persuading his comrades to make common cause with the Russians and join them, or of dying with his comrades on the *Roger Revelle*, as they will be destroying the ship one way or the other. Finally, he will let the prisoner return to the *Roger Revelle* so that he can give his colleagues the news.

Alternatively: even without a prisoner, Ochmorov contacts the characters. In this case, he breaks in on their conversations over the radio, posing the same choice: help him or die!

The characters now have several options:

- ◆ They can refuse to work with the Russians, fleeing or remaining on the *Roger Revelle*. In this case, Ochmorov knows no mercy and will try everything he can to kill the characters and, above all, to sink the *Revelle*. He'll use a tactical nuclear weapon for the purpose: he wants to be absolutely sure that nothing remains of the ship and the virus.

- ◆ If the players decide to fight the Russians, the Keeper should not make it too easy for them. The Russians are also pros and they outnumber the SEALs. Despite that, the idea isn't doomed to failure in advance, and perhaps the characters will succeed in capturing the *Potemkin*.

- ◆ Most probably, the characters will see reason in the words of the Russians and make common cause with them. That means

an inevitable end to their careers in the Navy and likely an early end as deserters on the high sea. Still, it's the right choice morally.

The Roger Revelle

Superstructures—The Bridge

The bridge is empty, like (almost) all the other areas of the ship. A ghostly silence reigns—the computers and monitors are all dark, and there's no electricity anywhere on the ship: the engines are stopped. The electricity can only be turned on in the engine room (*Idea* roll, plus *Know* roll).

On one of the computers, there's a pool of nasty, viscous, green slime. Similar puddles can be found in other isolated spots. These pools are the highly contagious sputum coughed up by the infected. If a character touches the slime with unprotected skin, much less tastes it, he will be infected (the virus has POT 60; roll against the character's CON on the Resistance Table). Otherwise, there's nothing interesting on the bridge or in the adjoining map and navigation rooms.

If the electricity is restored, a *Computer Use* roll on the captain's terminal will yield a complete crew listing—fifty-nine people were supposed to have been on board—as well as the captain's log. The latter doesn't contain any great clues, just the *Revelle's* route and positional data. If the characters work a little with the computers on the bridge (*Computer Use* rolls), they can learn that a central computer on board sends and receives e-mail from the onboard network's computers via satellite several times a day. If the characters take the time, they can view a list of sent e-mail. There are quite a few, but it may occur to them that a certain hcs frequently sent mail to vambucci@navy.mil and a certain njones@navy.mil. Some of the characters can correctly identify njones as Dr. Nathaniel Jones, a doctor attached to the Third Fleet (*Know* roll). The characters can assume that vambucci is no one less than their boss, Vice Admiral Matthew Bucci.

Superstructures—The Rest

The other cabins on board, the mess, galley, and the heads all offer a similar picture: it looks as if the rooms were hurriedly abandoned.

Tip for the Keeper

During the briefings and operational planning, play appropriate military music in the background for the appropriate mood! It shouldn't be march music; something snappy and peppy with drum rolls will work best.

Beds are unmade, food still sits on plates, and toilets are unflushed. In addition, they keep finding more pools of the green slime. Otherwise, outside of the personal effects of the crew, there are no interesting discoveries to be made.



Below Decks—The Engine Room

The entrance to the engine room is through a small control room filled with computers and control monitors. The door in this room and the exit to the engine room proper are both open. The engines can indeed be turned on from this room, but the controls require electricity. For this purpose, there's a small auxiliary generator in the engine room proper.

Naturally, everything is pitch dark. The engine room is a nightmare of narrow, twisting passages, steaming valves, and large boilers. The SEALs will quickly lose sight of each other as they plunge into this labyrinth, as there are a multitude of different paths: small ladders leading up and down, and metal grates crossing over the engines and boilers like bridges. Now and then, sounds come out of different corners—the Keeper should build tension in the players, reaching deep into his bag of tricks (SAN losses of 0/1 can be inflicted, if desired).

Infrared vision devices don't function down here (some of the boilers and valves are still very hot and "white out" the IR). On one of the boilers, the characters can make out the tattered remains of

Tip for the Keeper

During the exploration of the ship, speak in a quiet, subdued voice. Prompt the players to only communicate in whispers or—even better—with gestures. This will convey the atmosphere of a mysterious, but professional military operation!

something. On closer observation, it turns out to be the torn remains of a small rhesus monkey.

Then, suddenly, they are attacked by two giant black monsters with tiny red eyes! The creatures are covered with fur and have superhuman strength (SAN loss: 0/1d4). Their attackers are "only" the gorillas who had been on board the ship as lab animals, now driven wild by hunger and fear. The characters shouldn't realize this until after a terrifying battle in flickering light in the tight spaces between engines and boilers. Once the characters finally secure the engine room, they will spot the auxiliary generator in a small room off the far side. The auxiliary generator is easily switched on, and with its electricity, the engines can be brought back into service.

Two Panicky Gorillas

STR 20	CON 25	SIZ 18	DEX 22	HP 22
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Damage Bonus: +1d6

Attacks: Bite 70%, damage 2d6+DB; Hand 70%, damage 1d4+1d6+DB; Grapple 80%, damage, special

Armor: 4 points of fur and leathery hide

Skills: Be Peaceable 02%, Climb 90%, Hide 75%, Howl 100%, Jump 90%

Below Decks—The Laboratories

The laboratories are sealed off from the outside world. Airlocks with integral disinfection apparatuses lead into them. In a cabinet next to the entrance, there are medical protective suits. These resemble space suits somewhat, each having its own oxygen supply and always being slightly pressurized, so that if the suit is damaged, air will

escape, but none can penetrate. Helmets with large visual windows and built-in communication radios hinder the wearer's perception somewhat, while the suits themselves seriously impede movement, especially in combat (–20% to all physical actions).

One of the airlocks is broken, in any case, and both pressure doors are slightly ajar. Without electricity, the other airlock doors can only be opened by means of a manual emergency handle.

In the area behind the airlocks, there are offices, more cabins for the scientists, and smaller laboratories and workrooms without interesting content, as well as the following important rooms.

The Laboratory

This is a large central laboratory in which most of the research work was conducted. The equipment consists of computers, writing and work desks, medical and technical apparatuses, incubators, and chemical cabinets. One side of the room is closed off by bulletproof glass and can only be reached by another airlock, this one glass. A large operating table surrounded by medical devices dominates the isolation area. From the operating room, a second, heavy door locked with a digital keypad leads to the Cold Room.

The laboratory is in poor shape—documents are scattered everywhere, chairs have been thrown around, and the computers have been destroyed. It appears to be the aftermath of a fight—as pools of dried blood, spent bullet casings, and some bullet holes in the walls indicate. The remaining crew members and the cultists fought it out here. The cultists were victorious, even if three of their number had to die. The firefight's dead lie in the Cold Room, as bloody drag marks on the floor hint.

The Cold Room

Because the electricity was turned off, the temperature in the room was not maintained correctly. If the electricity is turned back on, a small digital readout to the right of the heavy door will display a number (say, –30.3°) which will slowly sink as the Cold Room is re-refrigerated.

The door to the Cold Room is secured with a keypad, and it will only open if the correct combination is input. If a character looks at the small display, he will figure out that the code must have five digits. Close scrutiny of the keys will reveal that the 1, 3, 4, and 5 buttons have been more heavily used than the others. The code itself had to be easy for the scientists to keep in mind. Therefore they took a cue from the name of the project and chose the first five places of the decimal representation of the number pi. After inputting 31415, the security door to the Cold Room will open (the Keeper can nudge the players along the right track with a halved *Idea* roll).

The small Cold Room is a tableau of horror: it is completely filled with corpses, heedlessly piled on top of each other. Most of these corpses were victims of the virus and show the corresponding physiological changes. Five of the crew members were apparently healthy, or the disease wasn't very advanced in them: the cause of death in these cases is obviously gunshot wounds. Three of them are cultists. Conspicuously, they each bear a large tattoo of a phoenix on their backs. None of those killed by the virus has a similar tattoo.

If the Cold Room is emptied out a bit, large drawers can be opened from the room's walls. Two crew members killed by the virus



Drag marks lead to the Cold Room

and a rhesus monkey have been carefully dissected. Especially hard-bitten characters can get a good view of how the virus mutated the inner organs of the afflicted. This is not a pretty picture: a swollen lung filled with green slime, some kind of air bladder that has grown in the abdomen, an enlarged liver.

Finally, in the last drawer, there is a similarly necropsied Deep One, whose DNA is the source of the whole calamity on the *Roger Revelle*.

If the dead on board are counted, the SEALs find there are only fifty-six. Three of the crew are missing! This can be confirmed by comparing the crew list found in the computers on the bridge. These three have taken the mini-sub and dived down to R'lyeh—Spenser and the two surviving cultists, Paul Taylor and John Powers! Who exactly is missing can be determined by comparing the crew list with the nametags on the overalls or smocks of the dead.

Spenser's Study

A computer sits on the writing desk. If turned on, it prompts the user for a log-in ID and a password. The log-in name is "hcs" (for Honore Clarke Spenser) and isn't hard to find out. A complete list of all crew members and their corresponding log-in names can be found among the scattered documents in the lab. It might also occur to the players based on the e-mail traffic found on the bridge. Spenser's password is harder to guess, but as a loyal cultist, he chose the name of his secret project: "phoenix." A Keeper who doesn't give the players much credit can provide an additional clue in the form

of a poster on the study wall showing an amazingly beautiful bird flying up out of a sea of flames. If this fails, a one-time, difficult (i.e., halved) *Computer Use* roll will hack it.

In Spenser's computer, there are two folders with the names "Project Pi" and "Phoenix." In the first are comprehensive reports and research data on Project Pi. It's left to the Keeper to determine what information the characters can glean by looking through this data.

The content of the second folder has been emptied, but apparently Spenser is no computer genius. Thanks to Microsoft Windows, these files are still in the Recycle Bin on his desktop and can be restored with a mouse click.

The Phoenix files are scanned pages of antiquarian books with melodious names like *The Necronomicon*, *The R'lyeh Text*, and *Cthaat Aquadingen*. These files won't likely be particularly interesting to the SEALs. They're ancient texts, none of them in English, but Latin (*The Necronomicon*, *Cthaat Aquadingen*) and medieval German (*The R'lyeh Text*). These texts are only fragments of the actual books. They have a common theme, however: all these fragments deal with an ancient, primitive god with the name Cthulhu and his following, demons and fish-like beings, the Deep Ones. Cthulhu, according to these documents, resides in a city called R'lyeh that's supposed to be sunken somewhere in the Pacific. There dead Cthulhu lies dreaming, waiting for the time of his return. The commentaries and annotations of Spenser indicate he seems to have believed in the veracity of these documents and was seeking R'lyeh. Obviously he is a lunatic.

Also on Spenser's PC, a few old, sent e-mail can be reconstructed. If the characters find these, the e-mails are in the Appendix (Handout 3).

Otherwise, Spenser's office is arranged very efficiently and evinces no personal or unnecessary objects, just a work area and some reference works in shelves on the walls. The books are all medical and genetics textbooks. A large number of journal articles are arranged in an orderly fashion in several folders on the shelves. They cover topics like on themes like cloning, in-vitro fertilization,

and transferring DNA via a carrier (flu viruses) into another organism.

The other documents in this room revolve directly around Project Pi and are all of an administrative nature, although there are also personnel lists and plans listing the participating scientists. If the characters take a lot of time, they can learn from these documents that the entire project was brought into being solely by Spenser's initiative. In addition, he got jobs for five of his former colleagues—these are the five other Phoenix cultists, of whom three lie in the Cold Room, shot dead, and the two more who are under way to R'lyeh with Spenser in the mini-sub.

The Norwegians' Cabin

One cabin here in the airlocked science era was inhabited by two people whose reading habits seem to show they were apparently not scientists—the only books in the room are cheap paperbacks. Calendars with nude women on the walls strengthen this impression. Under a pillow on the two beds, there's a sort of diary. It's in Norwegian and therefore completely incomprehensible to the SEALs. There are no dates in the little book, but a quick flip through will pique some interest: the author was obviously in a distressed mental state, his handwriting changing frequently, jittery and scribbled. Again and again, the word "Kursk" can be made out in the text. In addition, scattered throughout the book are many little drawings, not particularly well executed. They show a fish-like being that walks upright, with large eyes, a broad maw, and with a powerful but stooped build. This book is the journal of one of the Norwegian rescue divers who found a dead Deep One in the sunken wreck of the *Kursk*.

The journal was a sort of coping strategy for the diver who never escaped the nameless terror that gripped him in the depths of the Barents Sea. The SEALs may recognize the similarity of the creature depicted to the carcass in the final drawer in the Cold Room (SAN loss: 1/1d4).

The Cages

In another room, there are cages for laboratory animals. As the labels show, these confined two male gorillas and six rhesus monkeys. The



electronic cage locks failed after the electricity outage, and the primates freed themselves. The rhesus monkeys didn't make it far—four of them lie mutilated in this room, one is dissected in the Cold Room, and parts of the sixth are chewed up on a boiler in the engine room. There are also two large salt water tanks made out of Plexiglas. These are empty except for the water. They were intended for live Deep One specimens.

The Bow Room and Diving Pool

In the bow area of the ship there is another very large room which is several stories high. It is dominated by a large diving pool in the middle. An apparatus similar to a crane over the pool allows the pool's purpose to be divined very quickly: a miniature submarine should be hanging from it, of which there's no trace. The computers in this room (which need electricity, of course) can detect a signal from the mini-sub (*Computer Use* roll)—it comes from the depths below the *Roger Revelle*! Attempts at communication remain unanswered. The receiver that is detecting the directional signal can be removed from the console and connected to a laptop without a problem (given successful *Mechanical Repair* and *Electronics* rolls). This will make the pursuit of the mini-sub that much more exciting.

Otherwise, the room contains diving equipment and a lot of other objects, including weapons. With a *Spot Hidden* roll, the SEALs can find an inventory list for the arsenal. If they compare it to the weapons on hand, they will notice that three Micro-Uzis are missing.

In total, there are: six M16A2 assault rifles with 1,000 rounds of ammunition (See the Additional Weapons table at the end of the adventure); eight spearguns (Base chance 25%, damage 1d8+2 (underwater 1d8), base range 15 yards, attacks 1, ammunition capacity 1, hit points 12, malfunction 00) with 20 shots and a further 40 tranquilizing rounds (as above, instead of damage, anesthesia of POT 25 rolled against the target's CON on the Resistance Table); and ten shock generators (Base chance 20%, damage *stun*, base range *touch*, attacks 1, hit points 10, malfunction 97).

*CONTACT! R'lyeh
and the Showdown*

Ochmorov insists upon destroying the *Roger Revelle* and cannot be dissuaded.

The characters will want to follow the missing sub into the deeps. That's not really a problem, even without the tracking device, because the exact position of the presumed Deep One colony is fairly easy to discern from the work papers of Spenser and the Project Pi research team.

Whether or not the characters have made common cause with the Russians, seized the *Potemkin* from them, or used their own sub, it should be possible for them to follow the remaining cultists. This should proceed as an exciting dive with mysterious shadows on the instruments and strange sounds from the deep. If the SEALs have taken the directional beacon from the *Roger Revelle*, the chase can be particularly effective. The trip is not very far or deep—very soon, geometric forms appear out of the midnight blackness of the water. These are parts of the sunken city of R'lyeh, in which Cthulhu, sleeping, waits for his return.

The Keeper's task now is to create a mysterious, suspenseful atmosphere and to scare the players with the horrors of the ancient city (SAN loss: 0/1d4). It is a city that shouldn't be able to exist here, with high towers of colossal, dark green stone, constructed in non-Euclidean fashion, overgrown with algae and coral. Nevertheless, carved reliefs in the stone can be seen clearly, along with the hieroglyphics of a long-forgotten language. Their sense can only be guessed at, but they show nightmarish forms that couldn't possibly have lived—or is it just the characters' imagination conjuring up the images?

A huge black mountain towers above the rest of sunken R'lyeh. The characters find themselves on a direct course toward it when the directional signal is lost. The last signal came from inside the mountain!

When approaching the dark mountain, a massive opening is revealed into which the characters can navigate. It leads into a kind of pool in a huge cavern in the middle of R'lyeh—with a breathable atmosphere!

The pool is located in a massive subterranean hall. Wide paths run along the edges, like the waterfronts of an underground port



facility. From the paths, dark passageways lead further into the mountain. The domed ceiling of the hall is so high that it's swallowed up in darkness. Titanic, irregularly spaced columns rise up into the darkness. Everywhere on the walls and columns, strange, uncanny, alien reliefs and hieroglyphs in an antediluvian, long forgotten language are worked into the stone. The whole complex seems to be incomprehensibly old. But the dark, basalt stone with the strange symbols seems to have remained completely untouched down through the millennia. The only sign of its age is the thick growth of algae and fungus that has grown up out of the water like a cancer and covers large portions of the walls, ceilings, and columns. These plants emit a dim, greenish light which is the only illumination within this primeval edifice.

On one side, barely discernible in the darkness, the *Roger Revelle's* little research sub is moored. On the shore behind it can be seen the remains of an improvised camp where Spenser and his two colleagues landed. They spent a few hours here, occupying themselves intensely with the hieroglyphs and resting, before Spencer and Paul Taylor set out. The last cultist, John Powers, stayed behind to guard the submarine (his statistics are found at the end of the adventure). His task becomes particularly pressing when the SEALs appear. As soon as they show themselves, Powers takes cover behind a pillar and opens fire with his submachine gun. If the characters are working with the Russians, the first Russian who climbs out of the *Potemkin's* hatch can be cut down in cinematic fashion by a salvo from the darkness. The characters have to figure out some way to take out the shooter in the darkness. Take into account that Powers is well hidden and lying in ambush (chances to hit him are 1/5 normal), the characters don't know how many enemies they face, and they have to climb out of their sub, presenting themselves on a silver platter. Possibilities for defeating Powers include, for example, deploying smoke or flash grenades, or the SEALs leaving the boat by a different exit, e.g., through the torpedo tubes, sneaking onto land, and eliminating the shooter.

When Powers is defeated, he'll still be alive but mortally wounded when the characters get to him. He lies, covered in blood, behind a column, muttering the same words over and over, in what almost sounds like a prayer:

*As the phoenix arose from the flame
The sleeper will wake just the same
Born again by our hands
Infinite power he commands
For his return we are forewarned
From his own flesh shall he be born
His second body we shall bestow
And our thoughts only will he know
By our will directed; by no thing deflected
The age of man sets like the sun
Death unto them, for we have won!*

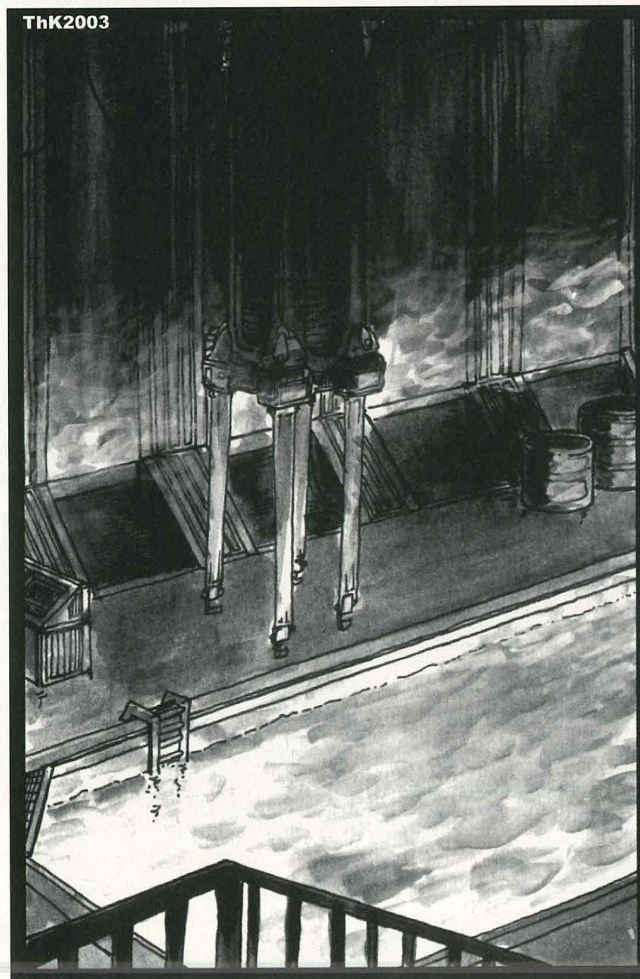
Then he laughs insanely and dies shortly thereafter.

If the characters examine the area near Powers' remains, they'll find indications that the three cultists rested here, as well as a scrap of paper with handwritten notes by Spenser, possibly a fragmentary translation of some of the strange hieroglyphics on the walls (Handout 2). In addition, the characters will find Powers' walkie-talkie with which, in all probability, he warned the others. The characters can even contact Spenser, if they

choose, to try and dissuade him from his insane errand. In the mini-sub, the SEALs can also find a few ampules containing the highly contagious sputum of the infected—the same viscous green slime as on board the *Roger Revelle*. In another sealed test tube, marked DO-DNA, is DNA extracted from a Deep One.

The characters now have several alternatives:

1. Wait: They can simply wait it out. The Keeper should then try to describe the uncanny alienness of this place and to stoke their fear with noises from the passageways, weird splashes, and foul smells. If the Keeper wishes, he can unleash a wave of 4d6 Deep Ones and a Star Spawn of Cthulhu (statistics and sanity costs found in the base rulebook), which can suddenly burst in from all sides, out of the passages, and from underwater. If the characters are victorious and keep waiting, they'll learn at some point that Spenser was successful in his endeavors—either over the walkie-talkie or through the following events. Spenser's intrusion has broken the seal and inadvertently woken Cthulhu. What follows is literally apocalyptic: it begins with incredible earth tremors, then parts of the ceiling fall in and cracks open in the floor. The Keeper should play the characters' flight as excitingly and cinematically as possible. Behind them, parts of the black mountain collapse and if they are able somehow to escape the destruction, their real problems begin. They are suddenly followed by Something gigantic and inconceivably fast. Cthulhu in person! (Statistics in the base rulebook.) Fleeing in the sub should hardly succeed; if the SEALs use the craft itself and ram



Cthulhu (halved *Pilot (Ship)* roll), they can get rid of him—but only for two minutes, which can suffice for a breakneck chase with a merciful Keeper. Attacking Cthulhu with torpedos has little prospect of success. If the SEALs are with the Russians on the *Potemkin*, the idea of using the *Shkval* torpedos may occur to them. There are in fact two prototypes on board which, with a *Luck* roll, will function correctly. They are fast enough to catch the Great Old One, with the same effect as above. A third possibility of being temporarily rid of Cthulhu lies in using a nuclear weapon, although with the side effect that the *Potemkin* will necessarily be destroyed by it as well. Nevertheless, there may be a feeling of triumph in death (“I’m taking you with me!”) Perhaps the Keeper would permit the characters’ flight to bring Cthulhu within the range of the Pacific

Fleet’s guns and cruise missiles. What happens then is left to the Keeper’s imagination...

2. In the Halls of R’lyeh: If the characters decide not to wait around but follow Spenser into the darkness, they have to enter the labyrinthine passageways of the sunken nightmare city. With a *Track* roll, it’s possible to follow his trail. It leads through broad and high corridors overgrown with dimly glowing algae and fungi. Mysterious reliefs on the walls depicting nightmarish horrors dampen one’s natural curiosity as to what might be making the shuffling and splashing noises in the deeps. When the SEALs have followed the corridors for a while, they’re suddenly and ferociously attacked at a large intersection by 3d6 Deep Ones and perhaps (30% chance) a Star Spawn. (Statistics and sanity costs in the base rulebook.) Among

the attackers is Paul Taylor (statistics at the end of the adventure), by now insane and already showing signs of the virus. If the characters are able to fend off this attack, they’ll hear shuffling and angry growls from out of the darkness. After a short pause for breath (2d6 minutes), they’re attacked again and again by new waves of monsters bursting from the blackness. The subsequent waves are composed of 2d6 Deep Ones and perhaps (30% chance) a Star Spawn. (Statistics in base rulebook.) Any of the players infected with the virus will not be attacked. An *Idea* roll will prompt this realization if the players don’t figure it out for themselves. The attacks will only stop when all of the humans are either dead or infected.

If the characters all infect themselves with the virus, if necessary with the help of Taylor’s remains, they can follow Spenser’s trail unmolested. Conceivably, the Russians who’ve survived thus far aren’t enthusiastic about infecting themselves with a deadly virus and must be convinced with a *Persuade* roll. The soldiers have to follow Spenser uphill for a long time through the grotesque maze of passages. Now and then they will encounter beings from the sleeping god’s entourage without being bothered by them. Finally, they’ll eventually reach Spenser. He stands before a massive portal, sealed with dark stone blocks and decorated with nightmarish symbols. He is attempting to open it. At the moment, he’s affixing an explosive charge. If he notices the characters first, he will not automatically attack. To the contrary, he’ll attempt to convince them of the rightness of his actions and even promise them an anti-virus to cure them of their disease. If they agree, then they all open the great gate together. Behind it lies, in a massive subterranean dome in the peak of the mountain, Cthulhu, sleeping, as old as time itself, and bound to his mausoleum by the power of a gigantic and bizarre Elder Sign. (SAN loss for this panorama: 1d10/1d100.) If the SEALs approach, they’ve barely taken a few steps into the massive domed hall when suddenly one of the sleeping titan’s eyes opens. What happens next is left to the Keeper’s fancy. Very possible would be a flight pursued by Cthulhu with the outcome described above.

If the characters overpower Spenser before he can open the portal, then they’ve succeeded to the maximum possible extent in the adventure. If they search Spenser’s body, they will actually find an ampule with an anti-virus—a

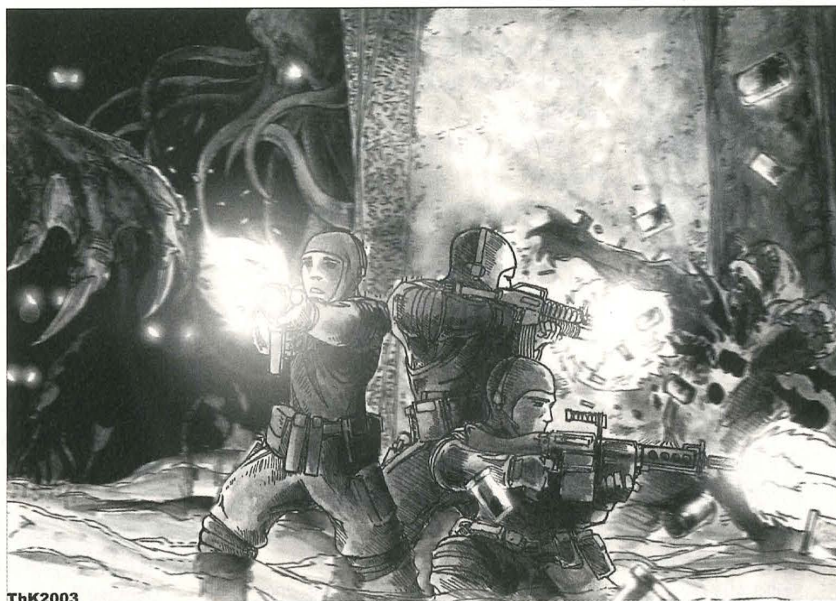


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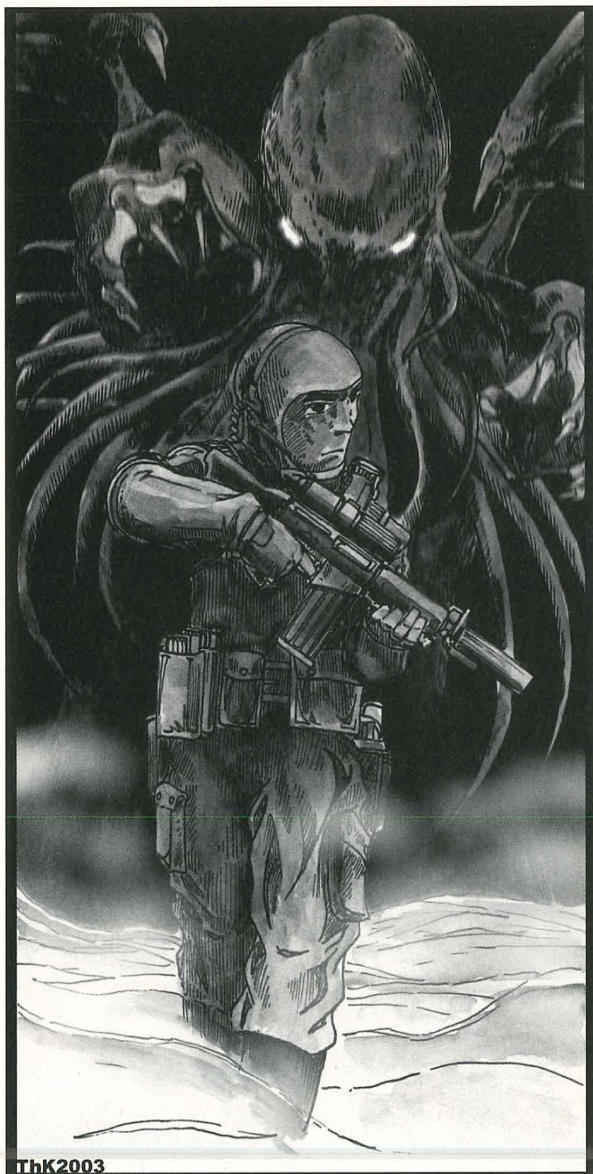
successful *Pharmacy* roll determines that the ampule will suffice for three doses. If more than three characters (possibly including the Russians) are still alive, they have to decide between themselves who gets the antidote. If anyone's foolish enough to take the antidote while still in the passages of R'lyeh, further attacks naturally ensue on their way back to their ship.

Loose Ends

The real dangers have indeed been overcome, but there are still a couple open ends to the story, and if everyone has had fun, there's no reason for not following one or another of these plot threads.



ThK2003



ThK2003

- ◆ Dr. Nathaniel Jones is the last survivor of the Phoenix cult; he's still waiting at a rendezvous point for Spenser and Cthulhu's DNA. What happens to him?

- ◆ Vice Admiral Buccini knowingly sent the characters to their deaths. He and a few other important people still know about Project Pi and also that it achieved success, in a manner of speaking. If they're not stopped, they'll try again sometime, somewhere.

- ◆ If the Russians under Ochmorov are still alive, they can place some obstacles (i.e., torpedos) in the way of Project Pi and its Russian counterpart. Will the characters continue to support them? Might they even join them permanently?

- ◆ If Cthulhu has been awakened, the question remains whether he destroys the world, or what happens to him.

- ◆ If the *Roger Revelle* is not destroyed or if infected people are still around, the virus continues to exist. Who will take possession of it? Will it spread? Will the population of the world be annihilated and the few, lucky survivors be turned into grotesque water-breathing creatures?

Non-Player Characters

Wayne Jackson

In case the players' group lacks size or firepower, the Keeper can use Wayne as an additional SEAL alongside the characters. He can also provide atmosphere for a more reserved group of players, in that he can make the typical macho, action movie cracks at appropriate places.

Wayne has steel blue eyes, is not particularly big, but a real bundle of dynamite. He's recently bleached his short hair and shaved a skull into the nape of his neck. Perpetually frowning, Wayne projects a snide, arrogant appearance. He frequently balances a toothpick on his lower lip.

Wayne is a Texan. He always carries an enormous Bowie knife, polished to a mirrored finish. He enjoys playing around with the knife, cleaning his fingernails with it when he's got nothing else to



do. Wayne is a specialist in unarmed close combat. He claims to know 27 different ways to kill a man with his toothpick.

Quotes (said in a broad, smoky voice):

"Hey, Vasquez, has anyone ever mistaken you for a man?"

"Let's kick their ass!"

"I've got a flea here at five o'clock. Should I squash 'im, Cap? It'll only take a second!"

"Eat this!"

STR 18	CON 18	SIZ 16	DEX 18	POW 18
INT 12	EDU 14	APP 10	HP 17	SAN 90

Damage Bonus: +1d6

Weapons: According to weapon.

Skills: All *mêlée* combat skills 100%, all other combat skills 80%, all physical skills 80%, Be Cool 99%, Macho One-Liner 99%

Admiral Dmitri Ochmorov

Admiral Ochmorov has commandeered the Russian nuclear submarine *Potëmkin* and now commands his small hand picked group of deserters, themselves elite soldiers who don't lag much behind the Navy SEALs.



His deserters are: Pyotr Kaminer, Vladimir Brushov, Igor Knotovsky, Grigory Brest, Alexandr Lotovsk, Mikhail Kerensky, Sergei Kirsakov, and Nikolai Romsy.

Ochmorov is a very intelligent man in his early fifties, relatively short but very powerful and wiry. He has short white hair and steel blue eyes. He has a sarcastic sense of humor and is a distinguished orator and diplomat.

Quotes (with a Russian accent):

"You ken eeder be reezonabul, end save de vurld, or you ken die. Chooz end let me naw."

STR 18	CON 18	SIZ 16	DEX 18	POW 18
INT 16	EDU 18	APP 14	HP 17	SAN 90

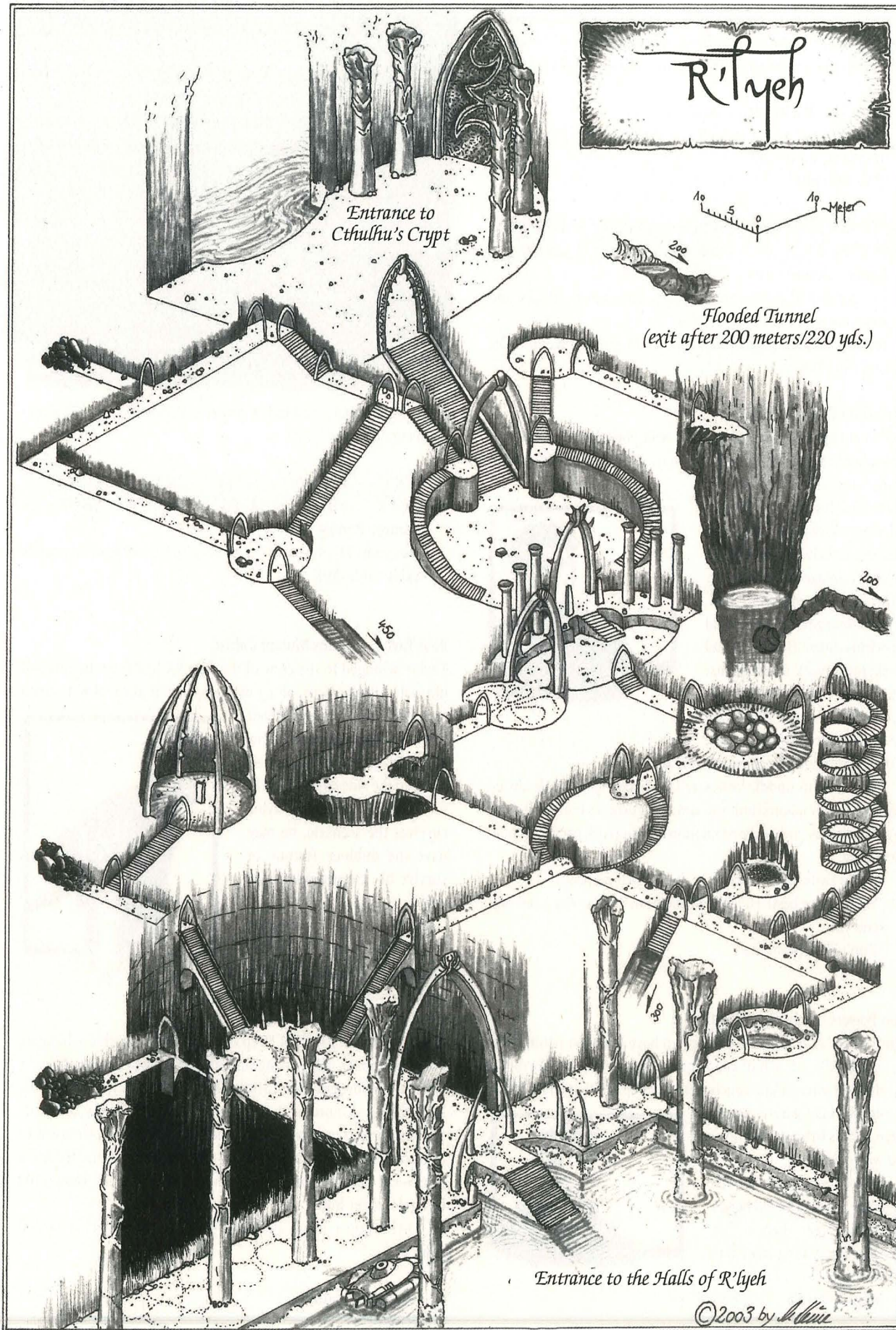
Damage Bonus: +1d6

Weapons: 9mm Yarygin PYa Pistol 80%, damage 1d10; other attacks and weapons are possible, all at 80%

Skills: English 70%, Leadership 90%, Persuade 80%, Steal Submarine 90%, Swim/Dive 80%

The Elite Russians: Pyotr Kaminer, Vladimir Brushov, Igor Knotovsky, Grigory Brest, Alexandr Lotovsk, Mikhail Kerensky, Sergei Kirsakov, Nikolai Romsy





For simplicity's sake, identical statistics are given for all the Russians. They're tough guys and former elite naval commandos or sub crewmen. Take your cues from the player characters for skills not listed here.

Quotes (with a Russian accent):

"Amerikantsy! You alveyz vant to deeztroy de vurd! Vy not trrry to save eet for once?"

"Dos vidaniya!"

STR 16	CON 16	SIZ 14	DEX 16	POW 16
INT 13	EDU 14	APP 12	HP 15	SAN 80

Damage Bonus: +1d4

Weapons: AKSU-74 75%, damage 2d8; other attacks and weapons are possible, all at 70%

Important Skills: English 20%, Sneak 80%, Swim/Dive 80%, Die Stylishly 90%

Vice Admiral Matthew Bucci

Bucci has had a dream career. He's still young and already the Commander of the Third Fleet. He has, above all, his unscrupulousness to thank for his success. He's worked his way up ruthlessly and won't hesitate to step over bodies. Publicly, he knows to protect his image as an eloquent, charming, and educated man. He's far too cagey to let a scandal imperil his career. He's never had the slightest black mark against him. He has a wife and two children, and is a model American. If he hadn't been born in Italy, he'd be planning to be president one day.



Bucci is in his middle forties, tall, and good looking. He always wears a perfectly tailored uniform and never exposes himself. Among his subordinates, he has the reputation of being rock hard and coolly calculating.

Quotes (with military posture, hands behind back):

"You are the best! The best of the best! That's why I can only send you."

"Don't disappoint me!"

John Powers – Sub-Guarding Cultist

John Powers is actually very happy to have been left behind with the supposedly safe job of guarding the mini-sub. The horrors of R'lyeh don't interest him much. Upon seeing the characters arrive, he puts out his cigarette with a curse, jumps behind a column, and warns Spenser.



Powers was in the service for many years and then began a scientific career where he met Spenser. The young man was officially Spenser's assistant on the *Roger Revelle*, but he's

Tip for the Keeper

During the action scenes, be sure to evoke the right atmosphere. Put on hard, fast, loud music, like music from action movies, heavy metal, or Wagner's "Ride of the Valkyries." If the Russians or Wayne (see below) fight with the characters, be sure to let them bellow out brief battle comments like "CONTAAAACT!" "Eat this!" "I'm out!" "Behind you!" "Aaagh!" or "It got me!" Try to influence the players to express themselves similarly, with short, succinct utterances, shouted if possible. Push the tempo and hectic nature of the scenes by speaking more quickly and spurring the players to act quickly. Don't allow any long discussions. Also try to avoid too many dice rolls which take up too much time during hectic scenes. You can decide freely what the NPCs are aiming at and if they hit—you don't have to always let the dice decide!

traded his lab coat for a black diving suit. He wears a phoenix tattoo on his upper arm.

STR 15	CON 16	SIZ 14	DEX 15	POW 10
INT 12	EDU 16	APP 12	HP 15	SAN 0

Damage Bonus: +1d4

Weapons: Micro-Uzi 60%, damage 1d10, 2 clips of 20 rounds

Skills: Hide 60%

Paul Taylor – Insane Mutant Cultist

Taylor belonged to the crew of the *Revelle*. In R'lyeh, he infected himself with the virus, along with Spenser. It affected him much faster: he's already transformed halfway to an amphibious creature. Strangely, he hasn't had many of the side effects (death, for instance), and if Taylor survives the scenario, he may have the dubious fortune to survive his metamorphosis as well.



However, his mind hasn't come through the transformation intact. Taylor is completely out of it and simply walked away from Spenser. When he appears with the group of Deep Ones, he looks horrible—bloated, though still stuck in his diving suit, which has burst in several places, exposing sallow gray skin. His milky white eyes stick out and his hair falls out in clumps. His tongue is swollen and slimy, and spittle runs from his mouth. When he encounters the characters, he tries to bite them, attempting to infect them with the virus. He has a Micro-Uzi with him, but it never occurs to him to use it. Death would be a release for him.

On his upper arm is a phoenix tattoo, distorted by his bloated skin.

Quotes (throatily):

"Glurp!"

“Boggle boggle!”

STR 18 CON 18 SIZ 12 DEX 10 HP 15

Damage Bonus: +1d4

Weapons: Bite 30%, 1d3+DB (+ Infection POT 60), Claws 50% 1d3+DB

Equipment: Micro-Uzi, damage 1d10, 2 clips of 20 rounds, Explosives, Walkie-talkie

Skills: Hide 60%

SAN loss: 0/1d4

Dr. Honore Clarke Spenser – Infected Head Evil-Doer and Chief Cultist

Spenser is a genial scientist with a very persuasive manner. Indeed, he’s completely persuaded Jones and the other members of Project Phoenix. His inner fire drives him and Phoenix on. When the characters reach him, only a door and a few minutes separate him from the fulfillment of his life’s work. Accordingly, he will attempt to get the characters on his side with eloquence and good arguments. First, he will try seductive offers of power and ruling the world. Then, he’ll offer the anti-virus, bluffing that only he can inject it and administer it correctly. If the SEALs remain unpersuaded, he’ll lie openly, claiming that he’s doing it for America, appealing to the SEALs’ patriotism. He’s absolutely not reachable by arguments to the contrary and will not compromise at all. Spenser is indeed infected with the virus, but aside from a little sweat on his forehead and an occasional cough he shows no symptoms. Otherwise, he wears a diving suit, has a Micro-Uzi and an open suitcase on the ground next to him, and is



about to attach an explosive charge to the gate leading to Cthulhu’s mausoleum when the characters come in.

Quotes:

“Let’s talk about this like reasonable people.”

“Don’t you see the incredible opportunity that this offers?”

“Power without limits! Ruling the world!”

“By the way, I can also give you the antidote. You only have to agree!”

“Think of the service you will provide to America!”

STR 10 CON 14 SIZ 12 DEX 14 POW 17
INT 18 EDU 21 APP 15 HP 13 SAN 0

Damage Bonus: n/a

Weapons: Micro-Uzi 40%, Damage 1d10, 2 clips of 20 rounds; Bite 30%, damage 1d3 (+ Infection POT 60)

Equipment: Explosives, walkie-talkie, suitcase: anti-virus, virus, hypodermics, empty ampules

Skills: Genetics, etc. 90%, Demolition 60%, Persuade 80%, Fanaticism 100%

Appendix

1. Pre-Rolled Characters

Captain Joe “Mojo” Whitaker

General Knowledge:

Mojo is the team leader and ranking officer. He is young, in his early thirties, and the ideal soldier. He always wears a perfectly fitting uniform, has steel blue eyes, blonde hair,



Additional Weapons

Name	Caliber	Base Chance	Base Damage	Base Range	RoF	Ammo	HP	Mal-function	Year
M16A2	5.56x45mm	25%	2d8	110 yds	2 or 3	30 (mag.)	10	98	1984
Minimi	5.56x45mm	15%	2d8	110 yds	20	30 (mag.)/100 (belt)	25	98	1982
SR-25 sniper rifle (a/k/a Mk 11 Mod 0)	7.62x51mm	25%	2d6+4	110 yds	1	20 (mag.) or 5 (mag)	8	98	2000
Remington 870	12-gauge	30%	1d10+6* 4d6/2d6/1d6*	50 yds	1	5	15	99	1950
M72 LAW	66mm HEAT	15%	8d6/1m	150 yds	1	one rocket	10	96	1960
AKSU-74	5.45x39mm	25%	2d8	20 yds	1 or 20	30 (mag.)	12	98	1983
Micro-Uzi	9x19mm	15%	1d10	15 yds	2 or 20	20 (mag.)	10	98	1980
Frag grenade	—	—	Throw	4d6/4 yds	thrown	1/2 —	8	99	—

*First damage given is for slug, second for shot.

broad shoulders, and a sharp chin. He has a model career as an officer behind him.

Mojo comes from a very well respected family. His father is a senator, and it was clear very early that Mojo would also have a story-book career. He always receives top evaluations, graduated from the Naval Academy with distinction, and reached his current position before he was 30.

Player's Knowledge:

Unfortunately, not all that glitters is gold: that's true for Mojo as well. On the outside, he's the perfect soldier, but he owes his success not to his superior abilities, but to the influence of his family and a short, dirty affair with an influential advisor at the White House, Camille Rose. This connection and his family name have opened doors for Mojo, even though he's not really good enough for his position.

Mojo may not be a bad soldier. But in really stressful situations he tends to break down. He lacks essential leadership qualities, has problems making decisions, and leading subordinates. Consequently, he's under tremendous stress much of the time and suffers great anxiety about failing as an officer in a combat situation. That, or the revelation of his relationship to Rose, would be the immediate end of his career. And if that weren't bad enough, it'd besmirch his family's name.

STR 16	CON 17	SIZ 16	DEX 16	INT 12
POW 8	EDU 10	APP 15	SAN 40	HP 17
Idea 60%	Luck 40%	Know 50%		

Damage Bonus: +1d4

Important Skills: Chemistry 20%, Climb 80%, Computer Use 40%, Conceal 70%, Dodge 80%, Electrical Repair 20%, Electronics 20%, English 60%, First Aid 40%, Hide 70%, Jump 80%, Leadership 30%, Listen 60%, Locksmith 60%, Mechanical Repair 20%, Medicine 20%, Navigate 40%, Pharmacy 20%, Physics 40%, Pilot (Boat) 80%, Pilot (Ship) 10%, Psychoanalysis 5%, Psychology 5%, Sneak 80%, Spot Hidden 70%, Swim 80%, Throw 80%, Track 80%

All firearms skills: 70%

All hand-to-hand weapons skills: 70%

All hand-to-hand combat skills: 70%

Lt. Amy "Deadeye" Vasquez

General Knowledge:

Deadeye doesn't talk much. She doesn't need to. Ice-cold eyes and a granite countenance speak volumes: anyone who takes her on comes out the worse. She's a specialist in striking and killing. Like a great hunter, she always bags her prey. Like a bloodhound, she never loses a trail. Locked doors are no obstacle to her. And silent death from the barrel of a sniper rifle has but one name: Deadeye!



Player's Knowledge:

Unfortunately, not all that glitters is gold: even Deadeye has a little problem that, so far, she's been able to cover up. She has a severe cerebral disturbance that has cost her the ability to understand written language. Her signature has become an illegible scrawl, and that's about all she can write. While reading isn't her primary duty, it's certainly important, and if her disability became known, she'd be discharged immediately.

STR 16	CON 16	SIZ 16	DEX 18	INT 15
POW 18	EDU 16	APP 14	SAN 90	HP 16
Idea 75%	Luck 90%	Know 80%		

Damage Bonus: +1d4

Important Skills: Climb 90%, Computer Use 40%, Conceal 90%, Dodge 90%, Electronics 40%, English 75%, First Aid 40%, Hide 90%, Jump 80%, Listen 80%, Locksmith 70%, Mechanical Repair 20%, Navigate 40%, Physics 40%, Pilot (Boat) 80%, Pilot (Ship) 10%, Psychology 50%, Sneak 100%, Spanish 50%, Spot Hidden 90%, Swim 90%, Throw 80%, Track 90%.

All firearms skills: 100%

All hand-to-hand weapons skills: 90%

All hand-to-hand combat skills: 90%

Lt. Mollie "DevNull" Caple

General Knowledge:

DevNull in her early twenties, black, and of average height and stature—and in perfect shape. She wears her hair close-cropped and bleached blonde. She's never without her wraparound sunglasses.

DevNull talks constantly. A live wire, constantly hyperactive, she always needs to be doing something with her hands. She's happiest with a keyboard under her fingers—on the computer she's untouchable. As a teenager, she hacked computers at NASA and the NSA, and was recruited by the Navy when she was discovered. In the Navy, she's had a smooth career in all respects and quickly landed with the best of the best of the best: the SEALs! She applied for a place and soon a number of deployments were decisively resolved through her bold actions and singular capabilities.



Player's Knowledge:

Unfortunately, not all that glitters is gold. DevNull has a little problem that she's so far been able to cover up: she is pathologically curious. No secret can stay hidden from her; she has to stick her nose in everywhere. Her curiosity has gotten her into some problems. She's collected a lot of compromising information over time, enough to end her career. Some particularly piquant photos show her own captain (Mojo) and an influential White House adviser, Camille Rose, engaged in certain unambiguous activities. DevNull thinks they may come in handy one day.

A further problem is pills: DevNull uses a whole array of uppers to help her keep up the energy she needs. When she's popped a couple, she really feels alive at the keyboard.

Obviously, it'd be the end of her career if came out. But that's not all: if DevNull no longer enjoys the protection of the Navy, a prison sentence or attempt on her life may be in the cards for DevNull.

STR 15	CON 16	SIZ 14	DEX 16	INT 18
POW 18	EDU 18	APP 15	SAN 70	HP 15
Idea 90%	Luck 90%	Know 90%		

Damage Bonus: +1d4

Important Skills: Chemistry 60%, Climb 80%, Computer Use 100%, Conceal 70%, Dodge 80%, Electrical Repair 80%, Electronics 100%, English 90%, First Aid 50%, Hide 70%, Jump 80%, Listen 60%, Locksmith 90%, Mechanical Repair 60%, Medicine 40%, Navigate 60%, Pharmacy 60%, Physics 60%, Pilot (Boot) 60%, Pilot (Ship) 30%, Sneak 80%, Spot Hidden 90%, Swim 80%, Throw 80%, Track 80%.

All firearms skills: 80%

All hand-to-hand weapon skills: 80%

All hand-to-hand combat skills: 80%

Lt. Felipe "Boom-Boom" Pereira

General Knowledge:

Boom-Boom comes from out west and is part Navajo—a sharply cut nose and a dark complexion hint at his heritage. This touch of Indian gives him a striking appearance: had Boom-Boom not become a SEAL, he could have had a career as a model. That would have been a great loss, though, because no one knows his way around demolitions like Boom-Boom. It doesn't matter to him whether its blowing up a single row house while leaving the neighbors untouched, or whipping up a bomb from toothpaste and shoe polish. Boom-Boom is the only man for the job.



Player's Knowledge:

Unfortunately, not all that glitters is gold: even Boom-Boom has a little problem that he's so far been able to cover up. He's a sex addict. He's hooked on the kick from hormones flowing in his veins, and worse, he gets off best from very hard, very brutal sex. Young (female) cadets serve his purposes best: they're impressed by his position of authority and keep quiet for the same reason after they're kicked out of his bed the next morning, often bleeding and bruised. Boom-Boom feels some guilt over this, but the kick always pulls him back. If it came out in public, of course, it'd not only be the end of his career, but a lengthy prison sentence!

STR 16	CON 17	SIZ 16	DEX 18	INT 15
POW 18	EDU 16	APP 18	SAN 40	HP 17

Idea 75% Luck 90% Know 80%

Damage Bonus: +1d4

Important Skills: Chemistry 90%, Climb 80%, Computer Use 40%, Conceal 80%, Demolitions 100%, Dodge 80%, Electrical Repair 60%, Electronics 60%, English 75%, First Aid 40%, Hide 70%, Jump 80%, Listen 60%, Locksmith 60%, Mechanical Repair 60%, Medicine 60%, Navigate 40%, Pharmacy 60%, Physics 60%, Pilot (Boat) 80%, Pilot (Ship) 10%, Psychology 70%, Sneak 80%, Spanish 60%, Spot Hidden 70%, Swim 80%, Throw 100%, Track 80%.

All firearms skills: 80%

All hand-to-hand weapons skills: 80%

All hand-to-hand combat skills: 80%

Lt. Edward "Bishop" Potter

General Knowledge:

Bishop is a cruel, grim giant from the South. His classmates used to make incest jokes before he broke some of their larger bones. Thereafter, they refrained. Now he's a real giant and as strong as he is tall. Physically, hardly anyone is his equal. Bishop's the man for the rough stuff: he's mastered every weapon and can hold off armies by himself with his beloved chain gun. But in no way is he stupid—he may not earn a doctorate, but for his job, it's way more than enough.



Player's Knowledge:

Unfortunately, not all that glitters is gold: Bishop has a little problem. He's a bigot. He has problems with people with other skin colors. He doesn't just think less of them, he genuinely despises them wholeheartedly. It goes so far that he'd willingly send such people into danger or let them die. He and his family are long-time KKK members. It's hard for Bishop to conceal his distaste for people of different colors, which has created problems for him in the past. He keeps his distance from black and brown teammates. If it comes out that he's committed crimes while in a Klan hood, his SEAL career would be over in a second. He will protect that secret at any price.

STR 18	CON 18	SIZ 18	DEX 16	INT 9
POW 18	EDU 14	APP 14	SAN 40	HP 18

Idea 60% Luck 90% Know 70%

Damage Bonus: +1d6

Important Skills: Climb 80%, Computer Use 20%, Conceal 70%, Dodge 80%, English 60%, First Aid 30%, Hide 70%, Jump 80%, Listen 60%, Navigate 20%, Pilot (Boat) 80%, Pilot (Ship) 10%, Sneak 80%, Spot Hidden 70%, Swim 80%, Throw 80%, Track 80%.

All firearms skills: 100%

All hand-to-hand weapons skills: 100%

All hand-to-hand combat skills: 100%

Lt. Charlie "Chopper" Hancock

General Knowledge:

Chopper is regarded by many as slightly insane, on account of his crazy, restless eyes, unlimited inner energy, and a sheer, boundless desire for adrenaline. Chopper wanted to be a racecar driver, but his family prevailed and sent him into the Navy. When he discovered that he could get his speed rush there as well, he began a singular career.



Chopper can pilot pretty much any craft—on water, in the air, or over land—with a unique mastery. For other people, his maneuvers seem foolhardy and almost crazy as he pushes his machines to the utmost, in death defying fashion. But Chopper knows his limits, and knows just how far and fast he can go.

Player's Knowledge:

Unfortunately, not all that glitters is gold: Chopper has a little problem. He's not just hooked on speed, but also on the kick he gets from combat and killing. Hand-to-hand combat does it the best for him. There's nothing better than making the beat-down—or even killing—an opponent, with his bare hands or a big knife. When he's overcome by blood lust, he'll disregard his own safety and the safety of the team by taking unnecessary risks. He'll jump directly into lines of fire, alert enemies to his position, or even attack his comrades who want to hold him back. It will be damn hard to stop him when he finally snaps. Until now, Chopper's been lucky enough that he's been able to control himself in really critical situations. But one day, it'll be different, and that'll be the end of his career.

STR 16	CON 17	SIZ 14	DEX 18	INT 16
POW 18	EDU 16	APP 16	SAN 45	HP 16
Idea 80%	Luck 90%	Know 80%		

Damage Bonus: +1d4

Important Skills: Climb 80%, Computer Use 70%, Conceal 70%, Dodge 80%, Drive Auto: 100%, Electrical Repair 80%, Electronics 80%, English 60%, First Aid 40%, Hide 70%, Jump 80%, Listen 60%, Locksmith 60%, Mechanical Repair 90%, Navigate 80%, Physics 80%, Pilot (Aircraft) 90%, Pilot (Boat) 100%, Pilot (Helicopter) 100%, Pilot (Hovercraft) 90%, Pilot (Ship) 100%, Pilot (Tracked Vehicle): 90%, Sneak 80%, Spot Hidden 70%, Swim 80%, Throw 80%, Track 80%.

All firearms skills: 70%

All hand-to-hand weapons skills: 100%

All hand-to-hand combat skills: 70%

Mike "Doc" Varney, Ph.D., Sci.D., M.S., etc. etc.

General Knowledge:

Doc isn't a SEAL. He consults for them and often accompanies them on deployments as an external advisor. He's a genius, aspiring scientist. He often appears confused and absent-minded, and talks about things that ordinary mortals can't fathom. In his early forties, he's already got two doctorates (in molecular biology and genetics) and is working on two others (in physics and biochemistry). He's one

of the brightest intellectual lights in the land. Such a devotion to science has its costs—Doc has neglected his private life and his appearance and looks like a young Albert Einstein. Nevertheless, his brilliance is universally recognized.



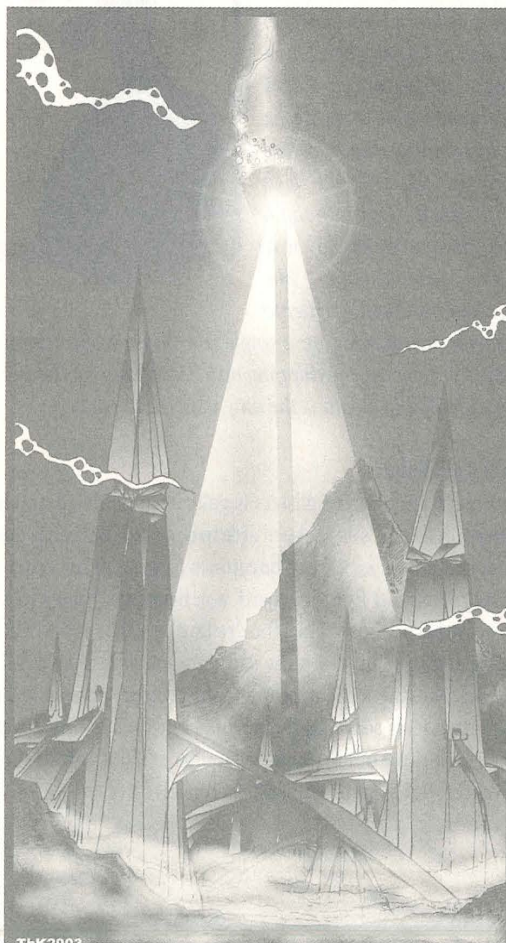
Player's Knowledge:

Unfortunately, all that glitters is not gold: Doc has a problem that he has to hide. In trying to escape from science, he has become addicted to very hard-core pornography—particularly S&M videos and representations of sodomy. If his inclinations become public, it means the end of his glittering public career and a disreputable end as a bum in the gutter.

STR 12	CON 15	SIZ 14	DEX 12	INT 18
POW 18	EDU 21	APP 12	SAN 40	HP 15
Idea 90%	Luck 90%	Know 100%		

Damage Bonus: n/a

Important Skills: Biology 90%, Chemistry 80%, Computer Use 80%, Electrical Repair 60%, Electronics 60%, English 90%, First Aid 30%, Genetics 80%, Library Use 100%, Mechanical Repair 60%, Medicine 60%, Navigate 60%, Pharmacy 70%, Physics 90%, Russian 60%, Spanish 40%, Spot Hidden 70%, Swim 60%.

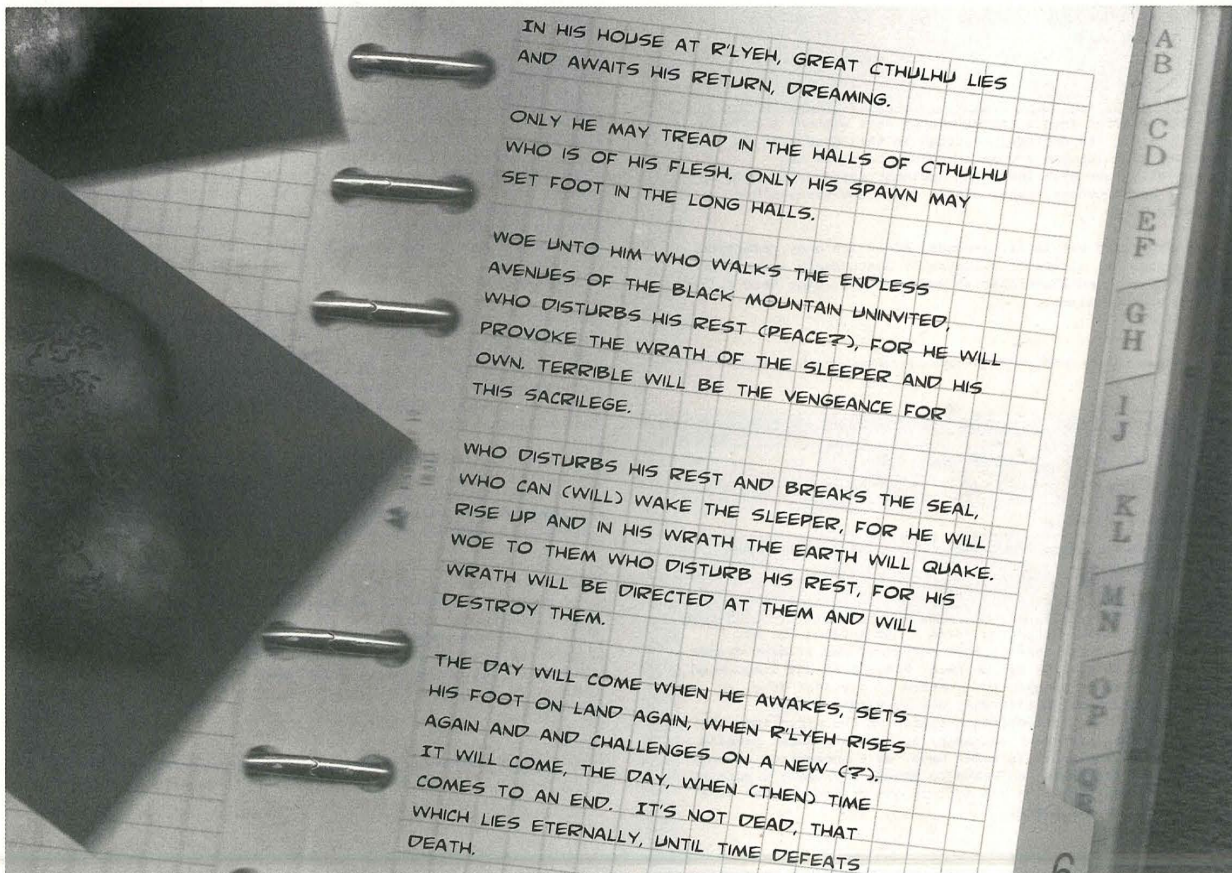


2. Handouts

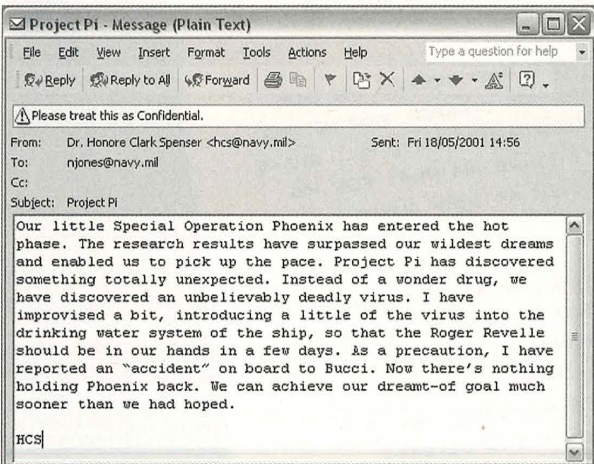
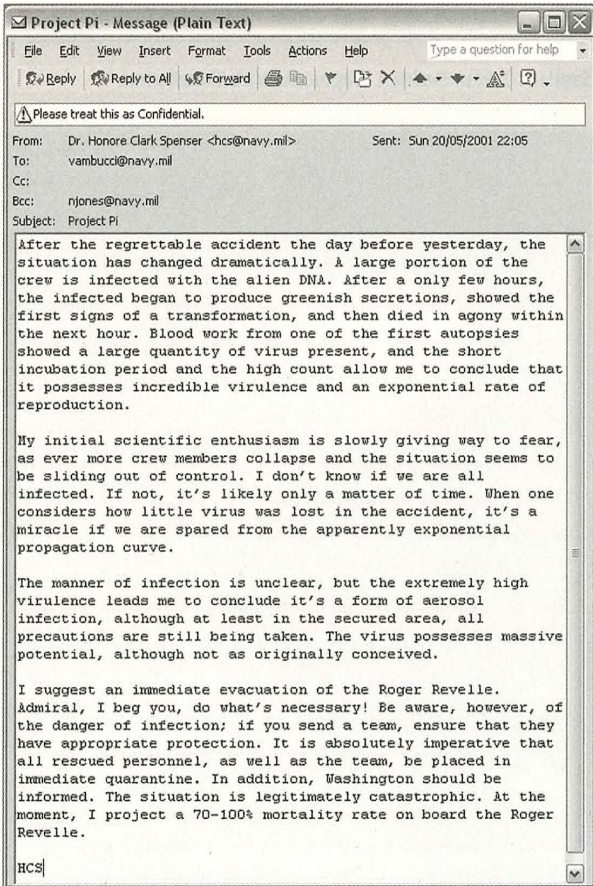
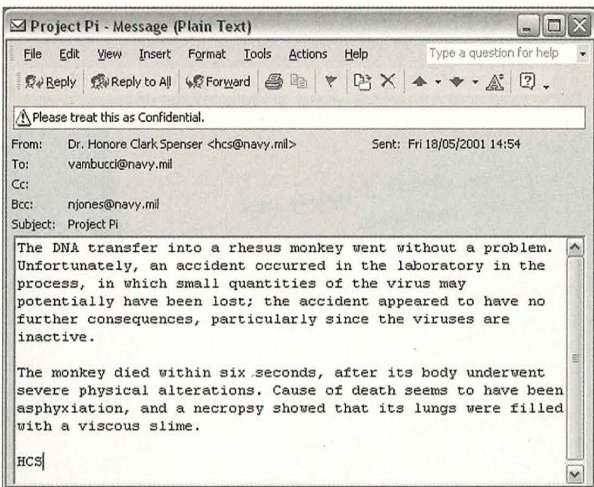
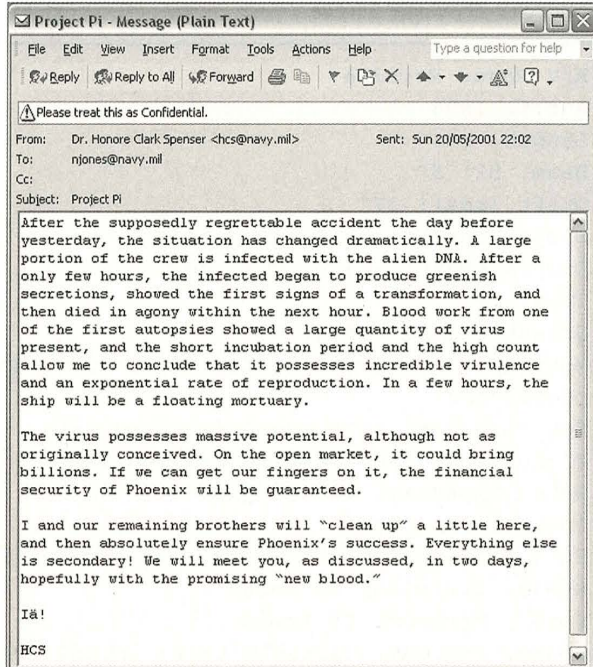
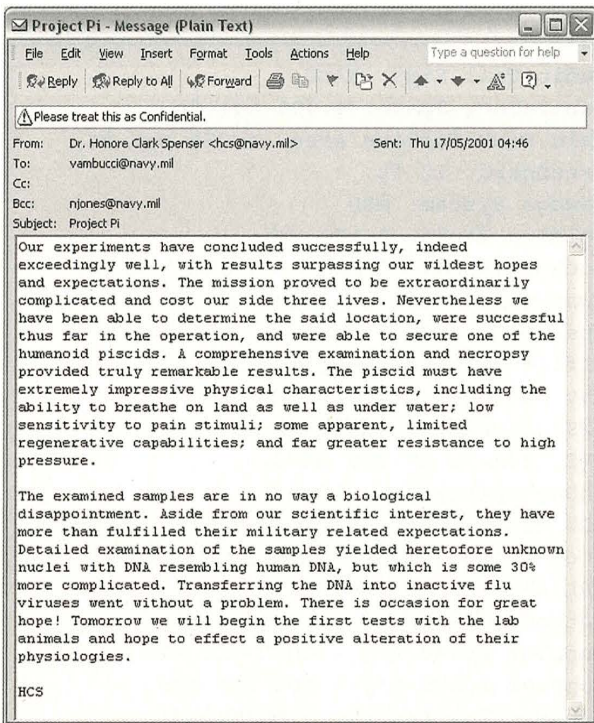
Handout 1: The Roger Revelle

R/V Roger Revelle	Radio Call Sign: KAOU
Built: 1996	Laboratory Space: 4,000 sq. ft.
Length: 273'	Main Deck Working Area: 4,070 sq. ft.
Beam: 52' 5"	Freeboard: 12 ft.
Draft (max): 17"	Sewage System: MSD
Gross Tonnage: 3,180 long tons	Holding Tanks: 5,100 gal.
Displacement: 3,512 long tons	Document/State I.D#: CF6354XF
Crew: 22	Ownership: Title held by U.S. Navy.
Scientific Berthing: 37	Operated under charter agreement with Office of Naval Research.
Motors: Two General Electric 3,000-hp propulsion	Navigational capabilities:
Bow Thruster: 1,180-hp Azimuthing jet	GPS Trimble Tansmon P-Code
Propulsion: Two 3,000-hp Z-Drive Lips	GPS Trimble NT 200 DGPS
Water Capacity: 12,000 gal.	RADAR Sperry 3cm, 10cm
Incinerator: Yes	ADU GPs Ashtech Attitude-sensing System
Fuel consumption: 4,400 gal./day (transit)	Acoustic Positioning System Nautronix 916
Speed, Cruising: 12 knots	SBL/LBL
Speed, Maximum: 15 knots	Fathometer Furuno FV 700 50 kHz
Speed, Minimum: variable to 0, any direction	Doppler Speed Log - ODEC 200 kHz
Endurance: 52 days at 12 knots (fuel)	Doppler Speed Log - EDO 600 kHz
Range: 15,000 at 12 knots (fuel)	Dynamic Positioning - ROBERTSON
Fuel capacity: 227,500 (planning)	ADF - SIMRAD Taiyo
	Gyro - Sperry MK 37 (2)

Handout 2: Handwritten Fragments with Translation



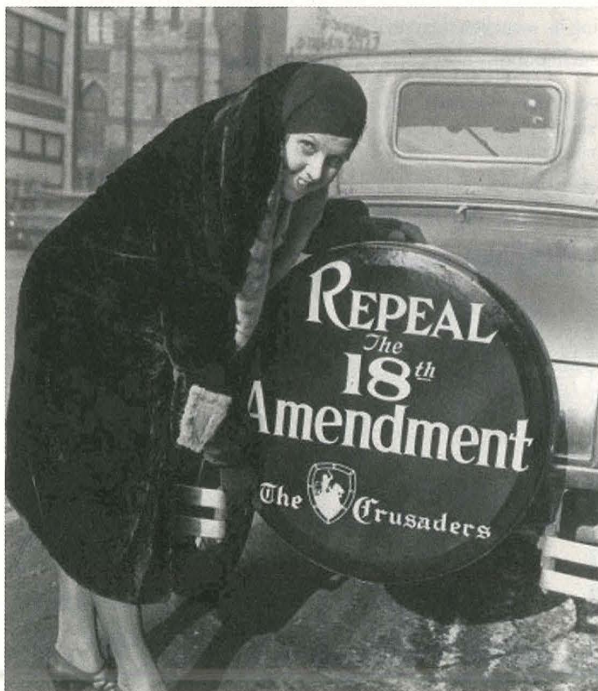
Handout 3: E-mail



underground economy, and exponentially multiplied the number of criminals in the United States. The Volstead Act was in force for 13 years, and during this time, many former small-time criminals turned into rich and powerful gang leaders by supplying alcohol to the American public. In some cities, booze barons managed to dominate entire cities. They had no qualms whatsoever when it came to defending their territory by the use of force. Almost overnight, giant cities like Chicago and New York turned into arenas for brutal gangland slayings and bribery scandals on a scale until then unknown, as well as a host of other crimes. Often, the police were powerless to stop the ruthless gangs from dominating the cities, or they simply refused to take action because they were paid to keep turn a blind eye. This quickly tarnished the image of big city police, creating the appearance that many cities had been handed over to organized crime. To many, it seemed as though nearly every public official was being paid off. Citizens loathed the brutal activities of the gangsters, and often rejoiced in the rare cases when a mobster or gangster was actually brought to justice. And yet, very few members of law enforcement dared take action for fear of retribution.

The 1920s had almost come to a close when, in October 1929 – on “Black Friday” – the New York Stock Exchange, and with it the stability of the American economy, collapsed. Overnight the U.S. economy dropped from its soaring heights of the 1920s into the abyss of the Great Depression of the ‘30s. Nearly everyone in the nation was in some way affected by the market crash. Society’s liberal atmosphere quickly evaporated. Now most Americans were concerned with day-to-day life, rather than entertainment and living lavish lifestyles. Many nightclubs and bars filed for bankruptcy. All the while, the army of criminals increased, just as unemployment and poverty ravaged the country. It appeared to many that crime was the only line of work that *did* pay. Since the demand for alcohol steadily diminished during the decade of the Great Depression, organized crime focused their activities on the “classic” criminal acts such as burglary and robbery. Soon the era of bootlegging ended

Prohibition had its opponents....



altogether, when, in December 1933, the newly elected President, Franklin D. Roosevelt revoked Prohibition. With this single action, many mobsters lost power, retreating to the underground, moving their criminal activities once again away from the public eye.

The Volstead Act

The 18th Amendment to the U.S. Constitution (named after its father, Congressman Andrew Volstead of Minnesota), became effective on January 16th, 1920, and remained in effect until December 5th, 1933. The law prohibited the production, transport, and sale (and thus, consumption) of alcoholic beverages in the United States. Provisions existed for exceptions for certain religious and medicinal purposes, but all such uses had to be approved by the proper authorities.

Until March 1st, 1929, violations of this Act were punished in the following way:

First violation (production or sale): Fines up to \$1,000 and/or possible imprisonment for six months.

First violation (transport): Fines up to \$500.

Second violation (production or sale): Fines between \$200 to \$2,000 or imprisonment for one month to five years.

Further violations invoked similar punishments.

Second violation (transport): Fines between \$100 to \$1,000 and imprisonment for a maximum 90 days.

Further violations (transport): Fines of at least \$500 and imprisonment for three months to two years.

After March 2nd, 1929, the punishments became increasingly drastic because the Federal Government had finally realized how readily Prohibition was being undermined. The government decided to correct this problem by increasing the degree of punishment. The fines were increased to a possible maximum of \$10,000, terms of imprisonment increased to five years. In the end, even the increased punishments for violating the Volstead Act did not prove severe enough to deter criminals such as Al Capone. He, for instance, earned up to \$300,000 or more a day at the pinnacle of his reign in the late ‘20s and early ‘30s.

Who We Occupations in the Era of Prohibition

Of course, there is no need for characters to shy away from their favored occupations of, say, professor of linguistics, doctor of medicine, parapsychologist, or what-have-you in a game set in a gangster milieu. However, there are also occupations that better fit this setting, and which are described in this article (you will also find them in the rulebook, albeit in a less detailed form). These occupations can be roughly grouped into three classes: Investigators working on the side of the law; investigators having civilian jobs; and investigators representing “the other side,” i.e., being associated with the gangsters.

Keepers of the Law

Prohibition Agents

To enforce the Volstead Act, the Federal Government created the "Federal Prohibition Bureau." The agents of this bureau were assigned the duty of identifying and arresting offenders of the Volstead Act. If a player chooses a Prohibition Agent as his character, the keeper needs to take into account that this occupation exists only until 1933, after which Prohibition was repealed. The bureau continued to exist (after quite a few name changes and internal reorganizations) as the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, and Firearms. Every large city had a district office of the Prohibition Bureau, which was run by a district commissioner. The number of prohibition agents (often in several teams, each led by a "special agent") varied from city to city, ranging between 3 and 300 agents. Corruption was widespread among these agents, who, together with their infamous brutality, gave the Bureau a generally poor reputation with the public. Prohibition Agents were, in fact, Federal Agents, with legal authority that was nearly impossible to clearly separate from state and city police. While the Bureau of Prohibition was responsible only for enforcing the Volstead Act, it was also engaged in the enforcement of violations indirectly related to the Volstead Act (for instance, arresting criminals who had committed murder while violating of the Volstead Act, or seizing property that was used in violating the Act). These criminal acts, on the other hand, would also fall within the responsibilities of the state police. For players, conflicts are to be expected on a day-to-day basis. "Normal" Prohibition Agents correspond exactly to policemen from the rulebook, while their superiors (special agents) are rather like police detectives. If you have access to the *Investigator's Companion*, use the Federal Agent as described in that book.

Bureau of Investigation Agents

Agents of the Bureau of Investigation were usually (especially among themselves) regarded as elite policemen, which often means there was much friction between them and local authorities. Today's FBI (Federal Bureau of Investigation) was in the 1920s dubbed the Bureau of Investigation. Later, it was renamed the "United States Bureau of Investigation" (USBI) on July 1st, 1932, then again "FBI" in 1935. Whatever the name, we are talking federal police here, existing on a separate line of command, side-by-side with state police. As federal police, agents were empowered to "take care" of a variety of particular cases. These were governmental crimes, espionage, terrorism, sabotage, transport of stolen goods (especially cars) across state boundaries, and trafficking in women (prostitution). In all other cases, the Bureau of Investigation was only allowed to investigate by the request of the state or local authorities. Until a change of law in 1934, agents were prohibited from making arrests on their own; if they wanted to arrest a person, they needed to call upon local police. Officially, they were also barred from carrying weapons. Ironically, they were also encouraged to wield them ("for purposes of self-defense"), being free citizens after all. Each larger city had a field office led by a special agent in charge, and his deputy, an assistant special agent in charge. They commanded up to five field supervisors, who each had a team of 15 to 25 special agents at their beck and call. These special agents correspond to the policemen from the

rulebook, while field supervisors are equivalent to police detectives. If you have access to the *Investigator's Companion*, use the Federal Agent as described in that book, deleting Firearms from the list of professional skills.

Local Law Enforcement Officers

"Everyday" crime was left to the members of the local police force, who on occasion had to deal with their state police counterparts. They were allowed to carry any weapon they desired, and to make arrests on their own. Each city had its central police department, with individual police stations in each city quarter. The mayor typically appointed the chief of police. The chief was in command of both the uniformed street police and the "plain-clothes" police. Of the latter, there were only a limited number at each police station; more could be called from other stations should there be a need. For players interested in role-playing a policeman, the Criminal Detective would probably be the best choice. They employ the following ranks (in ascending order): Detective, detective sergeant, detective lieutenant, detective captain, and chief of detectives. Players are best restricted to the first three ranks, since the other two are generally confined to administrative duties, supervising the work of the lower charges (besides, there is only one chief detective per police department). Prior to the era of Prohibition, the reputation of the police was quite good. This changed in the years after 1920, since many of the poorly paid policemen were often involved in the various criminal activities themselves as a means of bolstering their incomes. Detective sergeants and detective lieutenants correspond to the rulebook's police detective, while detectives are equivalent to policemen in the rulebook. If you have access to the *Investigator's Companion*, use the uniformed police officer for policemen as described in that book for policemen on street beat.

Civilian Occupations

Private Investigators

Private investigators were not part of any government organization, and thus did not need to worry about judicial responsibilities. Instead, they were free to accept any kind of work, taking only their own counsel into consideration (be their reasons financial, moral,



Good hauls were worth recording...

amorous, or whatever). For players who want to be a P.I., know that such characters require an official license that costs around \$50.00, and depends upon passing a licensing test. This license can be revoked (or not even granted) if the character has been found guilty of a crime or has hindered members of law enforcement from performing their duty. The Private Investigator may either work in an agency of his own, together with a partner, or may be employed by a national agency. Those characters working for large firms have the distinct advantage of a regular, although not too high, salary.

While a private investigator is working on a case, he only has the rights open to any citizen: The right to bear arms (although not openly); the right to arrest someone for whom the police have issued a warrant; and the right to arrest someone in the process of committing a crime. Of course, connections are extremely important in this line of work. Good contacts within the police force are especially important to provide the private investigator with inside information and to allow him a bit of leeway in overstepping the law during an investigation. However, even such contacts become useless if the investigator has the wrong type of patron! If you have access to the *Investigator's Companion*, use the private eye as described in that book.

Journalists

(Newspaper) Journalists may lead very dangerous lives. They are sometimes the last moral bastions in a swamp of corruption in which the members of local police and law enforcement are often mired. Players wishing to play this character usually begin their career with a badly paid job as a reporter at a daily paper, wandering the streets in search of the "big one." Once they have proven themselves (maybe they even manage to "out-scoop" the rival papers), they may be transferred to a particular area of journalistic interest, such as local politics, the courts, crime beat, society, or the financial department. Should they prove themselves again, they might even advance to editor, columnist, or editor-in-chief – often acquiring an appropriate amount of fame with each position.

Each newspaper has a deadline, which also applies to the character if he wants a story to be included in the next edition. With morning papers, this deadline is usually 10:00 p.m. on the night before publication, while evening papers have a noon deadline. Characters hoping to convince an editor-in-chief that he is working on something really big, often finds these deadlines extended. Journalists, like private investigators, require connections. If you have access

The busts got bigger as Prohibition dragged on...



to the *Investigator's Companion*, you will find a variety of information on the various types of journalist character templates.

Attorneys

Practicing Attorneys, too, might work on their own, in a joint practice, or as part of a law firm. They are sometimes employed by mobsters, having specialized as defense counselors to prevent their clients from going to prison. Such "gangster attorneys" invariably work alone, because joint practices and law firms are far too concerned about maintaining their good reputation to enroll such "black sheep" into their ranks. If you have access to the *Investigator's Companion*, you may also want to incorporate the information found therein.

Gangsters

Independent Criminal

The *Investigator's Companion* has detailed information on various possible types of gangsters and criminals. One class of gangster is the Independent Criminal. Independent Criminals may work for a gang or a criminal syndicate once in a while, but are not counted as belonging to any solitary gang. Often, these are neophytes who need to "prove" themselves by means of a successful caper before garnering the attention of a particular gang or syndicate. Experienced criminals usually specialize in a particular type of crime, such as burglary, safe cracking, picking pockets, fencing stolen goods, or forgery. Choosing a field of specialization that does not interfere with the dealings of the large gangs or syndicates may be of vital importance to a player. Choosing an area of specialty in which local syndicates have no experts can bolster a character's chance of being hired for a "job."

Gangs

Gangs are comprised of several criminals who have banded together for the purpose of committing crimes. To do so, they travel the country, striking in one city after another, disappearing as quickly as they came. Most of these gangs specialize in bank robbery (in the manner of Bonnie and Clyde). As opposed to criminal syndicates (see below), members of a gang do not ply their trade openly, but are perpetually on the run from the police, living in the shadows of society. While the police usually have difficulty getting at local syndicates (witnesses are only rarely willing to testify), the gangs often leave behind considerable evidence, but no perpetrators! Should a player opt for the occupation of gang member, the keeper needs to take into account the player's need to constantly be on the run.

Criminal Syndicate

As opposed to gangs, the field of operations of a Criminal Syndicate is usually confined to a city or a clearly defined part of a city. Syndicate sizes vary from only a few loosely organized members up to extremely powerful and dangerous organizations that are often referred to as the "Mafia" or the "mob." Mobsters are a class of criminals who readily come to mind when first thinking about adventures in a gangland setting. It is difficult to make specific statements about the internal structures of such huge syndicates, since they vary

greatly. The same holds true for their activities. Some syndicates try to control a certain type of crime in their area of influence, while others want to eradicate (or bring under control) all competition. All syndicates are, however, controlled by a leader. This leader rarely participates directly in the activities of his underlings (because he is rich enough to hire people who can do his dirty work for him), making tracing the chain of command in a Crime Syndicate very difficult for law enforcement. As a result, it is very hard to pin a crime on him, and he often holds the respect of the citizens living within the syndicate's domain, making the task all the more daunting. In some cases, when the syndicate is also a large family (with the head of the syndicate acting as patriarch and "godfather"), the lesser members, when arrested, refuse to "rat out" other members of the organization, making the structure immune to prosecution.

Some criminal syndicates perform legitimate businesses that are used as fronts, which serve as investments and a means of laundering their ill-gotten gains. In any case, such syndicates need some degree of silent cooperation from government institutions to function for a prolonged period. Fortunately, there are numerous government employees who feel they are grossly underpaid, and can be easily corrupted. Additionally, politicians, judges, and public prosecutors have to be elected to office, which has enabled many a syndicate member to obtain these useful positions. Syndicates are also likely to infiltrate unions to gain a foothold among the workforce.

Criminal Fields of Activity

The larger syndicates usually earn money by selling alcohol, thus violating the Volstead Act – either by buying the alcohol from foreign distillers and smuggling it into the country, or by stealing it from those few legal distilleries still existing in the country, government warehouses (where confiscated alcohol is awaiting destruction), or other criminals.

The smugglers came by road and sea



The wages of crime being poured away...

In most cases, syndicates procure alcohol by smuggling it across the U.S. border. Distilling alcohol is quite easy and many "moonshiners" (illicit distillers) were trying to maximize their profits by offering cheap, but highly toxic methanol (POT 5: temporary blindness) instead of alcohol blended with ethanol. Investigators should beware of cheap bargains!

A large portion of bootleg alcohol is brought into the country by British ships weighing anchor just outside the three-mile zone of U.S. waters. For instance, a rather popular "point of arrival" is Long Island, due to it being so close to New York, as well as its long coastline with many dry brooks and abandoned beaches. The syndicates take over the illegal goods at these locations and smuggle them into the country using motorboats (and sometimes seaplanes). In this way, bootleg alcohol has also found its way to Arkham: The bootleggers' boats go up the Miskatonic and unload their cargo at the warehouses of Danny O'Bannion.

Trucks from Canada and rumrunners from the Caribbean are also reliable sources of top-quality booze. Syndicates sell the alcohol (sometimes pure, sometimes blended) to independent wholesalers, who in turn sell the goods to retailers or speakeasies (which are often frequented by members of local the syndicates, too). Syndicates competing for customers in the same region usually fight each other tooth and claw, and yet they depend on large-scale cooperation with syndicates from other regions to manage the complex logistics of transporting the alcohol. This is one of the chief reasons why the Volstead Act aided the rise of organized crime on such an immense scale.

But organized crime is not limited to the distribution and sale of alcohol. Other endeavors include illegal casinos, organized betting, operation of illegal gambling machines, prostitution, money lending and extortion, and, of course, "protection" for local businesses.

Alcohol is also a welcome source of income for independent criminals and gangs who want to run the risk of angering the larger syndicates. Occasionally, gangs will boldly raid one of the syndicate trucks transporting alcohol. Even the government warehouses and distilleries are not safe from these brazen bands of roving criminals. Apart from these occasional forays, however, independent criminals and gangs usually pursue one (or more) of the lines of criminal activity from the aforementioned section on "gangs."

Caught in the Act!

Criminals who are arrested are detained while awaiting trial. This also applies to persons suspected of lesser offences (such as buying alcohol). The accused are brought before a judge, who decides whether there is a sufficient evidence to allow for further investigation. Lesser offenders, those whose only crime was, for example, to imbibe alcohol, are usually sentenced to a minor punishment. For the accused whom must await trial, a bail is sometimes set. This is when the corrupt lawyers under in the employ of the syndicate bosses enter the scene. Bail is possible for almost any capital crime, even with charges of murder (reaching as high as \$50,000 in such cases). The murder of a policeman, of course, rules out bail in any case. In the end, the outcome of the bail negotiations depends greatly upon the knowledge and the connections of the attorney. Necessary attributes and skills for a practicing attorney are POW, Credit Rating, Fast Talk, Law, and Persuade; he should also know how to intimidate and/or bribe. A judge who is not hindered by blackmail or on an illicit payroll is free in his rulings. In these cases, the judge usually takes into account the accused's previous records, the brutality of the offense, as well as the power of public opinion when setting bail amounts. If a bail is set, it is usually paid for by the gang leader whose underling is currently being held. Should such a leader not exist (or be unwilling to pay), a professional bail bondsman may offer payment. In this instance, the accused must pay 10% of the bail amount as a fee. This means that should he jump bail, he will not only be hunted by the police, but also by the bail bondsman hoping to capture the fleeing criminal in order to regain the total amount of money paid as bail.

At the end of the hearing, the presiding judge decides on a date for a trial, usually between four to eight weeks from the hearing. The accused (or his attorney) may now – if there is no real hope of being acquitted – try to make a deal with the district prosecutor or the Federal authorities (the Bureau of Prohibition or the Bureau of Investigation; see above). A confession sometimes earns a reduced sentence. Once again, much depends on the skill and the connec-



Another day, another raid

A good website dealing with this topic is www.crimelibrary.com. There you will find biographies of infamous gangsters and outlaws of the 20th century – written in story form, making it more entertaining to read the descriptions.

tions of the attorney, the criminal record of the accused, public opinion, and, of course, the determination of the authorities.

The main trial is held in front of a jury of twelve people. The oratory prowess of the prosecutor as well as the defense counsel is often significant in deciding the fate of the defendant (if the trial is actually role-played, appropriate skill rolls are in order). The defendant's attorney and the prosecuting attorney duel against another during the cross-examination. Both are allowed to question the defendant in any way they like, trying to convey a certain image of events by carefully posing their questions. The presiding judge has a rather passive function. The keeper should not hesitate to have an attorney character make several *Fast Talk* or *Persuade* rolls to judge his success with the jurors. The *Law* skill might also come into play.

At the end of the trial, the jurors retire for deliberation. If a defendant or the persons behind him intend to bribe or threaten to influence the jurors, now is their opportunity. After finishing their deliberations, the jury pronounces their verdict. The presiding judge performs the actual sentencing. Punishment varies depending upon factors such as the circumstances of the crime, its nature and brutality, the defendant's criminal record, and his conduct during the main trial. Other considerations include the judge's strictness and a state's own laws. For the purposes of game play, you may wish to use the following guidelines:

Crime	Punishment
Armed robbery	5-25 years of imprisonment
Car theft	1-5 years of imprisonment
Bank robbery	5-25 years of imprisonment
Bribery (making the bribe)	1 year to life-long imprisonment
Bribery (taking the bribe)	1-25 years of imprisonment
Bribing a juror	10-25 years of imprisonment
Burglary	3-7 years of imprisonment
Forgery	3-15 years of imprisonment
Fraud	3-15 years if imprisonment
Kidnapping	1-15 years of imprisonment
Murder, 3 rd degree (negligence)	1-15 years of imprisonment
Murder, 2 nd degree (not premeditated)	10-25 years of imprisonment
Murder, 1 st degree (premeditated)	15 years to life-long imprisonment, or death penalty
Murder of a policeman	Death penalty (varies by state)
Possession of illegal firearms	6 months to 1 year of imprisonment
Tax evasion	3-15 years of imprisonment + a \$10,000 fine and payment of taxes.

Another consideration taken into account is a convicted prisoner's conduct. In some cases, good conduct during the first one-third of the served sentence may lead to the remaining two-thirds being suspended, thereby releasing the prisoner on probation.

famous Gangsters and Cops

Gangsters

Please note that none of them had very long lives...

The most famous gangster of this period has to be **Alphonse "Scarface" Capone** (1899-1947). Right after his move from Brooklyn to the city of Chicago in 1920, he started his criminal career as a simple pimp; soon, after extensive and bloody gang wars, he controlled the city's entire organized crime operations. Since there never was a witness suicidal enough to testify against Capone, law enforcement agencies had great difficulty in connecting him with any illegal activity. In 1932, he was finally sentenced to several years of imprisonment – for the comparably negligible crime of tax evasion.

Arizona "Ma" Baker (1872-1935) was the founder and leader of the Baker Gang. The gang consisted mainly of her sons. They specialized in bank robbery and kidnapping.

Dion "Deanie" O'Bannion (1892-1924) was the boss of a gang trying to bring the north of Chicago under his control. After he was killed by some of Al Capone's men, Chicago plunged into five bloody years of gang wars, with Capone's syndicate finally emerging victorious.

Charles "Lucky" Luciano (1897-1962) was the most powerful boss of any criminal syndicate existing in the United States from 1932 through 1936. He controlled the city of New York, and he even-



Alphonse "Scarface" Capone and associates

tually managed to create the first nationwide – albeit only loosely organized – crime syndicate by forming alliances with other gangs. This nationwide organization did not last very long, however.

Jack "Machinegun" McGurne (1904-1936), a former prizefighter, was one of the most notorious killers who ever worked for Al Capone. His nickname leaves no doubt as to his favorite weapon.

Arthur Flegenheimer, better known as **Dutch Schultz** (1902-1935), controlled bootlegging in all of New York, as well as the protection money racket in Harlem. He was killed by rivals after he had threatened to kill the prosecutor of the district of New York.

John Thomas "Legs" Diamond (1896-1931) began his criminal career as a bodyguard and hired killer. After he had advanced to syndicate boss, he fought a four-year-long gang war against Dutch Schultz for control of New York. At the end of conflict he had not only lost the gang war but his life as well.

John Dillinger (1903-1934) was among the most famous bank robbers of his time. In turn, he led three different gangs, the last and most important of which even managed to win some popularity with large parts of the population despite their unscrupulousness (owing to the fact that the image of the banks during the Great Depression was rather negative). In 1931, he was killed in a firefight with agents of the USBI. However, years later a rumor arose that he had survived and had escaped the Federal agents.

Abe Bernstein (1897-1954) was the boss of the infamous Purple Gang syndicate in Detroit. At its height, the syndicate controlled bootlegging and protection rackets throughout the city. The syndicate had won fame – or rather, infamy – in the early 1920s by preventing unionization of several factories in the city by arranging the deaths of key individuals. His "prevention" efforts came at the behest of the factory owners. In the 1930s, the Purple Gang began to disintegrate due to the death and imprisonment of various important members. Eventually the syndicate merged with "Lucky Luciano's" nationwide crime syndicate.

George "Bugs" Moran (1893-1957) succeeded "Deannie" O'Bannion as head of his syndicate, after O'Bannion's death. Still ruling the northern districts of Chicago, he continued the gang wars with Al Capone for control of the city. After seven members of the Moran Gang had died on February 14th, 1929 in the machinegun fire of Al Capone's killers (the Saint Valentine's Day Massacre), it became clear that he had definitely lost the war.

Policemen

The "Untouchables" were a ten-person special unit formed by the Bureau of Prohibition in Chicago, waging a hopeless battle against Al Capone. Since they could never pin anything directly on Capone, they instead concentrated on cutting him off from his supply of alcohol, destroying his breweries and distilleries, and arresting his men. In 1932, they finally managed to arrest Al Capone and put him behind bars – although the charge was on tax evasion. The special unit's nickname alluded to the fact that all of its members proved resistant against all attempts at bribery – a rare thing indeed for prohibition agents – causing a nationwide stir. The leader of this special unit was **Elliott Ness** (1903-1957). The names of the other members were: **Marty Lahert, Sam Seager, Barney Cloohan, Lyle Chapman, Tom Friel, Joe Leeson, Mike King, Paul Robskey, and Bill Gardner**. Among the better-known FBI agents of the period were special agent in charge, **Earl J. Connelly** (area of operations: Cincinnati, Chicago);

special agent in charge, **Samuel P. Cowley** (area of operations: Chicago); and special agent, **Melvin Purvis** (area of operations: the entire Midwest).



Untouchable: Elliott Ness



Prohibition wasn't widely popular

Adventures

The creation of adventures in the gangland setting of course depends on which side the investigators are on: The side of the law or the side of the gangsters. The keeper also needs to consider whether the adventures are to be set completely in a gangster backdrop, or whether the investigators are just to have a brush with the syndicates. The characters might turn into witnesses for or against one or more gangs in alternating adventure set in the 1920s without influencing the adventure's main plot. Of course, such criminal activities are usually restricted to the larger cities (see, for instance, the introductory adventure "Dead Man Stomp" in the rulebook). Smaller towns and villages do not boast syndicates of their own. Then again, maybe the village where the characters reside is on a bootlegging route of a syndicate (on the coast or near the Canadian border), meaning that gang activity might easily be incorporated into the adventure after all.

The Success of the Volstead Act

The Volstead Act was revoked on 5 December 1933, since the general idea of Prohibition had never received widespread public backing and the government came to see the end of Prohibition as the only way of effectively getting rid of the gang problems. However, the Prohibition Act did indeed enjoy some measure of success: Average alcohol consumption in the U.S. dropped by a margin of up to 30%, as compared to the pre-1920 data. Alcohol consumption did not increase significantly until the end of the Prohibition area, when the gangs and syndicates stepped up their supply of the population with illegal alcohol.



A seemingly endless supply of alcohol flowed...

Adventure Hook: The Jug from the Depths

Here is one extended example of an adventure idea in the Prohibition era. It is based on the investigators working for the syndicate of the New York gangster, Dutch Schultz. Along with others, they are based at Long Beach on Long Island, their job being to drive out to the schooners from the Bahamas, which are anchored safely outside the three-mile zone. There they receive shipments of Caribbean rum and bring it to shore in motor-boats. After they are done, the alcohol is shipped to New York City in trucks. The experienced rumrunner Vannie Higgins is in charge of the operation. One night, as they are on their way to the coast with a large cargo of alcohol, the gang is stopped by a police boat full of prohibition agents. They manage to escape, though, since Higgins has the bottles of rum thrown overboard to lighten the boat, making it faster. However, the cargo is not really lost. As is usual in this business, the bottles were stuffed into small sacks full of cork, adding weight in the form of blocks of salt before leaving the schooner. Once the salt dissolved in the water, the sacks came floating back to the surface, and the rumrunners only needed to return to collect them. This is exactly what Higgins has his men do, the rumrunning players among them. The search party is split between several boats, combing a large area; some distance between the boats is necessary for the adventure to work.

When the characters return to New York City several days later, they learn that Vinnie Higgins has died. His body was found in the harbor that morning – horribly mutilated in a way that rules out a mob killing. If the characters make their way to the place where the body was found (which is also the scene of the crime), they notice an old sailor nearby who somehow leaves the impression that he has always been there. If they talk to him (by no means will he address the investigators on his own), the old man tells them plainly that they are working for Dutch Schultz and that they took part in that particular bootlegging operation on the coast. He cautions them to return his property to him, or else they might share Higgins's fate. If the characters threaten to use violence, he is absolutely unimpressed.

In the following days (and especially during the nights), the investigators feel threatened several times, without being able to find who (or what) might be shadowing them. These eerie experiences range from hearing splashing footfalls in a dark back alley to more substantial "symptoms" like one of the investigator's flats having been ransacked by an unknown burglar. The characters might also see the old man several times, sitting at the counter of a speakeasy, brooding over his "coffee."

This time, three of the four men (plus Higgins) assigned to the rumrunning operation turn up dead. One of them is found in the harbor, the next one in a speakeasy, and the last one in his flat). Even Dutch Schultz can no longer ignore the problem, and the characters will probably want to have a chat with Larry Fay, the last surviving member of the group (who was not in the same boat as the investigators during the retrieval operation). Fay is fiercely loyal to the syndicate and claims not

to know anything. His younger sister, Masha Fay, however, is able to pass on to the investigators what Larry told her the day after the smuggling operation:

"As he was bringing in the sacks floating on the water, he spotted a small, brightly gleaming jug of metal caught in the algae that clung to the sack he was hauling in. Hoping the jug to be made of gold, he did not tell Higgins or the others about his 'find.'"

Should the investigators confront Larry Fay with their newly acquired knowledge, they find that he has gone to ground somewhere. A neighbor reports that when last she saw him, he had been visited by a stranger – a person matching the description of the old man!

A few days later, Larry Fay contacts the investigators, asking them for a meeting. He tells them about the ancient jug and the old man who just appeared at his place one day to claim it as "his own." When Fay made it clear to him that he had pulled the jug from the sea and considered it to be rightfully his now, and that he intended to sell it, the old man became furious, cursing and threatening Fay, and said he would return, and not alone! Fay, however, was not terribly impressed, but believed all the more that the jug must indeed be valuable. He decided to disappear for a few days to decide what he had wanted to do. Eventually he decided to sell the jug. However, the fence he sold the jug to was – unsurprisingly – not really convinced of the jug's value, paying much less than Fay wanted. His sudden decision to contact the characters comes from a desire to warn them of the old man – and to ask them to put in a good word for him with Dutch Schultz.

By this point, the investigators should have an idea about the true nature of the situation. The jug is an artifact belonging to Deep Ones living in the depths of Long Island Bay, and only by accident (or maybe some more sinister reason?) did it get caught in the algae, only to be found by Fay. Of course, the Deep Ones want the jug back. So far, they have had one of their human allies (the old man) try to obtain the jug, even several times, but failing this, it is obvious that they will resort to violence. The investigators will only be able to stop the threat if they contact the old man (he is not hard to find, since he seems to be trying to stay close to them) and return the artifact. But this is more difficult than it might seem at first glance. Sure, they have all the means of a large crime syndicate at their disposal, but then again, this is Dutch Schultz's organization and not theirs, and Schultz does not take lightly to characters using his organization for their own purposes. Also, the group associated with the Deep Ones has countless members. Should the old man or his associates be killed, others will readily appear.

The final problem lies with the artifact itself, which is now in the possession of the fence. The fence will only sell it back at a fantastic profit (probably well beyond the financial means of the investigators). But the characters, being who they are, will surely find a way of . . . acquiring the artifact without having to pay for it.



Professionally Speaking...

The Professions

The Archaeologist

Digging Up Past Wonders in the 1920s and 1930s

By David Conyers

"Neo meaning new and lithic... L.I.T.H.I.C. meaning stone. All right, let's get back to this site, Turkepan Burial near Hazelton. Contains a central passage and three chambers or cists [...] Don't confuse that with robbing, in which case we mean the removal of the contents of the burial. This site also demonstrates one of the great dangers of archaeology – not to life and limb although that does sometimes take place – no I'm talking about folklore." — Doctor Indiana Jones, *Raiders of the Lost Ark*

Indiana Jones romanticizes the profession of archaeology yet he does give the wrong impression of what exactly archaeologists get up to. He could more aptly be described as a treasure hunter; running into a temple to steal its most valued artifact then fleeing before upset locals hunt him down to punish him for his sacrilege. The life of a real archaeologist is far more mundane; in a similar situation he or she would first request permission from the locals and their government to enter the site then go about planning and organizing an expedition, which would then excavate and catalogue the entire complex from top to bottom over a period of months or years. The following article examines the roles of archaeologists in the 1920s and 1930s, a period when archaeology was becoming the modern profession as we know it today, and the last period of the Indy style tomb robbers.



Removing the sands of eternity...

of humans through their remains; their physical bodies, the artifacts that they made, and the landscapes that they shaped.

Comparatively speaking, archaeology is a young science, born in the early Eighteenth Century during a period when European powers began discovering the remains of many ancient or previously unknown civilizations in their colonies and at home. Initial excavations were of Roman sites, then later in Egypt. In these early days excavations were more akin to vandalism, when spectacular architecture and sculpture unearthed in

ancient temples, palaces and tombs were pulled down and removed. Most of these treasures were shipped back to French and British Museums as a symbol of national pride glorifying the extent of their global empires. These treasures included the human-headed winged bulls from Khorsabad in Iraq and the Luxor Obelisk from Egypt. Such looted treasures are still on display in the museums and galleries of the European and North American nations that plundered them so long ago.

Archaeology underwent significant changes in its methodology in 1798 when Napoleon Bonaparte and his soldiers arrived in Egypt. Traveling with Bonaparte was Baron Dominique Vivant Denon and several other savants. They were inspired by the wonders of Ancient Egypt and

soon began measuring and recording many of the country's ancient treasures and recovering and cataloguing artifacts. This was an important survey because it was the first one of its kind. Denon wrote *Travels in Upper and Lower Egypt* which was published in Paris in 1802 and soon created a widespread interest in Europe of ancient Egyptian culture. Thus Egypt was quickly overrun with explorers, antiquarians, historians and archaeologists digging up the past.

Probably Napoleon's most famous Egyptian discovery was the Rosetta Stone, the remains of a stela comprising of three sections with three different texts. The top section comprised of Egyptian

The Profession of Archaeology

Archaeology is derived from the Greek and means "the study of what is ancient". Archaeologists gather information through the identification and interpretation of material remains. They search for evidence of the past everywhere, from stone statues, burial sites, ancient temples and old garbage pits. Thus archaeology is the study

Hieroglyphs, the second a cursive script called Demotic Egyptian, and the last was Classical Greek. The Greek could be read and turned out to be a decree from Ptolemy V dated from 196BC. It was believed that the Greek translation could provide the key to the other two writings, but ensuing conflicts with British forces saw the Rosetta Stone fall into the enemy hands. Study did continue, but it was not until 1822 that the hieroglyphs of the Rosetta Stone were finally translated, by French linguist and historian Jean-François Champollion. His discoveries opened up the writings found through all the Ancient Egyptian ruins dotted along the Nile Valley.

In other parts of the world humanity's origin was now being called into question which would later affect the science of archaeology. In 1833 Charles Lyell published *Principles of Geology* demonstrating his theory of stratigraphy and the concepts of layers showing that the world was extremely ancient, with newer layers constantly being laid on older soil deposits. This led to the concepts of *terminus ante quem* which means "cannot be earlier than" and *terminus post quem* which means "cannot be later than". By using dating evidence found in a layer (ideally such as coins which are dateable using historical records), other artifacts found in context with the dating evidence could be considered to be of the same age. Stratigraphy allowed the relative order of deposition to be worked out, determining what was older and what was younger.

Lyell was also responsible for the principle of uniformitarianism, the assumption that natural processes operated in the past in the same way that they are observable today, and it is upon this basis that archaeologists interpret the data they recover. Meanwhile the concepts of archaeological time were also being redefined, particularly for categorizing recently discovered cultures that had no written language. Three categories of Primitive Man came into popular use; Stone Age, Bronze Age and Iron Age, terminology still in use today.

These discoveries would later influence British archaeologist Sir James Flinders Petrie. In 1890 while excavating the site of Tel-Hasi in Palestine did Petrie formally test then publish his scientific method for excavations, which was to record everything from the largest temple to the smallest fragment of pottery. Each item was measured, described, photographed, and then its position in the site recorded, numbered and catalogued. After building a complete picture of all finds at a site, more accurate interpretations of the buried culture emerged and damage to potentially important finds was minimized. Petrie's work was important because he was the first to codify all of these concepts together, and he was the first rigorously record everything so that conclusions using these principles could be drawn.

From Petrie's work a new generation of archaeologists

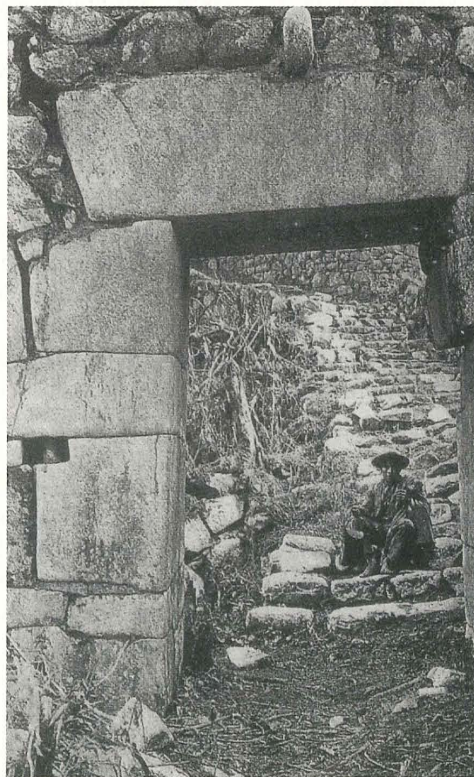


Flinders Petrie

emerged, a scientific academic who applied process and methodology to digs, and soon wonderful discoveries across the globe were not only being discovered but understood. American historian Hiram Bingham leads an expedition into the Peruvian Andes uncovering South America's greatest archaeology treasure, the Incan city of Machu Picchu. In Iraq British archaeologist Leonard Woolley excavated at the ancient Sumerian city of Ur discovering evidence of what may have been the Biblical flood, and the remains of ziggurats that inspired the story of the Tower of Babel. This was a time when history was no longer learned just from reading books or observing art, the very earth itself was confirming and disproving previously held beliefs concerning the origins of humanity.

Archaeology between the World Wars

Archaeologists practicing in the 1920s and 1930s were living in the golden age of their profession. Archaeology was changing with the focus on studying the whole society as opposed to recovering interesting treasures.



A gateway at Machu Picchu

One major theory operating at this time was Diffusionism. Invented by anthropologist Edward Burnett Tylor in the Nineteen Century, Diffusionism suggested that human culture is spread by degrees of outwards expansion from a single source as opposed to the view that cultures develop independently. But competing theories were in operation. Nationalism was another factor that guided the conclusions archaeologists drew when they examined site evidence. Italian and German excavations of the 1930s were focused on discovering evidence that bolstered Fascist beliefs. European and British archaeologists were influenced by Marxism in their theories of Diffusionism. The origin of mankind was also hotly debated – was it Africa or Asia? Even Europe was thrown into the debate with the clever fake of the Piltdown Man. In North America archaeology continued to be studied as a part of anthropology because the Native Americans did not have an immediately recognizable ancient past unlike Egypt, the Middle

East or Europe. The Bible was another factor influencing archaeology from as far back as the 1840s. For the religiously inclined, archaeology was seen by many as a means of proving the Bible to be correct,

and many digs in Palestine and particularly Egypt searched the long recorded history of these countries for events that could be tied back to the scriptures.

This was also the era of the “big dig” in Europe and the United States where plentiful and cheap labor hired during the Depression made large scale excavations viable. It was also a time when all evidence at a site was being rigorously recorded. In the 1870s Schliemann dynamited layers at Troy that he wasn't interested in and didn't even record in order to reach lower, earlier levels. It is thought he actually blew up the layers that were Homer's Troy, a regrettable loss that professional archaeologists of the day did not wish to repeat. The concepts of archaeology as “the non-repeatable experiment” had at last become commonplace.

Many digs gained enormous following in the press during this time transforming many archaeologists into celebrities. The most famous of these was made by British Egyptologist Howard Carter and his sponsor Lord Carnarvon in 1922 when they opened the intact tomb of Egyptian Pharaoh Tutankhamen. Normally archaeological sites have been ravaged by the forces of time and plundered by equally destructive tomb robbers, but Tutankhamen's tomb was found intact and contained fabulous treasures and amazing relics



Mycenae's Lion Gate



Heinrich Schliemann

dating over three thousand years. This news caught the public's attention and changed many aspects of European life, including art, decoration, literature and theater. Even clothing altered to incorporate Egyptian styles.

By the 1920s the world was starting to open up as distant corners of the earth previously

inaccessible to earlier generations were now ready for exploration and discovery. Amongst the forefront of these explorers were the archaeologists.

Archaeology Timeline

- 1638: John Greaves explores the Great Pyramid in Giza, later publishing the first accurate maps and measurements of the tomb
- 1655: Ole Worm's son publishes his *Museum Wormanium*, a

collection on antiquities collected by his father throughout his lifetime

1707: The inaugural meeting of Britain's Society of Antiquaries, which today is one of the oldest archaeological organizations in the world

1732: The Society of Dilettanti is founded in England with the purpose of studying ancient remains across the globe

1748: Pompeii is rediscovered, arousing interests in connoisseurs

1753: The world's first public collection of antiquities, the British Museum is founded in London

1798: Napoleon Bonaparte arrives in Egypt, accompanied by savants, to study geology and ancient ruins

1806: Lord Elgin removes marble sculptures from the Greek Parthenon in Athen's Acropolis,

which are later bought by the British Museum and known as the Elgin Marbles

- 1822: After working for Napoleon in Egypt, Vivant Denon publishes the last of his nine volumes of *Descriptions*, all of which provide the foundation for all future studies in Egyptology
- 1822: Jean-François Champollion deciphers Egyptian hieroglyphs using the Rosetta Stone as a key
- 1833: Charles Lyell publishes *Principles of Geology* using the theory of stratigraphy to show that the world is extremely old
- 1836: Christian Thomsen organizes the Danish Museum's collection according to a Three Age System of Stone, Bronze and Iron Age
- 1843: After traveling through Central America, Americans John Lloyd Stephens and artist Frederick Catherwood publish *Incidents of Travel* providing detailed descriptions and illustrations of Mayan ruins
- 1845: Austen Henry Layard excavates at Nimrud unearthing palaces of Assyrian kings and sending huge sculptures back home to England
- 1846: The Smithsonian Institute in Washington D.C. is founded and becomes the first major sponsor of archaeological research in the United States of America
- 1849: Henry Layard discovers the ancient city of Nineveh in northern Iraq
- 1856: Samuel Haven asserts that the mounds in North America were built by American Indians, who crossed into this continent from Asia via a land bridge
- 1857: Quarry workers in Germany's Neander Valley near Düsseldorf expose bones of Stone Age humans which come to be called Neanderthal Man
- 1858: Inside Kent's Cavern in England, William Pengelly finds a

sheet of stalagmite sealing stone tools and the remains of extinct animals providing the first indisputable proof of the antiquity of man

1860: Désiré Charnay photographs the Maya ruins of Chichén Itza

1860: French naturalist Henri Mouhot discovers the city of Ankor Thom and the associated temple Angkor Wat

1862: Guiseppe Fiorelli catalogs the Roman city of Pompeii which was buried by a volcanic eruption

1865: In his book *Prehistoric Times*, Sir John Lubbock coins the terms Paleolithic and Neolithic suggesting that the study of the various stages of human evolution could be obtained through observing primitive people

1866: The Peabody Museum in Harvard is founded and later sponsors archaeological expeditions in the United States of America and Central America

1867: The ruins of Great Zimbabwe are first seen by a European, Karl Gottlieb Mauch

1871: Sir Edward B. Taylor writes *Primitive Culture*, providing a definition for culture and suggests three stages of advancement from savagery to barbarism and finally civilization

1871: Heinrich Schliemann begins his excavations at Hissarlik in Turkey unearthing the ruins of Troy

1879: Stone Age paintings first discovered at Altamira in Spain

1891: British archaeologist Sir Flinders Petrie begins excavation in Egypt perfecting methods for excavating and documenting finds and introduces the sequence dating method

1892: *Pithecanthropus*, or Javanese Man, the first *Homo Erectus* fossils, are discovered by Eugene Dubois in Indonesia

1893: Erland von Nordenskjold describes the Mesa Verde cliff dwellings of Southwest United States

1888: The National Geographic Society is chartered in Washington D.C. as a scientific and education organization and later funding numerous archaeological expeditions across the globe

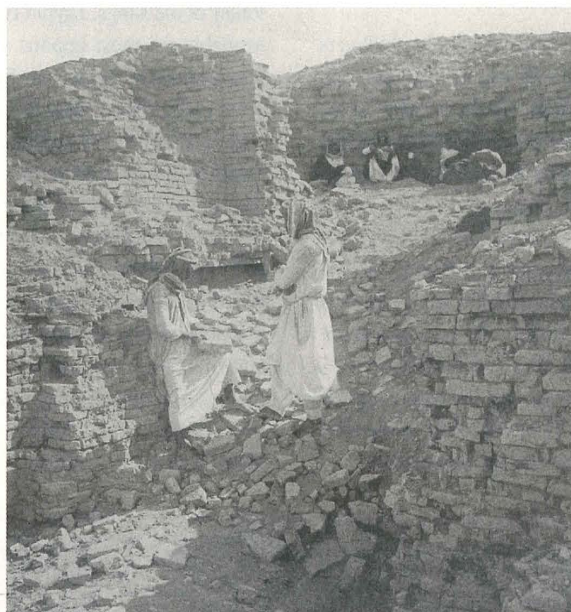
1895: Flinders Petrie leads the most comprehensive investigations of the Pharaonic age in Egypt lasting 30 years

1900: Sir Arthur Evans begins his excavations at Knossos on Crete discovering the Minoan civilization

1903: First typology of American Indian pottery produced by William Henry Holmes

1905: Leopoldo Batres uncovers Tenochtitlán, capital of the Aztecs, in Mexico City

1911: American historian Hiram Bingham is the first Westerner to discover Machu Picchu in Peru



Ur, 1928

1912: Discovery of a primitive hominid in the Piltdown quarry in Sussex, England which is considered to be the missing link between human and ape, but is later found to be a forgery

1913: Koldewey discovers the Ziggurat of Babylon, the Biblical Tower of Babel

1915: Sylvanus Morley publishes his first of many findings and decipherings of Mayan hieroglyphs

1918: World War I pilot O.G.S. Crawford develops technique of aerial survey of sites

1919: British Museum begins excavations at Ur in Iraq

1922: Excavations in Punjab yields evidence that Alexander the Great did occupy the city of Taxila and thus did indeed reach India

1922: British archaeologist Howard Carter and his sponsor Lord Carnarvon discover the intact tomb of Egyptian Pharaoh Tutankhamen

1925: V. Gordon Childe writes the first major synthesis of Central European prehistory in *The Dawn of European Civilization*

1926: Sir John Marshall, Director General of Archaeology in India, conducts excavations at Mohenjo-Daro in the Punjab

1927: Canadian medical doctor Davidson Black discovers a previously unknown hominid species in China called Peking Man

1927: Sir C. Leonard Woolley discovers the gold-rich royal cemetery in the ruined Mesopotamian city of Ur

1929: Gertrude Caton-Thompson investigates the ruins of Great Zimbabwe in Southern Rhodesia

1932: First systematic excavations at Tiahuanaco by Wendell Clark Bennett near Lake Titicaca in Bolivia

1935: Astronomer A.E. Douglas develops dendrochronology – a method of dating archaeological finds through counting tree rings, but his method is not widely adopted

1938: Matthew Williams Stirling leads an expedition into southern Mexico discovering the colossal stone heads of the Olmec People

1939: Anglo-Saxon ship-burial and funerary treasures found at Sutton Hoo in England

Famous Archaeology

Digs 1919-1939

Between the two World Wars, European and North American archaeologists were discovering and excavating sites all over the world, particularly in the Americas, Europe and the Middle East. Eight of the more famous digs are described here.

Ur, Iraq (1919-1934)

Ur is an ancient city located between the Tigris and Euphrates Rivers near the Persian Gulf. The city was first built around 4,500 B.C. and was later the site of the Ziggurat, one of the Seven Wonders of the World. Excavations funded by the British Museum began in 1919 led by British Consul J.E. Taylor later joined by a University of Pennsylvania expedition. From 1922 British archaeologist Sir Charles Leonard Woolley directed the two groups, and together they discovered tombs of great material wealth. The most extravagant was that of Queen Pu-Abi whose tomb had been untouched by looters through the ages. With her were buried four attendants who poisoned themselves so they could join her in the afterlife. Famous British crime writer Agatha Christie was also associated with this site, and wrote *Murder in Mesopotamia* after she was inspired by the discovery of the royal tomb. Later she married one of Woolley's younger assistants.

Valley of the Kings, Egypt (1922-1928)

Arguably the most famous archaeological find of the Twentieth Century was the tomb of the Egyptian Pharaoh Tutankhamen. After years of searching Carter had still found nothing, but in November 1922, just before his sponsor Lord Carnavon pulled his funding, Carter at last discovered the intact tomb of the young Pharaoh at the base of the tomb of Rameses VI. Treasures in the 3,300 year-old tomb included two life-sized statues of the king, gold amulets, bracelets, collars, rings and daggers, a sarcophagus with an inner gilded wooden coffin and another inner coffin made entirely of gold, and the perfectly preserved body of Tutankhamen. In a storeroom known as the Treasury were many boxes and model boats, four canopic jars containing the King's embalmed organs, and two miniature coffins with fetuses of what were presumed to be Tutankhamen's children. Later evidence suggested that

Selected Terms and Phrase

Every profession has its own language, terminology and jargon, and archaeologists are no different. Here are a few common terms and definitions that keepers can throw into a campaign for flavor.

- Artifact:** common name for an object found in an archaeological site
- Anthropology:** the study of humans from a biological, cultural and social viewpoint
- Archaeology:** the study of the past through identification and interpretation of the material remains of human culture
- Bronze Age:** the phase of human material cultural development when they moved from Stone Age tools to using metal
- Context:** an archaeological term referring to where objects found in sites come from and how they relate to each other
- Cuneiform:** the earliest form of writing first invented by the Sumerians, using reed pens to imprint wedge-shaped script into clay tablets
- Dendrochronology:** the dating of past events through counting and study of tree rings, a new technique rarely used in the 1920s and 1930s
- Diffusionism:** the theory that human culture is spread by degrees of outwards expansion from a single source, as opposed to the view that cultures develop independently
- Egyptology:** the study of Ancient Egypt
- Epigraphy:** the study of ancient writings inscribed on hard or durable material such as metal or stone
- Hieroglyphs:** the system of writing using pictorial characters, commonly found in Egyptian and Central American cultures

- Feature:** anomalies in the landscape created by people such as pits or postholes, walls, roads or yards
- Forgery:** a copy of an artifact made deceitfully to be passed off as the original, normally for money
- Iron Age:** the stage in human development following on from the Bronze Age when iron hardened by the addition of carbon is used in weapons and tools
- Layer:** distinct deposits of soil which show differences in the way they were formed due to environmental factors or human activities
- Megalithic Monument:** large, usually undressed stone, monuments dating from Stone Age and early Bronze Age cultures, and includes single standing stones, stone circles, chambers or rooms, and alignment or rows of stones
- Mesolithic:** Middle Stone Age, a term used exclusively in Europe where Stone Age cultures showed similarities to both Paleolithic and Neolithic cultures
- Mythology:** a collection of traditional tales, often associated with a particular culture or group of people, handed down orally through generations
- Natural:** the stratigraphic layer untouched by archaeological deposits, and consequently marks the end of the excavation
- Neolithic:** New Stone Age primitive societies that practice agriculture, pot making, weaving textiles, working stone and making tools
- Paleography:** the study of handwritten material from ancient and medieval times excluding writing on metal or stone

Paleolithic:	Old Stone Age primitive societies that practiced hunting, gathering and used stone tools chipped into shape	Stratification:	stone, wood or bone the identification of successive layers of soil each with a different archaeological period
Photogrammetry:	the use of photographs in map-making generally by overlapping aerial photographs	Stratigraphy:	giving a sequence to finds in an archaeological site
Prehistory:	the classification of cultures before the use of writing	Terminus Ante Quem:	dating terminology for describing an artifact as "cannot be earlier than"
Primitive Man:	term for societies whose culture reached Stone Age levels or less	Terminus Post Quem:	dating terminology for describing an artifact as "cannot be later than"
Site:	a particular region where ancient human remains have been identified	Three Age System:	the classification of prehistory into Stone Age, Bronze Age and Iron Age
Stone Age:	the stage in human development before Bronze Age where weapons and tools were predominately made of	Typology:	an archaeological dating technique that identifies artifacts typical of different periods in the sequence



Howard Carter



Lord Carnarvon

Tutankhamen was probably murdered. Carter's discovery created a world-wide obsession with Ancient Egypt. Daily updates on the latest finds were always in the newspapers and

tourists regularly flocked to the site. On a darker note, within a year of opening the tomb Lord Carnarvon died of an infected mosquito bite, creating stories that the expedition members had fallen under the Pharaoh's curse. Work at King Tutankhamen's tomb was completed in 1928, while cataloguing continued until 1932.

Taung, South Africa (1924)

Conclusive evidence and world wide publicity of the origins of primitive man in East Africa would not be made until the 1960s, but archaeological finds of humanity's ancestors were already turning up in Africa, Europe, the Middle East and Asia. It was the work of Australian anthropologist and paleontologist Raymond Dart who was making the headlines in the 1920s. In Taung, South Africa, Dart was provided with fragments found in a mine which he identified as the skull with a full face, teeth and jaw of a small child aged 5 or 6, dated at 2 to 3 million years. Previously Asia had been seen as the home of humanity, but the date of this find challenged that belief. Dart was convinced that these remains were of a bipedal ancestor of humanity, and named it *Australopithecus Africanus* and that this ancient species used tools constructed from the long bones of gazelles, antelopes and wild boars. However Dart's interpretation was rejected by the scientific community until the mid-1940s when similar fossils were discovered confirming his interpretations.

Chichén Itza, Mexico (1924-1934)

The temples and cities of the Mayan people had long been known to archaeologists and historians by the 1920s. Because Mayan civilization had flourished in the rain forests of Mexico's Yucatan Peninsula and in neighboring Central American countries, new temples were always being discovered beneath the jungle which had overgrown them. One of the pioneers of Mayan archaeology was civil engineer Sylvanus Griswold Morley, who in 1914 obtained funding for Maya research from the Carnegie Institution to conduct digs at Copán, Petén and Chichén Itza. Morley's books written on his findings lay the foundation for the study Mayan Hieroglyphs, a growing area of study in the 1920s and 1930s. The city of Chichén Itza was the big archaeological dig in Central America between the wars. The site dating back to the Seventh Century A.D. covered six square miles (15sq km) consisting of hundreds of buildings including temples, an Astronomical Observatory, a pyramid dedicated to the feathered snake god Kukulcan, the Temple of Warriors, and a Ball Court where it was believed a game was played which saw either victors or losers sacrificed at the game's conclusion, but which side still no one is sure.

Yin, Honan Province, China (1928-1937)

Archaeological digs in the Far East were not as well reported but the land's ancient history was by no means ignored by the archaeological community. In Anyang, China excavations led by Chinese born but Harvard educated Li Chi uncovered the capital of the Shang Dynasty named Yin dating from 1700 B.C. to 1027 B.C. The excavations uncovered the remains of a royal palace, several royal tombs and more than one hundred thousand pieces of bones and shells etched with Chinese words. Four and a half thousand words were counted, and translation of this ancient script had only just begun in the early 1930s.

Mount Carmel, Palestine (1929-1934)

While the profession of archaeology was almost exclusively dominated by white men, women were by no means excluded from the profession. The reputation of English archaeologist Dorothy Annie Elizabeth Garrod was cemented with her work at Mount Carmel in Palestine. The caves at Mount Carmel contain sites covering two hundred thousand years of occupation by Neanderthals and their Stone Age tools, the first site to contain Neanderthal skeletons outside of Europe. From her finds here and at other Palestinian sites Garrod made major advances in the fields of Paleolithic art, prehistoric migration, hunting and irrigation techniques. In 1939 she became Cambridge University's first female professor.

Tiahuanaco, Bolivia (1932 onwards)

Although the statues, ceremonial buildings and temples of Tiahuanaco had been known to Europeans since the time of the Conquistadors, the site was never properly excavated nor studied in depth until 1932. Located in the high altitudes of the Andes near Lake Titicaca, the Tiahuanaco civilization flourished across central western South America between the Fifth and Tenth Centuries A.D. The excavations were led by American archaeologist Wendell Clark Bennett funded by New York's American Museum of Natural History. Bennett used stratigraphic techniques to divide the Tiahuanaco culture into three distinct phases, Early, Classic and Decadent, as well as a post-Tiahuanaco period which was just before the culture was absorbed into the expanding Incan Empire.

Sutton Hoo, United Kingdom (1938-1939)

The most significant find in Britain between the World Wars was the Saxon burial mounds at Sutton Hoo in East Anglia, Suffolk. The site was discovered quite by accident when a local land owner asked archaeologist Basil Brown to investigate eighteen low grassy mounds on her property. Most of the mounds had long been robbed in antiquity, but in the largest mound Brown discovered an undisturbed royal burial of an early 7th Century A.D. East Anglian pagan king, entombed within a 100 foot (30m) long oak ship. Although significant finds were recovered, unfortunately excavations were put to a halt during the outbreak of the Second World War and were not recommenced until decades later. What the site did reveal was the remains of textiles, armor, weapons, coins, horns, woolen cloaks, fur caps and other princely artifacts, many inlaid with gold and semi-precious stones. It would prove to be the richest ever burial site ever discovered in Great Britain.

Where to Dig

All across the globe, many thousands of years of recorded history is buried under our feet. This gives archaeologists literally an unlimited choice of where to begin searching for the material remains of past cultures. But archaeologists don't just dig at random; there is too much area to cover, and very little of the past survives through to the present. To counter this preliminary research is required thus determining where exactly to dig.

Historical references are a good place to start. The Greek traveler and historian Herodotus described the Egyptian Pyramids and foreign peoples in his accounts of the Fifth Century B.C. while Julius

Caesar wrote of the battles and cultures of the Celts, Gauls and Germans during his Roman campaigns of occupation. Not always accurate and often embellished, such accounts do provide valuable background to any ancient culture under investigation, which can provide general directions to possible locations where digs might be conducted. Similarly not all historical accounts need be factual either, for mythology too often lent a hand. Heinrich Schliemann used the *Iliad* as a basis for finding the ancient site of Troy, and the Greek legends of King Minos and the Minotaur assisted in the excavations at Knossos.

Secondly, not all ancient sites are buried in the earth. Stonehenge, Angkor Wat, the Pyramids of Giza and the Great Wall of China were still standing and plainly visible for all to see when many of these ruins were "discovered" by European men of learning. These men soon learnt that wherever such monuments were found, clues to the culture, technology and lifestyles of the people who built them would always be buried in and around the monuments. Similarly candidate sites don't even have to be man-made, for distinctive natural formations often generated religious and cultural significance to the indigenous people who live nearby. One example is Ayer's Rock in central Australia which contains several caves, many with aboriginal paintings of the Anangu people.

Often when the past is buried by time, tell-tale signs of their existence remain visible on the surface landscape. In Britain and other parts of Europe there are earthy mounds dotted across the country overgrown with vegetation that doesn't match the surrounding fields, thus drawing the attention of onlookers. Excavation of these sites sometimes unearthed burial sites. In Central America tropical undergrowth has overgrown over Olmec and Mayan sites, leaving bumps and visible hollows providing a clear plan of features that once stood there, such as farms, temples, and ceremonial centers.

In the 1920s a new method of site selection was developed by former British World War One pilot O.G.S. Crawford. Using a small plane and a camera, he pioneered aerial photography and photogrammetry; collating several images together into a continuous map of the landscape. Often these maps showed artificial features, such as straight roads or canals that were not visible from the ground.

Local people are also another great source of information often utilized to find archaeological treasures. When Hiram Bingham was searching for the Incan city of Machu Picchu, its existence had long been known to the Indians who lived nearby, and thinking nothing of its significance, led Bingham there with a few simple directions.

Modern cities all over the world from London to Mexico City have been in existence for centuries if not millennia. Sites of interest to archaeologists can be found even in these sprawling urban centers, often in ancient sewer ducts or buried beneath the oldest foundations of modern buildings.

Lastly, sites are often discovered purely by accident, such as by workmen excavating while preparing a construction site, or from everyday citizens reporting unusual finds to local authorities. There have even been accounts of archaeologists in curio shops in Cairo or Istanbul who have discovered a tablet or pottery fragment on the shelves that stimulates their curiosity. A little backtracking to the seller can determine where the piece was found, and thus provide new candidate sites for digging.

Permits and Sponsorship

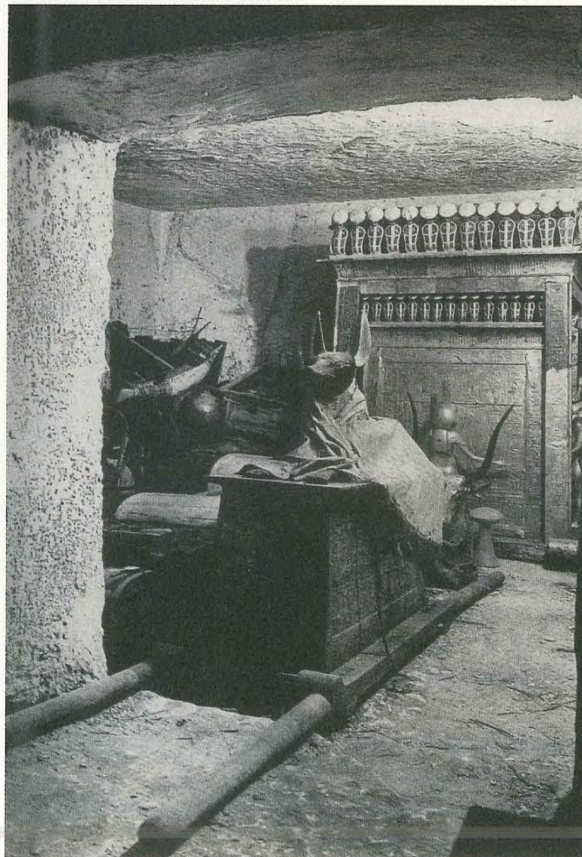
Knowing where to dig is one thing, but obtaining the right to do so is a completely different matter. Since ancient ruins do not discriminate, they can be found equally on public land, private property, and restricted areas such as military bases. Local people also have concerns about the issuing of permits, for digs can result in an invasion of their privacy, ruining the landscape, upsetting their business, or desecrating sites sacred to them such as modern churches or memorials. European and North American nations started introducing basic antiquity laws and laws for the protection of monuments from the 1880s. Britain led the way and by the 1920s most European and North American nations passed similar laws.

Luckily for archaeologists, most countries between the World Wars were politically administered as colonial outposts of European powers, particularly by the French and British who were very keen on sponsoring digs. Obtaining permission to excavate in African, Middle Eastern, Asian or Pacific colonies was obtained through colonial authorities, such as archaeological boards or societies, or, failing that, the colonial governor. Often fees were administered and cases had to be made for the validity of excavating the site. European powers also tended to favor nationals from their own country over foreigners, since many officials were of the mindset that whatever ancient treasures were discovered would more than likely decorate museums of the nationality of the lead archaeologist. Egypt remained an exception to the rule where excavation had been strictly regulated since 1858 by the Egyptian Antiquities Service. In 1912 the Egyptian government declared all antiquities in Egypt to the property of the government.

If a dig site was in an independent country such as in Australia, or Central and South America, or if there are important wealthy or royal families who could influence permits – such as sheiks in the Middle East – then there were fees or bribes that need paying. Often locals didn't consider the heritage and nationalistic value of ancient treasures unearthed in their own country, so generally they weren't concerned when their artifacts were shipped off overseas. Gold, silver and precious gems however were a different story, and many bribes and a lot of security was required to keep such items from disappearing.

Then there was always the issue of funding a dig. Excavations

Tutankhamen's Treasury



employing anywhere up to 300 or 400 diggers might cost a team around US\$ 2,000 (£500) a week in poorer countries, and significantly more in Europe or North America where labor costs could not as easily be exploited. Investigators planning their own excavations will need to consider funding, and often lacking that kind of money themselves, will need to secure a sponsor.

Digs generally attracted two types of sponsors, the first of which were reputable museums, universities or societies (such as the National Geographic Society). Museums made it their business to at least fund one or more digs at any particular time, while universities or societies only funded digs if relevant to their departments and charters. Funding normally would only be granted to reputable archaeologists who were highly qualified and had already experienced significant field work. Investigator archaeologists without this background wouldn't even get a look in, but those that do are still required to present their case to the museum or society's board.

The second category of sponsor was wealthy lords or dilettantes who had developed a personal interest in antiquities and were willing to fund their own digs. Normally such individuals were never as well trained or disciplined as professional archaeologists (but there were exceptions) and so regularly hired such help. The problem with this type of sponsorship is that excavations were generally conducted only where the lord or dilettante wished to dig.

Preservation and Decay

Little of the past actually survives and most of what does ends up underground. Some objects decay naturally, others are destroyed, and the chances of any item surviving decrease with time. Of the very small portion that does survive, only a small fraction of that is recovered, and most of that is never properly recorded or preserved.

Different material has differing chances of survival depending on the environment that swallowed it. In sand or earth wooden buildings normally only survive as postholes, while exposed stone of old temples and monuments is often robbed to build other structures. Mud bricks exposed to surface conditions decay rapidly, leaving almost no telltale signs of the buildings or structures in which they were used, but they do leave imprints on the surface where such structures once stood. Deeply buried bricks on the other hand do often survive intact. Leather, textiles, wood and plant material rarely survive.

Pottery is the most common item to be found in any archaeological site anywhere in the world. Even though it breaks easily, there are few environments where it do not survive indefinitely. Similarly, metals have a good chance of survival, particularly precious chemically inert metals such as gold or silver. While bronze and copper suffer corrosion, iron rusts until the object is completely destroyed. For human remains, the chances of survival depends on the type of soil, but generally only bones are left behind in the majority of cases. In Egypt, Peru and other parts of the world where mummification techniques were used as part of their culture, preserved bodies of these ancient people have been found in great numbers.

Micro-organisms that cause organic material to decay require temperatures above freezing, moisture and air. So environments such as bogs, polar, or desert regions where some or all of these conditions are absent, organic material may survive. In northern Peru there are deserts where it has not rained for hundreds of years; so Moche bone fragments have remained unchanged for just as long, while Andean tapestries a thousand year old survive for similar reasons.

Similarly cold regions such as Alaska, Siberia, Greenland and the Alps have preserved artifacts through freezing. Whole Mammoths and ancient men thousands of years old are well preserved, retaining soft body tissue and hair, and their textiles, wooden tools and weapons are similarly preserved. Water is another source of preservation such as ship wrecks, but because of the lack of significant underwater tools and diving suits available in the 1920s and 1930s, this was an area of archaeology not yet pursued.

Once an artifact is recovered, thought needs to be given to its long term conservation. Waterlogged wood needs to be kept wet, while iron items may be heated to stabilize the metal. Artifacts also need to be cleaned, either mechanically using brushes or fine abrasive paper, or chemically. Many recovered artifacts require reconstruction such as pottery, or on a large scale, entire sites. In the 1920s and 1930s materials uses to restore sites were not always reversible, such as cementing pieces with plaster, clay or non-reversible glues. Wax was a more versatile and reversible joining agent used during the period. Different chemicals were required to clean different materials, and the wrong application could irrevocably destroy an object.

Similarly objects displayed in museums or stored in warehouses also required maintenance, such as by controlling temperature, lighting and humidity, and protecting against air pollution, molds and pests. Preservation was an emerging field between the World Wars, but did create a new profession, that of the conservator.

Field Archaeology

Archaeological digs are a common aspect of the *Call of Cthulhu* game. Most keepers and investigators are interested in the secrets such digs reveal, but there are many more equally interesting aspects to a dig that can be incorporated into a narrative of a game session. Unearthing artifacts and deciphering their meaning can be an adventure in itself.

Digs can be located anywhere in the world, be they in the ancient catacombs of Tibet, in a Pharaoh's tomb on an island along the Nile, or high in the chilly peaks of the Andes. Common to most sites is that their treasures are buried in the earth, protected from the ravages

An Archaeologist's Toolkit

The following list includes some handy items an investigator archaeologist should seriously consider purchasing before setting out on their own dig.

- Basket:** for removing soil from the site
- Bent Spoon:** as found in a kitchen, spoons are used for removing small amounts of soil
- Bricklayer's Trowel:** an all purpose tool of the archaeologist, this pointed trowel is useful for digging around partially uncovered objects, or in earth when objects are suspected and the use of shovels or picks might cause irreparable damage
- Cloth Tape:** for general site recording, a tape could be used for laying out a site, measuring, planning, and section drawing
- Dental Picks:** were used for cleaning and examining fine works and fragile remains
- Hand-pick:** a digging tool commonly used to excavate large quantities of earth. It is the most widely used digging tool in the Middle East
- Mattock:** a combination pickax and hoe, very useful on digs
- Plumb:** a ball or pointer of lead or similar metal attached to a string used for finding the perpendicular and measuring the vertical
- Photo Scale:** a measuring stick painted in alternating black and white strips of fixed intervals, normally of 3 inches, 6 inches or a foot. These scales are placed next to recovered objects when photographed, so their length relative to other finds can be determined by examining the photograph only
- Shovel or Spade:** like hand-picks, these digging tools are commonly used to excavate large quantities of earth or removing turf
- Small Brush:** used to clean away grains of loose soil around objects
- Wheel barrow:** for removing soil from the site

Other common equipment would include field glasses, tents, wide brim hats (to protect from the sun), notepads, torches, oil lamps, cameras and film, flash bulbs, sketchpads, pencils, and erasers. Surveying equipment includes the plane table, dumpy level, transit and theodolite.

of time, the elements and looters. That means most excavations are going to require a lot of digging.

An average dig site in the 1920s or 1930s consists of anywhere between three to ten archaeologists each with at least professorships or doctorates, who oversees the digs across the entire site. Under each archaeologist there might be three to four graduates who managed portioned sections of the dig, trained diggers to excavate without damaging objects; or are on hand to identify potential finds. Conservators were often assigned to sites to ensure that unearthed material did not disintegrate or fade once exposed to surface conditions. Other specialists might include biologists, anthropologists, geologists or other science academics with unique skills to offer, such as astronomers to interpret ancient calendars.

Digging itself is often conducted by locals. Generally, these are the native peoples of Latin America, Asia, the Middle East and Africa, or hired labor or interested amateurs in the western world. On a normal dig, there would be at least one hundred to three hundred diggers, but much larger or smaller digs are not uncommon. With such a large number of participants, dig sites have to be carefully managed. First, there is the question of location, for if a dig is located far from populated centers, accommodation needs must be provided for the whole group, mostly in the form of tents. But back in the 1920s and 1930s, native diggers were often left to sleep outside facing the elements with whatever clothing and shelter that they brought for themselves.

Remote sites also require goods transported to and from towns where provisions can be readily obtained. Trucks are the preferred means of accessing a site, even if this required driving off road through deserts or grasslands for days on end. When dirt roads were not passable, such as during digs undertaken in jungles or mountainous regions, pack animals such as llamas, mules, horses or camels are used instead. Transport is required to get food, supplies, and equipment in, and recovered artifacts out. Expedition members regularly traveled both ways.

So, with anywhere up to four hundred or more people performing the actual excavations, many more personnel are required to support them. Westerners often fill the roles of medical practitioners treating injuries and illnesses, while foremen dictate the daily work activities of various groups. Buyers are always purchasing supplies and equipment or finding the best deals on the right digging tools. Photographers and draughtsmen record artifacts, noting exactly where on site they were recovered, while accountants balanced the books and organized wages and payment. On smaller digs the archaeologists took on many of these roles.

Apart from the digging, jobs for locals are as cooks, truck drivers, pack animal handlers, site and camp guards, foremen and servants. The latter role is predominately there to attend to the needs of senior archaeologists. Translators are also important, and employed by either westerners or locals. Locals who can speak the

native tongue of the archaeologists often worked under better conditions and pay, primarily because they can negotiate better pay and play a unique part as the vital link between the diggers and the archaeologists.

Of course, once a dig is established and underway, that doesn't mean that work will run smoothly. Many diggers aren't careful on how they handle finds, or don't bother reporting them especially if they are being paid just as much as the next man. To counter this, many archaeologists have introduced a system whereby each digger receives a reward over and above his salary for everything that he finds (diggers were almost exclusively male). In the Middle East this was called the *baksheesh* system, in which there was no payment for objects broken by the workmen. Another incentive rewarding proper dig procedures is to promote exceptional and honest workers to the role of foremen, and to rehire reliable individuals on later digs.

Other problems facing digs are rivalries, fighting and violence. Mixing different tribal groups on the most part work well, but if relationships between individuals turn sour the whole dig might take sides based on cultural or ethnic identity, and work might grind to a standstill for days or weeks until a resolution is reached. Murders almost always result in investigations by the local police authorities, and sometimes work was reduced or halted altogether until the culprit was charged. Superstition can also strike a site when native diggers are involved; an object might be seen to entice a curse or an evil spirit believed to have been released from a ruin might be causing bad luck on site. Workers who believe these things are unlikely to return to work, no matter how much money they are offered and will often convince other co-workers to quit with them.

Protection of a site is also important. Some artifacts, particularly those made from precious metal or stones are often stolen, or defaced due to the prying out of valuable components, or their discovery never reported to the archaeologists in the first place. Even upstanding archaeologists themselves have been tempted by the wealth of their finds. Careful eyes are required at all times.

Not all threats come from within the workforce. Sometimes, local rebel forces, bandits and mercenaries attack dig sites, particularly when digs were situated in remote locations. Thus digs occasionally require guards, local men provided by tribal rulers or government officials. But even guards were not without their problems. Leonard Woolley once hired guards from a local tribal sheik. The sheik sent him men without rifles hoping to bluff the archaeologists into purchasing weapons. Someone must have known this, for the camp was raided on their first night, a man was killed and supplies were looted. Negotiations need to be careful and to the letter.



Archaeologists and diggers

Conducting Proper Excavations

Proper excavation is achieved through the application of methodical and systematic excavations. Firstly, a site must be laid out. Surveyors or archaeologists trained in this field initially record fixed points, from which all measurements are referenced, on both the horizontal and vertical scales. These fixed points were often referenced to the national survey grid, or if one does not exist by referencing all points from a prominent and durable local landmark such as the summit of a nearby mountain.

Sites are normally divided into rectangular sections, which are numbered or otherwise uniquely identified so that finds can be grouped. This is done so that every recovered or exposed item can be recorded with a position that is used in later analysis and study. Since older layers are deeper, the vertical position gives clues to the period in which a recovered object belongs. This is the stratification approach pioneered by Petrie and others. Laying out a site can take days or even weeks to accomplish.

Next the site is carefully taken apart in a reserve order to how it was formed. Top soil is removed first to reveal features; anomalies in the landscape that are evident of human occupation, such as roads, pits, postholes, yards and walls. From these initial finds archaeologists can map out the general layout of how the site must have originally appeared. Then each layer – distinct deposits of soil – is removed while the archaeologists sift for artifacts, recording everything. Conversely, graves are often buried deeper than the layer in which they are related, but often the layer from which they are cut is easy to determine. This is time consuming work, with each layer lasting weeks or months before the next is investigated. Everything is recorded in the form of written accounts, catalogues, photographs and drawings. Tents are often erected over excavations particularly when protection from the sun or rain is required to ensure finds are not destroyed.

Once all this data is recorded, archaeologists can begin their analysis, determining the functions of individual rooms, courtyards, wells, and rubbish tips. This information allows interpretation on the daily lives of the inhabitants, such as how they cooked and where they obtained their food, what religious ceremonies they performed, how they fought, their family customs and even on the general health of individuals.

Renowned Archaeologists of the Era

Three well-known and respected archaeologists of the era are provided for the keeper to introduce to investigators, either for historical flavor or as consultants on ancient cultures.

Arthur Evans

Arthur Evans discovered a wealth of incredible artifacts during his lifetime. He was born in Nash Mills, England and later educated at Harrow School, Brasenose College, Oxford University and Göttingen University. Before taking up the trowel, Evans first worked at Oxford's Ashmolean Museum and was the curator there between 1884 and 1908.



Evans is best known for his work at the Palace of Knossos at Crete. In 1894 he began deciphering scripts on Cretan seal stones, but it was not until 1900 when the island became independent did his excavations truly begin. The Knossos ruins possessed a maze like quality that reminded Evans of the Greek myth dealing with King Minos, the Minotaur and the labyrinth; thus he dubbed the civilization Minoan. Most of the excavations were complete by 1903, with numerous pieces of artwork and written tomes recovered in the process include over three thousand clay tablets. Evans then spent a great deal of time translating the tablets discovering two distinct scripts, Linear A or Minoan Script, and Linear B, an early Greek dialect. Excavations continued until 1931, and were only interrupted by World War One. Much of the work involved restoration of the palace as it did excavation.

Amongst Evans achievements were several books, most notably the four-volume *The Palace of Minos at Knossos* (1921 to 1935) recounting his work on Crete. Other published texts included *Scripta Minoa* (1909) telling of his deciphering of the clay tablets and *Jarn Mound* (1933). In 1911 he was knighted for his efforts.

Evans plays a role in the scenario 'The Secret of Knossos' appearing in this issue of *Worlds of Cthulhu* which recounts his experiences during the 1920s. After 1931 Evans will most likely be encountered in England, either consulting, lecturing or enjoying his retirement. Investigators may consult him for his expertise in Ancient Mediterranean cultures. He is an old man by the 1920s.

Sir Arthur John Evans, 1851-1941

STR 10	CON 10	SIZ 12	INT 15	POW 13
DEX 11	APP 11	EDU 23	SAN 65	HP 11

Damage Bonus: none

Weapons: none

Skills: Anthropology 30%, Archaeology 95%, Art (Restoration) 60%, Bargain 45%, Credit Rating 65%, Cthulhu Mythos 02%, Drive Auto 30%, Geology 40%, History 80%, Law 15%, Library Use 85%, Listen 55%, Mechanical Repair 60%, Natural History 30%, Navigate 40%, Occult 55%, Persuade 75%, Photography 30%, Physics 25%, Psychology 25%, Spot Hidden 75%, Survey 70%

Languages: Egyptian Demotic 20%, Egyptian Hieroglyphic 10%, English 95%, German 65%, Greek 95%, Latin 70%, Linear A 95%, Linear B 95%, Turkish 40%

Max Uhle

Max Uhle was a German archaeologist who began his career in the field of linguistics. In 1880 he received a doctorate in medieval Chinese grammar, and then spent seven years as the director's assistant at the Anthropologisch-Ethnographisches Museum in Dresden.

It was in 1888 that Uhle developed an interest in Peruvian history and archaeology. He wrote several publications on South American archaeology, the Chibcha language, and interpretations of sites in Bolivian, Peru and Chile. By the time Uhle first arrived in South America in 1892 he was already known as one of the most knowledgeable scholars in Andean civilization.

Uhle first explorations were in Argentina, where he discovered his love for field work, all the while improving on his excavation techniques. He then moved to Bolivia to study Tiahuanaco, which at the time the Bolivian army was using as target practice. He was successful in petitioning the Bolivian government to stop this action, but at the same time the government canceled all excavations in the country. Even though Uhle established that Tiahuanaco was pre-Incan, he was frustrated by the Bolivian mandate and was forced to move his studies to Peru.

In 1896 Uhle began his most prolific and detailed excavations at Pachacamac in Peru, where he discovered thousands of artifacts including exotic pottery and mummies who had undergone trephination. Many of his finds were sent to Berlin Museum and later to the University of Pennsylvania, who sponsored Uhle's work when his German funding came to an end. In Pennsylvania, Uhle met Phoebe Hearst, a wealthy American who had a love for Uhle's work, and she funded his digs for the next ten years, as he collected nearly ten thousand artifacts such as pottery, shells, textiles, metals and mummies. From his finds, Uhle was able to lay the foundation for chronological dating of Andean civilizations.

In 1903, Uhle fell into a 10 foot (3m) deep excavation, spraining his neck severely, and from that time onwards the rate at which he worked slowed considerably. From 1905 he helped to create museums in South America and lectured at universities. In 1924 Uhle commenced on a series of lectures on the methods and aims of growing science of archaeology, and that its aims are to study how lost civilizations progressed into the civilizations of the present. Despite his numerous lectures on the nature and purpose of archaeology, few of his theories were adapted by his peers. Most of Uhle's career was spent simply finding artifacts and attempting to date them. However, he was later considered the father of South American archaeology because of the time and research he devoted to his work.

Max Uhle is an old man by the 1920s and 1930s, no longer practicing in the field. Investigators are likely to encounter Uhle during one of his lectures, or may seek him out for insights into Incan and pre-Incan culture if they are planning a trip to South America.

Max Uhle, 1856-1944

STR 09	CON 10	SIZ 11	INT 14	POW 10
DEX 08	APP 11	EDU 22	SAN 50	HP 11

Damage Bonus: none

Weapons: Fist 50%, 1d3

Skills: Anthropology 55%, Archaeology 80%, Astronomy 30%, Bargain 35%, Credit Rating 55%, Cthulhu Mythos 02%, First Aid 50%, Geology 40%, History 80%, Law 30%, Library Use 65%, Navigate 40%, Occult 55%, Persuade 60%, Psychology 35%, Spot Hidden 75%, Survey 50%

Languages: Aymará 45%, Chibcha 50%, Chinese 65%, English 75%, German (Own) 80%, Portuguese 20%, Quechua 55%, Spanish 75%

Sylvanus Morley

Sylvanus Morley was raised in Chester, Pennsylvania. He entered Pennsylvania Military Academy where he was trained as a civil engineer whilst simultaneously developing an interest in ancient cultures of the Americas. He went on to study archaeology at Harvard University. During this time he traveled to New Mexico to study the Cliff Palace at the Mesa Verde, and gained a taste of field work in Central America at Uxmal and Chichen Itza.

In 1914, Morley was employed by the Carnegie Institute of Washington, where he obtained substantial funding for excavations. For the next forty years he directed work at Chichen Itza, then later at Uaxactum in Guatemala, and he guided excavations for the Archaeological Institute of America. Morley was amongst the first to discover and translate Mayan hieroglyphs. His findings were published in three books, *An Introduction to the Study of Maya Hieroglyphs*, *The Inscriptions at Copan*, and *The Inscriptions at Peten*, which later proved to be foundations for the study of all Mayan writing. Morley's work also preserved writing that was later destroyed by nature, and his expertise in Mayan culture allowed him to chronologically date various Mayan sites. His personable nature and his ability to establish important contacts were always instrumental in obtaining funding, and he was skilled at bringing important people to examine Mayan achievements, thus attracting international interest to what was previously seen as an obscure culture.

Investigators are most like to encounter Sylvanus Morley in Central America on a Mayan dig, and may prove to be a worthwhile contact in Mayan based scenarios such as "The Pits of Bendal-Dolum" in Chaosium's *Cthulhu Classics*, or in Pagan Publishing's campaign *The Realm of Shadows*.

Sylvanus Griswold Morley, 1883-1948

STR 11	CON 12	SIZ 14	INT 16	POW 12
DEX 13	APP 13	EDU 18	SAN 60	HP 13

Damage Bonus: none

Weapons: Fist 50%, 1d3

Machete 35%, 1d8+1

Skills: Anthropology 50%, Archaeology 85%, Astronomy 35%, Bargain 75%, Credit Rating 65%, Cthulhu Mythos 03%, Drive Auto 30%, Fast Talk 65%, First Aid 40%, Geology 50%, History 70%, Library Use 75%, Natural History 30%, Navigate 50%, Occult 55%, Persuade 85%, Photography 40%, Psychology 65%, Spot Hidden 75%, Survey 40%

Languages: Apache 20%, English (Own) 85%, Hopi 20%, Mayan Hieroglyphics 95%, Navajo 35%, Spanish 50%

*Archaeologists in
Call of Cthulhu*

Archaeologists are a common profession in *Call of Cthulhu* and there is good reason, because the creatures of the Mythos are so ancient that clues to their nature are found in ancient sites the world over.

Most archaeologists were specialist, knowledgeable in one or occasionally a few specific cultures, such as the Ancient Egyptians, the Zhou Dynasty, or the Roman Empire. Many – certainly the best

in their field – spoke several languages and could transcribe ancient writings. While many archaeologists were traditional academics with little worldly skills, the nature of field work turned many into expert negotiators with exotic people and with foreign government officials.

Like other academics, archaeologists require good research skills, organizational skills, the ability to write scientific papers, catalogue finds, and methodically lay out a site. Many need to learn to drive a car, pack a llama or ride a camel in order to excavate in difficult to reach sites. Other important academic skills include an under-

New Skill – Surveying (01%)

Allows a character to measure the shape and size of parts of the earth, such as an archaeological dig site or a field where a building is to be constructed, and then represent this data on a reduced scale, such as a plan or similar diagram. Surveying is employed in map-making and civil engineering projects. The operation of surveying employs the principles of geometry and trigonometry, and records linear measurements, heights, and angles. Generally all surveyed sites are measured from either a national grid network, or failing that from a prominent and fixed landmark. Surveying can also be used in reconnaissance and mapping of unexplored territory.

standing of geology, which is helpful in digging and analyzing layers, and art skills such as painting, illustration and photography used to record finds.

When it comes to understand the mind-shattering truths of the Cthulhu Mythos, archaeologists are excellent at establishing historical context, such as when exactly the Mi-Go began influencing Mayan culture, or how well was the Black Pharaoh known during Egypt's Middle Kingdom Period. They can estimate the age of artifacts (assuming it is reasonable to do so), as well as identify cultural similarities between human cultures. And if an ancient site needs exploring, archaeologists often know the best place to start looking for the important clues.

Archaeological Investigator

Income: Lower-Middle to Upper-Middle Class

Contacts and connections: archaeologists, by the nature of their profession will have contacts with museums, universities, societies and libraries. If an archaeologist has spent considerable time in a foreign country performing a dig, it is likely he will have contacts in that local government which might smooth formalities if passing through that country again during an investigation.

Skills: Anthropology, Archaeology, History, Geology, Library Use, Other Language, Spot Hidden, Surveying

Special: EDU+2

Tomb Robber Investigator

Income: Lower-Middle to Upper-Middle Class

Contacts and connections: an Indiana Jones or Lara Croft-style procurer of antiquities, who knows archaeology but just doesn't follow the principles of the profession. Instead, she breaks into tombs or forgotten temples, stealing the most prized artifacts and makes her escape. In the eyes of law, she is considered a smuggler of antiquities, and so need to employ criminal skills, either through necessity or design.

Skills: Archaeology, Bargain, Conceal, Library Use, Other Language, Spot Hidden, Sneak, plus one weapon skill of choice

Special: DEX+2

Conservator Investigator

Income: Lower-Middle to Upper-Middle Class

Contacts and connections: conservators will know archaeologists and will probably be associated with a museum or university. Because of the chemicals that they use for cleaning and preservation, their access to rare, toxic or unusual solutions probably won't raise the eyebrows of the authorities.

Skills: Archaeology, Art (Restoration), Biology, Chemistry, Geology, Mechanical Repair, Natural History, Spot Hidden

Special: DEX+2

Digger Investigator

Income: Lower Class

Contacts and connections: diggers are usually hired in the country in which they are employed, and generally will know their own language, plus at least a limited knowledge in the language of the

A native Kurdish digger



expedition conducting the dig, which will probably be either English or French. They have lots of local knowledge which the expedition leaders might find useful, such as site-associated myths and legends.

Skills: Archaeology, Drive Auto, Mechanical Repair, Operate Heavy Machinery, Other Language, Spot Hidden, and weapon skill in either Pick or Shovel

Special: STR+2

Antiquity Services Representative Investigator

Income: Upper-Lower Class to Middle Class

Contacts and connections: antiquity service representatives are employed by the local government to ensure that archaeological digs are conducted according to local laws regarding monuments and antiquities, and to ensure that artifacts are not smuggled out of their country. Mostly they are present to keep an eye on archaeologists, and generally show more loyalty to their local masters than to anyone on site. Often before anything new is attempted on site, an antiquity services representative must give his or her approval. They can be very influential with the local government when it suits them.

Skills: Archaeology, Bargain, Fast Talk, Law, Other Language, Persuade, Psychology, Spot Hidden

Special: INT+2

Foreman Investigator

Income: Lower Class

Contacts and connections: foremen are normally diggers who have been promoted through the ranks either because they are due diligent and reliable workers or because they speak the archaeologist's own language rather well. Often they are both. In some ways foremen are the best connected individuals on a dig site, for they have to deal with almost everyone at some point during an excavation. If something goes wrong, they'll often be the first to hear about it.

Skills: Archaeology, Bargain, Electrical Repair, Mechanical Repair, Operate Heavy Machinery, Other Language, Persuade, Spot Hidden

Special: INT+2

Guard Investigator

Income: Lower Class

Contacts and connections: commonly hired from the country in which they are employed, guards will generally know their own language plus at least a limited knowledge of the language spoken by the expedition conducting the dig, which will probably be either English or French. Many will know local militia leaders or even have contacts with bandits and revolutionaries that might be bothering a particular dig, and may be able to coordinate a bribe so they attack elsewhere.

Skills: Hide, Listen, Other Language, Ride, Spot Hidden, Sneak, and two weapon skills from Fist, Grapple, Rifle, Sword or Submachine Gun

Special: STR+2

Specialist Investigator

Income: Lower-Middle Class to Middle Class

Contacts and connections: specialists are investigators with unique skills useful to an archaeological dig, such as photographers and surveyors, who work in fields other than just archaeology. Surveyors plot out a site and accurately record plans and locations of recov-

ered features and artifacts. Photographers on digs or in museums take pictures of recovered artifacts and sites for cataloguing and publicity.

Skills: Bargain, Drive Auto, First Aid, Mechanical Repair, Persuade, Spot Hidden plus either Photography and Chemistry, or Surveying and Navigate

Special: DEX+2

Other professions commonly found on digs are Dilettantes, Doctors of Medicine, and Engineers, all of which are described in the *Call of Cthulhu* rule book.

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A Chapter from a Book of Impossible Occurrences

Out of the Dark Realms in Between

By Wolfgang Schiemichen

Translated by Dr. Rainer Nagel

Part 3: An Expedition to Tiahuanaco

On a plateau somewhere in the Andes Mountains in South America, at a height of 13,000 feet, where the air has become almost so thin as to be impossible to breathe, and in the vicinity of Lake Titicaca, lies the monumental ruins of an ancient city. The Aymara and Quechuan Indians living nearby call it Tiahuanaco, the city built by the gods themselves. And it truly must have been the gods who once lived here, for the plateau is far too high for grain to grow and for the population of such a large city to subsist by their own efforts. Neither can domesticated animals be kept here, nor can women give safely birth to children.

When the Spaniards came, they found the city empty, but still largely intact. The buildings, constructed from huge blocks of stone, had been held together with large silver pins by those who had built them. The arriving conquerors pried all of these pins from the stone. Thus, the once sturdy buildings collapsed during later earthquakes. Stones and statues were broken down and used in the construction of roads, railways, and even other cities, such as La Paz. And yet, enough remained to baffle generations of archeologists and anthropologists, posing riddles that turned out to prove fatal for some of these researchers.

In the early twentieth century, during the course of a brief but brilliant career, Tiahuanaco had become a veritable obsession for Dr. Tobey Robinson. Holder of a chair at Arkham Miskatonic University, the gifted researcher had not only intently studied the findings of his colleagues, but had also conducted his own studies in the field

among the highland Indians for a full year. On his return, he presented a study stating that the famous Gateway of the Sun did not, as commonly believed, resemble a sun god at all, nor could it be compared with the Indian rain deities. Rather, it had certain similarities with dark deities of the sea that had been worshiped in certain coastal areas of Peru, and whose images might still be found within the huge, sand-swept pyramids scattered about the coastline. He had recorded Indian legends speaking of similar, long forgotten cities on the bottom of the immeasurably deep Lake Titicaca, of cities said to be inhabited by fish-like, winged demons, rising up from the depths of their graves during the lightless, clouded nights to be worshipped on the shores of the lake, and appeased with sacrifices, just as in ancient times. Dr. Robinson tried to win sponsors for organizing a diving expedition to the bottom of the lake during several lecture tours, but he was ridiculed. His mockers insinuated that the honored professor might never have recovered from a Soroche seizure, a rare type of altitude sickness. It was his theory that the city might be more than the 1,500 years old – a date other researchers had estimated – which caused him widespread ridicule.

With his pride deeply hurt, the professor eventually talked the trustees of the university into funding an expedition that, in the end, was to fail tragically. On June 8th, 1924, an expedition of fifteen strong, made up of archeologists, geologists, and anthropologists, set out to find proof that Tiahuanaco had actually once been by the sea, but was now in the mountains due to dramatic changes in ocean depths. This



Lake Titicaca

theory explained why a city in which nobody would ever have been able to live had come to be found at such a high altitude. It simply had to have been by the sea at some earlier time. Dr. Robinson was sure the evidence sure existed; it was just waiting to be found.

One month later, the expedition reached Bolivia and, enduring indescribable hardships on their journey, struck camp at their destination. Shortly thereafter, all communication ceased.

When a rescue mission made it to the base camp half a year later, it found the camp empty, but perfectly intact. It appeared as though the expedition had simply decided to leave on a whim, and move to some other, unknown location. From the evidence, this decision must have been urgent, because it was apparent to the rescuers that certain

tasks, and left unfinished, as though the camp members had intended to return later.

After much searching in one of the fishing villages by Lake Titicaca, the rescuers finally found young Wilcox Updike, one of the missing anthropologists. He was emaciated, bare bones and completely apathetic, mumbling incoherently. The Indians, who treated him very reverentially, called him "He who was kissed by the Sea Mother" or "He who is given to the Fisher of Souls." A diary found with Updike provided some hints, but did not shed any light on the fate of the remainder of the missing expedition. On the whole, the diary proved that poor Updike had fallen victim to altitude sickness, as evidenced by his entries:

14 July: Finally arrived, and still not past the exertion. Have not adapted to the air around here, either. And then there's these wide plains where only dry grass grows; this endless void, and right in the center, this monolithic city of ruins. Very eerie—only gods could have dwelt here.

15 July: Something's wrong with this city! Its layout doesn't resemble that of the temple cities of the Incas or the peoples preceding them. There is no sense to the way the buildings are arranged. The layout seems totally arbitrary and, in a disconcerting way, disharmonious.

16 July: Today, Robinson presented to us a statuette of what he believed to be the local deity belonging to the vanished inhabitants. If they really worshipped something like this, their minds must have worked in rather bizarre ways. This figure looks much more like a demon than a god. Whatever it is, it has two legs like those of a goat, bony arms reaching out, and where you would expect a head, a snake-like mass with one bulging eye.

20 July: Our geologists returned today. They reported having found a multitude of evidence all around the plains and the neighboring mountain chains that there indeed must once have been a seacoast here. They even talked of sizable salt deposits within the rocks, and of fossilized sea animals. Meanwhile, we were able to reconstruct what must have been the former port facilities, though they appear to have been far too large for the type of boats that would have navigated Lake Titicaca, even taking into account its depth and the fact that, thousands of years ago, it covered a much larger area than it does today. All of us are more convinced than ever that this city might indeed have been situated not by a lake at all, but rather by the sea. But how might a port city have found its way so high up into the mountains?

22 July: All of us have our little eccentricities, but some are more bizarre than others. It looked today like Professor Robinson was talking to a small amulet. An amulet he now wears constantly. Its surface depicts the same monstrosity he presented to us a few days ago, and is made of a strange grayish-green stone.

25 July: Have begun dreaming of algae infested waters that seem to hide something of great importance in their dark depths. Feels like something is constantly tugging at my mind.

28 July: Made so many sensational finds today that history will probably have to be rewritten. Not only did we find bones of prehistoric animals in the vicinity of the city, but also shards of earthenware on which long extinct animals, like the toxodon, are depicted. Is Tiahuanaco not a mere 1,500, but rather 15,000 years old?

1 August: It is now common belief around the camp that our esteemed leader, Professor Robinson, is stricken with altitude sickness. He has become obsessed with his monstrosity (which he calls, Ythogtha) and believes that this entire place had only been erected to care for the Mother in the Lake, who rests in Yhe. And yet, our investigations have unearthed no proof whatsoever the Professor "god" had ever been venerated in this city—no proof at all.

2 August: The Professor must have infected me. Dreamed in the night about a huge thing rising from the lake, its writhing head resembling that of a sea anemone, and with wide, webbed hands, the tips of which ended in gaping sucking maws. Who would ever dream of something like that? And yet I am convinced the architecture of this city isn't right! The angles just aren't how they should be.

5 August: We had to concede that quite a huge proportion of the stonemasonry work in the monuments does not only look unfinished - it is unfinished. Had the unknown artists decided to abandon their work, or were they prevented from doing so by some unknown catastrophe? Could it possibly be that this city already existed as the Andes unfolded, maybe brought to the light of day by an earthquake? Because of the silver rods that once held the buildings together, the city was perfectly safe from any earthquake, much safer than any city of today. But how old would this make our mysterious civilization?

6 August: I am certain now I have fallen ill. I suddenly see in the stirring air-air that seems like water to me-the silhouettes of winged creatures gliding through this water. Am no longer able to focus on what I am seeing. Again the feeling something is tugging at my mind. I feel the scaly touch of a fish-like, a watery thing, enveloped by probing threads and wormlike, burrowing, eel-like things. Ever and ever dream of a city, much like Tiahuanaco, and there she is, resembling nothing but a winged, purple, and black octopus. Have I just written this nonsense?

12 August: Robinson was right again. At his urging, we examined one of the higher terraced fields and found the sealed entry to a grave, or memorial site. Plagued at night by fevered dreams, I was the only one who was not able to inspect the discovery with his own eyes. They found not only a larger than life statue of this goat-legged sea anemone (I'd like to be excused for my somewhat lax phraseology) but also discovered a bas-relief depicting some kind of demonic child bed. A subterranean city, made of stone, full of strange demon things, all of them birthed by some kind of giant octopus; itself over and over strewn with eye stalks made of horn, and possessed of two wings.

13 August: Woke up after being plagued by even more terrible dreams, with a huge creature on bony, fish-like goat legs approaching me, to enfold my head with its webbed, prehensile appendages and suck the soul from my body. Dozens of abyssal things crying up to me in hunger from the depths of a silent lake trailed it. I awoke with an unbearable headache, which freed me from the dream. As I looked into the mirror, I saw my head covered in what seemed to be suction marks, but this vision passed after a moment. I then discovered that everyone had left camp, and I ignored what I had seen, imagining it to be merely my imagination inflamed by the strange dream.

14 August: I am alone. All alone in these deserted, barren highlands-that much I know now. The others have gone there, and belong to the terrible Fisher of Souls now- the one that now appears to me every night, tugging at me and tugging, until it has sucked every last spark of my soul and my mind from me, throwing the last of my spirit down to those in the lake to feed upon. For what dwells down there, in the depths of the lake, is truly a Queen, a Queen of the Night. She was born from the blackness of space and brought to Earth by the dark lords in sunken R'lyeh, the sleeping demons who were here before us and will be here after us, and who will ever be reborn through She, who is called Cthylla, and through Her body those who are like unto gods will become unto gods themselves. Since they are born ever and ever again, for in their shells forever all their mirrored images slumber while He, the winged, horned, many-eyed kraken-fish, rests motionless and lurks and hopes to be fed the souls of men.

Poor Updike was confined to an asylum, dying within the year due to the hardship he had endured. The other members of the expedition were never found, and the mystery of their disappearance never solved. None of the expedition's recovered notes contained any mention of a deity called Ythogtha, or Cthylla, and neither the gravesite nor any underground ritual place has been discovered to date.



Cthylla, Cared-for Mother in Icy Waters

STR 38 CON 210 SIZ 44 INT 40
 POW 37 DEX 21 HP 127 Damage Bonus: +4d6

Weapons: Tentacle 80%, damage 3d6 or grapple
 She may grapple her victim to be able to attack it next round automatically without needing an attack roll.

Bite is automatic if she can grapple her victim, Damage 2d10.
 Squashing is automatic if she can grapple her victim. Damage 1d6+4d6.

Armor: 16 points due to thick skin; she also regenerates 1d6 points per round.

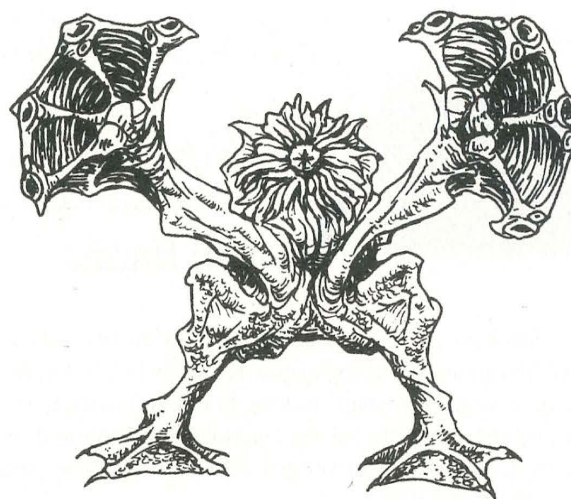
Spells: All magical rituals dealing with creatures living in the oceans of the Earth.

SAN: 1d4/1d10 Sanity Points.

Notes: Cthylla is the final guarantee that those among the Great Old Ones who are only near-immortal will be reborn when their former bodies are destroyed. According to ancient tomes, even Cthulhu is among those who need to replace their bodies on occasion. To do this, Cthylla needs to be fed souls on a regular basis. Her hunger for souls is truly monstrous and insatiable. She is not aggressive, but is kept secret by the various groups for obvious reasons, and well guarded for she is an ancient and valuable treasure. Because of tectonic shifting, she is now a prisoner in her city of Yhe, at the bottom of Lake Titicaca.

Should she be attacked, she fights using 2D6 tentacles. The razor-sharp barbed hooks on her horn-like tentacles are able to penetrate even metal. Should she be forced to flee, she secretes a dark, sticky liquid. This liquid blinds all within 150 feet of her, causing 2d10 points of damage and leading to blindness for 6d10 minutes.

Cult: Among humans, this creature has next to no worshipers, and she is hardly known at all. However, all groups somehow involved with the worship of Cthulhu, provided they know about her, strive to protect her as best they can. This means that characters who learn about this entity and follow her trail soon find themselves hounded by the most diverse assortment of humans and "things" imaginable. In addition, there exists a small, suicidal cult of assassins who have not only vowed to protect this entity, but also work toward freeing her from her South American prison.



Ythogtha, Soul-Eating Monstrosity from the Depths of the Sea

STR 40 CON 105 SIZ 55 INT 25
 POW 25 DEX 13 HP 80 Damage Bonus: +5d6

Attack: Tentacle 90%, damage 3d6; claws 90%, damage 1d6+5d6.

Armor: 8 points due to thick skin; he also regenerates 4 points per round.

Spells: All imaginable rituals able to establish contact to Great Old Ones or their deities, as well as all rituals able to summon somebody or something.

SAN: 1d8/1d20 Sanity Points.

Notes: Like many Great Old Ones related directly to Cthulhu, Ythogtha lies buried under the sea along with Cthulhu. He is, however, characterized by an agile, powerful mind. The Deep Ones and their human allies enable him to have statues depicting him. These statues can be found all over the world. However, they are usually in places of archeological interest. Every now and again, such statues also find their way into the possession of a university or an independent scholar. Whoever owns such a statue is beset by clandestine attacks night after night, taking the form of dreams. The dreams are intended to drive the recipient insane, wearing down mental defenses. The exact nature of the dreams depends on whom Ythogtha must provide with soul energy. Thus, the dreams vary greatly from person to person, but are always alike in that they increasingly reveal more and more of Ythogtha in his true form, but enlarged infinitely, so that his victim becomes ever more obsessed with him. Soon the victim is not only talking about Ythogtha wherever he goes, but also creating ever more terrible images of the entity (loss of 1d4 SAN each night). Once the victim has passed into insanity (i.e., lost 20% of his Sanity) and thus dropped any resistance, Ythogtha sucks the soul from the human's body by the power of his dreams. Afterward, Ythogtha transfers the power to the entity hungering for it.

Cult: This entity is totally unknown among human cultists. If at all, he is worshipped by Deep Ones in their cities under the sea.



Cult Exposed: Chapter 1

The Starry Wisdom Church

By Dan Harms

Starry Wisdom—an innocuous name, but one that conceals a hideous truth. Though the parent congregation died out by 1877, its tendrils still circle the globe, seeking to uncover the wisdom of ancient civilizations and recover the Shining Trapezohedron. Through these means, they hope to contact their god, the Haunter of the Dark, and grow mighty once again.

Antecedents

Starry Wisdom's founder, Enoch Bowen, was born to a wealthy Providence family in 1798, the same year Napoleon invaded Egypt. As Bowen grew up, he spent much of his time reading books on Egypt and creating model pyramids in a vacant lot next to his house. Later in life, he told a friend that he believed in the old Egyptian deities, and as a boy had even seen a procession of animal-headed beings one evening in shadowy groves by the Seekonk River.

No matter the cause, Bowen became a scholar of ancient civilizations without peer. During his study at Brown University, his professors were impressed with his mastery of Egyptian lore and his knowledge of demotic and Arabic. Following his graduate work, Bowen was offered a position at Brown teaching history and philology. Securing the position, he began making expeditions to Egypt. By this time the initial wave of treasure hunters attempting to loot Egypt of its riches was on the wane, and scholars had settled into the task of documenting the land's monuments and artifacts. By 1840 Bowen had written two books, made several minor discoveries, and met many of the great archaeologists of his time. Still, he searched for a huge find, one that would cement his position as a major Egyptian scholar.

It was in Cairo's Old Quarter that Bowen first heard of the Black Pharaoh. Around the time the pyramids were built, a man came out of the desert who commanded black magic and the power of the old gods. This ruler lasted for only a few decades before the old priesthoods and their champion, Sneferu, cast him down. Bowen asked his scholarly friends about these tales, but they scoffed at them as pure superstition. Nonetheless, the stories were compelling and Bowen set out to learn more, obtaining permits and money from private backers, and finally forming his own expedition into the desert in 1842.

For the first year, Bowen's search was unsuccessful. The deciphering of hieroglyphs was still in its infancy, but even then, most references to the mysterious pharaoh seemed to have been destroyed. No clear sites existed, so Bowen moved from one location to another, often coming into conflict with the British colonial government. The desertion of workers became a common occurrence and soon Bowen had to resort to drastic measures, finally spending three months wandering in the desert almost alone, looking for a

rumored sculpture of a faceless sphinx crowned as a king. Later, he disguised himself among the storytellers and tomb robbers of Cairo, attempting to find any hint of the mysterious figure. Matters looked hopeless, and his backers were demanding results.

In the end, the mystery found Bowen. One night as he made his way back to his hotel from the Old Quarter, he was accosted by two gentlemen claiming to be members of the priesthood of Nephren-Ka. They told him of the Black Pharaoh's tomb, in which a mural showed all of future history. The mural was hidden behind a curtain, and the priesthood rolled back a little each day. In this way, they knew that he was one chosen by their god to uncover the Black Pharaoh's secrets. Yes, they would show him that mural, but not yet. Another wonder, even greater, awaited in the mystical valley of Hadoth by the Shibeli River, hundreds of miles to the south. They would be happy to show him the way, for was he not the one chosen to bring their master back into the world?

Bowen was wary, but he agreed to their offer. His remaining team deserted him when they learned of his new friends, but the smiling priests were more than happy to provide diggers. Soon Bowen was excavating the ruins of what his guides called the Labyrinth of Kish. It seemed too good to be true, but Bowen could tell that these self-proclaimed followers of the Black Pharaoh had led him to a major find. In a matter of days, a crypt was discovered and opened, and Bowen made his way into the winding tunnels alone. He soon came upon a small windowless room where he glimpsed something glistening like a huge gem inside a yellowed metal box atop a pedestal. A sudden wind blew up, extinguishing Bowen's lantern, leaving him in darkness. He did not emerge for a week.

In April of 1843, noted Egyptologist Richard Lepsius arrived in Cairo with an expedition funded by the King of Prussia and charged to survey the wonders of Egypt, Ethiopia, and the Sinai Peninsula. Given Lepsius' prestige and extensive local contacts, it was only a matter of time before he learned of the desertion of Bowen's men and the new direction of Bowen's inquiries. A man familiar with Bowen and his work, Lepsius could not spare the resources to visit him at Hadoth, yet he quietly initiated an investigation that uncovered the unsavory roots of Bowen's associates and the fear among many of those who remembered the old ways in Cairo. When tales came back from frightened travelers of strange rites held in the desert near the excavations, Lepsius felt he had no choice but to write Brown University.

No one at Brown paid immediate attention to Lepsius' letter. In the previous year, a man named Thomas Wilson Dorr had attempted to create a new state government in Rhode Island. The University had closed down, its halls were being used as barracks, and the administration had more pressing concerns than the misbehavior of one of its professors far across the ocean. Later, when matters had calmed

down, the University alerted Bowen's backers, who then called the professor back to Providence to explain his behavior.

University officials found Bowen a changed man—arrogant, secretive, and hinting at the unspeakable secrets he had witnessed in Egypt. Even after his backers pressed him, Bowen was unwilling to turn over his notes and records of the expedition, nor even the smallest shard of pottery or trinket that would validate his findings. Worried about his obvious change in personality, the administration chose to place Enoch Bowen on leave while they continued their investigation.

The Church

The University's censure had little effect on Bowen. In July of 1844, he sold his house, using the proceeds to purchase the abandoned Free-Will Church in Providence's growing Federal Hill neighborhood. Declaring it the Church of Starry Wisdom, he attracted members from the youth of the area and set about establishing the church as an alternative to the traditional faiths of Providence. The trustees of Brown dismissed him, citing his poor moral judgment and possible harmful effect on impressionable youth, and the outcry in the scholarly community condemned his previous work to academic obscurity. Still, Bowen was unfazed; his path in life was clear.

The doctrines Bowen taught were complex, combining contemporary occultism and theology with the latest scientific discoveries. Bowen would often revise his doctrine, as fitted the predispositions of his audience, but the basic beliefs remained constant. According to Starry Wisdom philosophy, when the Tower of Babel fell and humanity began speaking different languages, the Divine Principle withdrew from active involvement in the world. Only a small group of the wise, who had condemned the Tower's creation, could still speak with each other. Before they dispersed to other parts of the world, taking their own people with them, they distilled the teachings of that era, using certain constellations and stellar phenomena to serve as mnemonic devices to keep their knowledge alive. As stars were born and died, and constellations shifted, the teachings could be reinterpreted to fit the needs of new ages and cultures. The largest concentration of these sages traveled to Egypt, but their members could be found in every culture, secretly teaching their successors the sacred wisdom.

Bowen was not taught this sacred wisdom, but instead had been given a greater honor. During his excavations in Egypt he had come upon the Shining Trapezohedron, a direct connection to the Divine Principle that had deserted the world so long ago. The Haunter of the Dark—as this principle was called—hid from the light because, as it was believed, his splendor would overwhelm humanity. The rediscovery of the Trapezohedron was the first sign of a new covenant. Through its window on all time and space, the user could witness the glories of other worlds as well as those of his own, after its miraculous transformation. The time had come for the old knowledge to be revealed to those who were ready for it and who could prepare the world for the final revelation, when all would be brought into the primal Unity once more.

The most intimate services were held with small groups of believers surrounding the Shining Trapezohedron. As the steeple room in the Providence Church could only hold seven people, Bowen sometimes scheduled two or three such meetings a night. At these services, the group sat in a circle around the Shining Trapezohedron, gazing at it for hours at a time. Often, members would go into a trance as they stared into its visions, uttering nonsense syllables, or glosolalia. (Orrin B. Eddy interpreted this as communicating in a "secret language" with the Haunter.) Then the Haunter would come down from the steeple and caress each person with its hideous wings and tendrils.

Larger scale services were held on Saturday nights in the nave where Bowen recited the myths of the Haunter (many of his own invention). The group then chanted "Egyptian songs" (again, most created by Bowen) in praise of the darkness, telling of their acts of devotion and mastery of the Starry Wisdom.

Originally, Bowen recruited from the Brown University set. He attracted many students who viewed his church as a welcome relief from the pervasive Baptist sensibilities of nineteenth-century Rhode Island. When these followers graduated most gave up overt ties to the organization, attempting to preserve their reputations. But Bowen knew enough about these former members to subtly blackmail them, though usually keeping his demands to small favors and considerations. By this device the cult slowly spread, reaching out into the local community and beyond. Most ex-members were of lower social status but ambitious, and they soon found their past associations with the church provided them ways of bettering themselves.

The early years of the Starry Wisdom Church saw two figures come to the fore. One, Orrin B. Eddy, was one of the cult's most visible proponents—until a schism with Bowen caused him to leave in 1847. Eddy later resurfaced in Boston where, in 1857, he launched attacks against the church and its doctrines, at the same time promoting his own brand of spirituality at a place called the "Chapel of Contemplation." Another member, Raymond Flagg, was a mysterious drifter who seemed to hold an uncanny influence with the former professor, and often indulged in solo sessions with the Trapezohedron. Flagg carefully remained in a subordinate position but it was he who, in 1848, introduced blood-rites into the Starry Wisdom's practices, citing the power gained by the priests of old who he claimed conducted such ceremonies. From this time on a sacrifice was held at least once a month. A victim was taken up into the vault in the tower and bound while the high priest summoned the Haunter, and the victim left to their fate. The remains were later hidden in the basement.

To supply themselves with a proper number of sacrifices, the group began a string of kidnappings among the lower-class families in the area, many of them Irish immigrants. This led to police investigations in 1853 and 1866, but no proof was ever found. All the victims were of the lower class, and the families' claims seemed too sensational to believe. At the same time, Bowen managed to stay on the good side of local officials by quietly donating the services of his flock to electoral campaigns for candidates who supported the status quo against the "upstart immigrants." As his followers kept a low profile and, save for an odd desire to work at night, dressed and acted like normal people, the politicians welcomed Bowen's support. The Church of Starry Wisdom continued to prosper.

The Church's Fall

Enoch Bowen died in 1868, after being admitted to Butler Hospital following a particularly strenuous ritual. Flagg temporarily assumed Bowen's role as leader while the congregation debated who should permanently ascend to the professor's place. About this time a minister named Abednego Akeley came from Townshend, Vermont, and disrupted one of the group's services, shouting Biblical quotations and challenging its priests to a theological debate. The Starry Wisdom apparently won this debate, for when Akeley later returned to Vermont, he converted his own church into the first (and only) branch of Starry Wisdom. Lacking the Shining Trapezohedron, and beset with desertions and animosity from the community, the few members of the Townshend Church of Starry Wisdom soon moved to Providence, joining the parent congregation in 1871.

In 1869 Doctor Lewis Slater became head of the church but quickly found himself in the center of controversy. Though suppressed by a Republican administration, the Irish immigrants had formed themselves into a powerful political bloc which condemned the church and its followers. When young Patrick Regan vanished while playing in an abandoned lot near the school, the old suspicions were enflamed, and only the timely intervention of the Providence police prevented an angry mob from storming the building. As a result, the cult grew more circumspect, and began targeting the newly-arrived French Canadian and Swedish immigrants. Regardless, their reputation within the local community remained suspect.

Soon two opponents rose against the cult. Father Liam O'Malley of Saint John's Roman Catholic Church first learned of the Starry Wisdom's evil after taking the deathbed confession of a former member in 1856, who told him the membership worshipped an unholy monstrosity which could only be banished by light. O'Malley's early efforts to expose the cult were repeatedly frustrated, but in 1874 he found an unusual ally. Whipple Phillips, a local businessman, Freemason, and former state assembly member, was approached by Doctor Slater, who had asked Phillips for his support. His curiosity roused, Phillips began researching the history of the Starry Wisdom Church, and was dismayed about what he learned. His research eventually led him to a Latin copy of a book titled *The Necronomicon*, which had been seized during a raid on a notorious alchemist's estate nearly a century earlier. What Phillips discovered in this book horrified him, and he resolved to work against the Starry Wisdom and their dark god. Although the Yankee Phillips and the Irishman O'Malley were strange allies, they nonetheless committed themselves to organizing a covert campaign against the sect.

In 1876 there were six more disappearances, and O'Malley and Phillips decided it was time to move. With the aid of a local gang, the Federal Hill Boys, they conducted surveillance of the church, keeping track of its members and their services. In February of the following year the two men, along with prominent members of the local community, called upon Thomas Doyle, Mayor of Providence, at his Benefit Street home. They could show Doyle no hard evidence had against the Starry Wisdom, but the mayor realized the possible repercussions of inaction if these two respected men were right. Doyle promised them that, so long as matters were conducted peacefully, he would back their efforts to expose the Starry Wisdom.

The two men plotted for the next two months, trying to decide on the best way to move against the cult. In the end, the answer was to invoke the city's building codes. Neither Bowen nor Slater had been fastidious in the upkeep of the old Free-Will Church. Slater refused to allow building inspectors into the church which prompted city officials to condemn the edifice and close its doors. The following day Phillips and O'Malley, accompanied by a small group of local men, broke into the church and ascended to the steeple, where they confronted the Haunter in its lair. Four men were driven insane on the spot, but O'Malley had the presence of mind to open the blinds, allowing light to shine directly on the exposed Trapezohedron, dispelling the avatar. Phillips then drew an Elder Sign at the base of the stairs to the tower, sealing it off from those the god had "touched."

Barred from their church, their god banished, the members of the cult found themselves condemned by the community. As Doyle had instructed, no member was harmed, but threats and harassment by the locals became commonplace. Several attempts to retrieve the Shining Trapezohedron were met by the angry locals and thwarted. When the Federal Hill Boys threatened Doctor Slater in May of that year, he decided to quit the city and moved away. By the end of the year, most of the cult had done the same, and the church was left abandoned, its doors closed and locked.

In 1893, Edwin Lillibridge, a reporter for the *Providence Telegram*, became interested in the defunct Starry Wisdom cult, which by this time had become little more than a rumor and source of old wives' tales. Lillibridge entered the church and discovered the Shining Trapezohedron. Nyarlathotep deemed him unfit and killed him. Later, in 1935, artist and writer Robert Blake entered the chapel, activating the Trapezohedron and bearing away Bowen's *The Pathway to Darkness* (see box). This matter came to a climax early in the morning of August 9, when Blake and the Haunter were simultaneously destroyed after a solitary bolt of lightning struck College Hill. Blake's physician, Doctor Ambrose Dexter, returned to the church, bore away its books, and threw the Shining Trapezohedron into Narragansett Bay.

After the Fall

After the closing of the church in Providence, the Starry Wisdom members scattered to cities across the United States and Europe. Raymond Flagg reappeared in London in 1880, preaching the Starry Wisdom doctrine to occultists and jaded urbanites alike. On weekends, the group would meet in an abandoned Roman Catholic chapel in the Yorkshire Moors to watch the heavens and further their esoteric discussions. The group seems to have disintegrated around 1888 when Flagg attempted to revive sacrificial practices within the group. Still, Flagg did make one invaluable addition to Starry Wisdom practice: the use of a mirror in a darkened room, used in place of the Shining Trapezohedron to achieve contact with the Haunter.

Since then, the Starry Wisdom cult has fractured into several small lineages. A group of initiates is often comprised of a single teacher with one to three students, all seeking to access the knowledge of the stars. Many of these people feel marginalized by society, while others seek power over situations where medicine or the authorities have failed them. Leaders recruit members through discussions of topics that intrigue them, including a touch of cynicism, while suggesting that greater revelations await those who are receptive. Once the

prospective member is hooked, the group leader doles out small amounts of knowledge in exchange for money, sex, services, or other considerations. Eventually, the initiate learns how to create his own mirror, thereby achieving some level of autonomy.

As a result of these actions, the rituals of the Starry Wisdom have become more private. Often a Starry Wisdom devotee has a small room in their house fitted out in black drapes, with a chair, table, candles, and mirror. The cultist stares into the mirror for hours, writing down what they experience in a small book. Their faith is more concerned with inner contemplation than with transforming the outside world, though they have great potential for accomplishing this if their Master wishes.

Most initiates of the modern Starry Wisdom trace a lineage back to Flagg in some manner (Slater's absence from all these lineages is puzzling and unexplained). They attempt to reconstitute the group's wisdom by reference to rare occult texts and personal revelation through the use of the dark mirror. Occasionally a solitary practitioner or small group begins to make blood sacrifices to the Haunter once again. Few are discovered, and fewer are willing to speak about what they've done.

Following the rediscovery of the Shining Trapezohedron, a new Starry Wisdom church arose in the latter half of the twentieth century. Based at 1726 South Normandie, Los Angeles, the group was headed by Reverend Nye, a red-robed man who openly displayed the Shin-

ing Trapezohedron and seemed to control its powers of healing and transformation. Higher-level rites were held at the Probilski Foundation, a private group founded in 1974 devoted to founding a museum devoted to Egyptian culture. The group's ties to the Black Brotherhood led to its investigation and subsequent closing. Reverend Nye's group was more cosmopolitan, attracting people from a wide range of cultural and socioeconomic backgrounds.

Additional Notes

Most branches of the Starry Wisdom have access to very few resources. Members make do with what money, possessions, political ties, and Mythos tomes they chance across or possess prior to joining.

The cult's symbol is an ank with a small black stone (usually onyx or obsidian) set into the loop. These are only worn for ceremonial purposes—most Starry Wisdom members are careful not to advertise their affiliation to outsiders. It is said that some advanced initiates may use the stone contained in this piece of jewelry as a dark mirror for casting purposes.

Nyarlathotep's name is never mentioned in cult literature. Rather, their patron is consistently referred to as the "Haunter of the Dark." The name Nyarlathotep is only revealed to higher-level initiates and spoken of in the most holy of ceremonies.

Dark Mirror Magic

The spells described below require a "dark mirror"—a mirror with a light-absorbing substance as its background—to be used successfully. This creates an inky background conducive to putting the user into a state of trance. The mirror must never be exposed to the sun or touched by anyone but the caster, lest it become useless.

Each of these spells is not formally taught. Instead, the Starry Wisdom worshiper engages in daily meditation before the mirror until the spell comes to them. Once a month, make the specified percentile roll and, if successful, the spell is learned.

Gaze of the Dark Eye (POWx1%): Costs a variable number of magic points (use the Create Gate table to determine the cost for the distance), fifteen minutes' meditation, and 1D3 Sanity. After casting, the user may view a specific location. The caster must succeed on a Luck roll to successfully view the place; if failed, or if a 96-00 is rolled, the caster's subconscious takes over, showing the vision that the caster most (or least) wants to see.

Due to the Haunter's influence, the image appears as the hideous "sight that is not sight," even if the caster does not possess that power. Most casters will wait until the location is in darkness to cast this, maximizing effectiveness. The vision is based on the caster's tie to the mirror; another person viewing the mirror sees only distorted reflections.

Knowledge and Conversation of the Luminous Void (*Contact Deity/Nyarlathotep*) (POWx1%): Opens communication with Nyarlathotep, in his form of the Haunter of the Dark. For each attempt, the caster must sacrifice 1 POW and 1D6 Sanity points. The chance of success equals half of POWx5 (round up). On second and later tries, sacrifice the same amount and continue to decrease the Luck threshold to reflect the changes in POW, but halve the Luck roll only on the first cast. The caster should meditate on the mirror for three days and nights while fasting. The Haunter manifests and provides a mystical insight (real or false), then departs. For a solitary worshiper, this spell takes effect only once and is seen as an initiation.

Call of the Dark Mirror (POWx1/2%): Costs 15 MP, 1D8 Sanity, and a night of meditation before the mirror. The caster must first use *Gaze of the Dark Eye* to view the subject. The accuracy of this is important—if that spell fails and the caster merely sees the reflection of their subconscious in the mirror, they will unwittingly target the spell against themselves.

Once the victim is viewed, the caster spends the magic points and initiates a POW vs. POW struggle. If successful, the victim falls into a coma, losing 1 CON per month until dead. The spell may only be broken by touching the person with an Elder Sign or breaking the mirror used to cast it.

Starry Wisdom Magic and Powers

Most of the group's rituals were created from Egyptian sources along with the imagination of Enoch Bowen himself, and therefore have no roots in any Mythos text. Bowen did collect a sizable library of Mythos tomes in his quest for power, but most of these were left in the Providence church after the sect fled.

Solitary initiates may be masters of dark mirror magic (see box), and Summon/Bind Hunting Horror is a perennial favorite among the traditional spells. The lack of a reliable Contact Deity/Nyarlathep spell has been an ongoing difficulty for most followers of the faith. In fact, the few times Starry Wisdom members have found and cast the spell, Nyarlathep has not manifested.

Many former members of Bowen's Starry Wisdom church are permanently gifted with the Haunter's "sight that is not sight," an inversion of darkness and light through the person's optic nerves. As a result, most cultists with this ability only come out at night, spending most of their time in absolute darkness or shadowy conditions. In addition, if Nyarlathep manifests himself anywhere within several miles, the viewer may view that location at will—or often, even if they would rather not.

Starry Wisdom Initiate, Age 24

STR 9	CON 11	SIZ 12	DEX 13	APP 13
POW 15	INT 16	EDU 13	HP 12	SAN 0

Damage Bonus: none

Weapons: Fist/punch 50%, 1d3+DB

12-gauge shotgun 30%, 4d6/2d6/1d6

Skills: Cthulhu Mythos 5%, Hypnosis 45%, Listen 35%
Occult 45%.

Spells: Gaze of the Dark Eye.

Raleigh Minkin

Born Donald Wurlitzer, Minkin was a revivalist minister who came to Providence to preach against sin and corruption. His popularity came from the personal touch he gave to his listeners. If your father fought against the Brits in 1812, his uncle served under Jackson at New Orleans. A nephew dying of tuberculosis brought tears and reminiscences of his own son, dead from the same disease. Whether addressing city slickers or backwoods farmers, Minkin told stories of growing up in the same conditions. Essentially a good man, most of the money his lies earned was quietly given to charity. His thrill, the basis for his existence, was getting away with the lie itself. After a decade of dusty stages and long nights filled with hymns and deception, Minkin had nearly forgotten his own name.

While in Providence, a worried mother informed him of her son's curious dealings with the Starry Wisdom Church. Minkin took it upon himself to storm into a Starry Wisdom meeting, calling upon Satan to show himself. According to the cult's folklore, Bowen smiled and said, "He's upstairs." The minister charged up where he met the Haunter.

Minkin remained in Providence, performing menial chores around the church in return for bread and board. Bowen had little respect for the man but knew he had some potential, so he gave

Minkin many privileges, including participation in most séances with the Trapezohedron. Minkin rapidly developed the "sight that is not sight" to the degree that the merest contact with sunlight brought him pain.

After the raids of 1877, Minkin fled, and wandered across the country, taking minor con jobs now and again, remaining in the shadows. One day in Chicago, a police officer found him sleeping in an alley and dragged him out into the light. Screaming from pain, Minkin attacked the officer, savagely cutting him with a piece of a broken picture frame. Had not bystanders subdued Minkin, the officer would have been killed. After a quick hearing, was committed to Chicago State Hospital.

His real name long forgotten, Minkin remains in indefinite custody. His own identity now lost, he mostly mimics those who guard him or performs obscene parodies of his guards' favorite radio shows. For the most part, Minkin sits in his cell, hums the latest songs, and thinks of nothing. This may change if he ever remembers his past or meets someone who encourages him to become again what he once was.

Raleigh Minkin

Starry Wisdom Oracle, Age 113 (appears 60)

STR 7	CON 17	SIZ 9	DEX 11	APP 5
POW 22	INT 17	EDU 21	HP 8	SAN 0

Damage Bonus: +1d4

Weapons: Kick 45%, 1d6-1d4+DB

Skills: Cthulhu Mythos 15%, Fast Talk 67%, Hypnosis 65%, Occult 35%, Persuade 65%, Psychology 75%, Unconsciously Mimic Those Nearby 66%.

Spells: Call of the Dark Mirror, Gaze of the Dark Eye, Knowledge and Conversation of the Luminous Void, Summon / Bind Hunting Horror.

Minkin doesn't remember he has these spells, but he might someday. If he does, he is especially dangerous – he has advanced enough with the Starry Wisdom magic that he can cast dark mirror spells using any reflective surface, including the water in his cell washbasin.

Special: Raleigh takes 1 HP of damage for every round he is in direct sunlight. The damage resembles that from a nasty sunburn.

Donnie Lux

Donnie ran away from his rural Arizona home before he was fifteen years old. One of his teachers had recognized his astonishing talents with paint and clay, and encouraged him to develop his talents, but his father took away his art tools, saying he needed a farmhand more than a dreamer. Feeling the need to express himself, Lux left home and began drifting across the West.

Eventually Lux found his way to San Francisco, the shining gateway of the California coast. Here he worked odd jobs, slept in alleys, and, when he had the money for supplies, created artwork he then sold on street corners. He became obsessed with the idea that if he could reach more people and share his artistic vision with them, he would never want for anything again.

Spurning the traditional religious paths of his youth, Lux turned to two spiritual gurus. One headed a cult of megalopolisomancy, a spiritual belief system based on the magical currents supposed

Books of the Starry Wisdom

History of the Starry Wisdom: Raymond Flagg's attempt to tell the history of the sect, from a biased insider's perspective. The book is accurate on many details of the Starry Wisdom Church's times and its worship of "the Haunter of the Dark", but Flagg omits many details in which characters might be interested (any reference to sacrifice or Nyarlathotep). The only known copy was hidden inside the Starry Wisdom church in Providence. *English; Sanity loss 1D3; Cthulhu Mythos +3 percentiles; Occult skill check; 5 weeks to study and comprehend/10 hours to skim. No spells.*

The Pathway to the Darkness: A work by Bowen, written for his own use, that describes the cult's doctrines, rituals, and innermost practices. This would be an invaluable treasure for the cult, if any member recognized its significance. The only copy was taken from the church by Robert Blake. *Aklo; Sanity loss 1D4/2D4; Cthulhu Mythos +6 percentiles; Occult and History skill check; 8 weeks to study and comprehend/16 hours to skim. Spells: Contact Deity/Nyarlathotep (Haunter of the Dark), Summon/Bind Hunting Horror.*

Notes from the Book of Eibon: A work compiled by Raymond Flagg from the cult's Latin copy of Eibon's tome, dealing with the darker aspects of Eibon's lore. Oddly, the book's spell is contained only in the smallest fragments in the original Latin; Flagg's work in reconstructing it is nothing short of astounding. *English; Sanity loss 1D4/2D4; Cthulhu Mythos +5 percentiles; 6 weeks to study and comprehend/12 hours to skim. Spells: Summon/Bind Hunting Horror.*

The Occult in New England: Book from the Starry Wisdom Church. Contains no useful Mythos information, but three weeks of reading does provide a skill check in Occult.

Description of Excavations at Tell-Basta (1833) and Sacrificial Cults in Ptolemaic Egypt (1839): These books by Enoch Bowen may be found if investigators research his life. Both may be assumed to be identical. Neither contains anything of Mythos interest, but reading each for five weeks grants a skill check in Archaeology. A more interesting work published privately while Bowen was in Egypt, *Excavations of Early Dynastic Egypt (1842)*, is described in the scenario book *Unseen Masters*.

running through the hearts of cities. The other was a mysterious man who never gave his name. This man, an itinerant Starry Wisdom priest, taught him the doctrines of the dark mirror and the Haunter before moving on. Weaving these two sets of teachings with his own vision, Lux became a man driven to share his visions with the world, and on a massive scale. Eventually his work paid off, and he was awarded a scholarship to one of Europe's finest design schools.

Today, Lux is one of the most sought-after architects in the world. His buildings echo those of men such as Raymond Hood, William Van Allen and Ivo Chander, but are noted for their use of Egyptian, Maya, and Greek elements, and a notable preponderance of reflective surfaces. Wherever Lux goes he is acclaimed, lauded, and invited to all of the best parties. With him come an entourage of students, businessmen, and hangers-on, the most promising of which have been brought into the knowledge of the Haunter.

Lux's long-term plan is to find a structure that somehow replicates the nature of the Shining Trapezohedron on a vast scale. Lux believes that his visions will appear alongside those of the Haunter when he does so. As he has shared this plan with few, no one has pointed out its audacity yet. At any rate, it is unlikely he would listen.

Donnie Lux

Inspired Architect, Age 35

STR 12	CON 14	SIZ 13	DEX 17	APP 18
POW 20	INT 18	EDU 16	HP 14	SAN 0

Damage Bonus: +1D4

Weapons: Bodyguards and aides

Skills: Archaeology 35%, Art (Architecture) 75%, Charm Funders 77%, Credit Rating 84%, Cthulhu Mythos 7%, Occult 20%.

Spells: Call of the Dark Mirror, Gaze of the Dark Eye, Knowledge and Conversation of the Luminous Void.

Special: Donnie Lux is always accompanied by his people. No matter what, he will always be dressed more stylishly than the investigators.

Sources: "The Haunter of the Dark" by Lovecraft; "The Faceless God" and the "Crypt of Nephren-Ka" by Robert Bloch for the Nephren-Ka background; "Documents in the Case of Elizabeth Akeley" for the Townshend branch; *Strange Eons*, by Robert Bloch, for the near future version; and the Call of Cthulhu works *Cthulhu by Gaslight*, *Keeper's Companion*, *Unseen Masters*, and "The Crystal of Chaos" from *Different Worlds* 34. Donnie Lux is partially inspired by Leiber's *Our Lady of Darkness*. Whipple Phillips was Lovecraft's grandfather, and material on him that cannot be verified through conventional sources has been invented.



A regular column for

Cthulhu Keeper

Corner

The Cthulhu Matrix

By Frank Heller

Translated by Hannes Kaiser

Does the following adventure sound familiar to you? A friend or acquaintance or employer asks the investigators to search for a missing person. After some initial inquiries at the missing person's residence (which inevitably will include a visit to the local library where first clues can be obtained), the investigators pay a visit to the place or area where the person has last been seen.

Here they start asking questions at the police station, at the local newspaper and at all the available archives, talking to all the relevant people they encounter. The keeper provides his players with a new handout or two at each location. From the gathered clues, investigators are able to put together a somewhat consistent overall picture. Eventually, characters finally arrive at the scene of the showdown, where they inevitably face a group of evil cultists of some Mythos deity just about to go through a vile sacrificial ceremony in which the missing person in question plays the crucial part. Of course, they are able to interrupt the sacrifice and save the missing person's life at the very last moment.

Well? Of course you know this adventure! You have probably conducted or played it a dozen times, with many nuances perhaps, but, in fact, it is always the same adventure. All right, one time the Mythos deity was Shub-Niggurath, the next time it was Nyarlathotep. The missing person was at one time a colleague, at other times a friend from university or from school. Sometimes the victim had not disappeared, but had been found dead – his dead body provided the reason for the investigation. But this last case is only a slight variation of the basic theme, and the rest of the plot is highly predictable: You won't be looking for the missing person; instead, you investigate his last steps which inevitably lead the back to the showdown with the cultists who – what an amazing coincidence – are just about to undergo their sinister ceremonies. And of course, the location for each adventure tends to be different each time, but whether the town was called Ashbury, Mapleton or Greenville, you would always stumble across the obligatory little police station, the small library, the local newspaper and a number of locals waiting to be interrogated by you. The characters' names keep changing, but to be honest, you have to admit that it was basically always the same plot, the same scenario.

The more gifted the keeper, the better he is able to make his players forget that they are playing the same adventure over and over again – by changing the location for the showdown, e.g. once in a cave, another time in the ancient ruins of a castle, next time in a deep wood. But it remains the place where the cultists eventually

meet to carry out their unholy ceremonies.

Sometimes this adventure has some extra spices. Keepers who use *Dreamlands* settings, don't want to miss out on the occasional excursion to the *Dreamlands*. So, simply add to the above scheme a pre-finale bit set in the *Dreamlands*. Maybe the *Dreamlands* variation provides a showdown setting that doesn't simply place the whole finale in the above-mentioned wood, cave or ruin, but moves it to the *Dreamlands*. And so the keeper is given the opportunity to snatch his *Dreamlands* monster compendium and add a few extra encounters, just to give his players the impression that this week's adventure varies from last week's adventure. Instead of cultists, it is Gugs that the characters encounter.

The One Adventure

As if there was an unwritten law, at an amazing number of Cthulhu games all over the world, the *One Adventure* is celebrated again and again – an adventure based on the aforementioned scheme. The Cthulhu Matrix – that's what I call it: A format according to which an incredible amount of adventures are constructed, as though there were some kind of mathematical formula providing the form of the adventure. And by means of variations – monsters, places, names – this familiar structure is being hidden. Yet, it appears again and again in adventures with a certain stubborn regularity.

This familiar Matrix eventually becomes difficult for keepers who write their own adventures to escape. But it is not limited to homebrewed adventures. Since the very beginnings of the game, the Cthulhu Matrix can be detected in all manner of professional publications. Just take the pains, if you like, to scan the more than two hundred released adventures for the Cthulhu Matrix. The result is quite astonishing. There are more than a *dozen* Matrix adventures among them.

Why is it that keepers and authors like to repeat this pattern? One simple reason is that so many adventures of that kind already exist, thus making you believe this is the only plot for a good adventure. In addition, the Matrix has the great advantage that it provides you with a useful dramatic development leading up to a climax: A mysterious beginning, investigating and role-playing,

and a grand finale. What is often overlooked is that this plot can only succeed a few times. Soon it grows boring and tedious, when the players more or less know what to expect. A third thing, which also might play an important role, is the fact that the first *Call of Cthulhu* adventure you play is often deemed the “best.” Who wouldn’t like to think back to that first session when you entered the world of H.P. Lovecraft? You probably have fond memories of your first Cthulhu adventure. So, if the first adventure is very likely to be regarded great, it only stands to reason that keepers should imitate it. And if this first adventure happened to be written on the basis of the Cthulhu Matrix, chances are that the keeper will return to the Matrix. And he won’t even notice it! Or maybe he doesn’t care. Maybe an enjoyable thing about the Matrix is that it allows you to celebrate a certain routine. (By the way, it is much easier for keepers and much less work if they go through the same adventure every week. Just take the odd name out of the telephone directory, put in some new monsters and off you go!) Although I wouldn’t say that you can’t have fun that way for quite some time, especially the first couple of games when, as already mentioned, you won’t even realize that you are about to replay the same adventure all over again. But as time goes by, it becomes routine – and then you are stuck inside the Matrix.

Ingredients for a successful Adventure

How is it possible that many Matrix adventures are so monotonous and so dissatisfying, while others are enjoyable or great? It is obvious that a Matrix adventure can be turned into a thrilling experience just like any other. This is especially true for creative adventures with plenty of interesting little ideas and twists covering the underlying Matrix. But if you only stick to the basic frame and don’t manage to add an original and compelling plot to it, you will quickly be in danger of delivering a boring and predictable Cthulhu Matrix adventure. But what you want is to successfully free the adventure from the enslaving chains of the Matrix structure, thus using the Cthulhu Matrix to unleash your narrative potential.

It’s quite obvious that the quality of an adventure depends on many factors. The Cthulhu Matrix influences some, but not all of these factors. If beyond the standardised Matrix structure all the other relevant factors are brilliant and innovative, the adventure can still be exciting. It, however, is rather difficult to integrate all the other aspects in a satisfying way. And anyway, I don’t want to write this to provide you with a manual on how to create a good adventure *using* the Matrix. I rather think that keepers should aspire to do *without* the Matrix. Or, learn to rarely use it so that this ever-repeating scheme doesn’t completely lose its charm and become a mundane routine. If all of the other factors that constitute a good adventure can be blended into a scenario, then the result will be much, much better than if you had adhered to the Cthulhu Matrix in the first place.

A very important factor is the *movement of the plot*. If the plot remains linear and predictable (as is the case for the Cthulhu Matrix) players can become frustrated. You might compare this to the tenth sequel of a successful film where the plot has become so predictable that it boring.

Another crucial factor for a quality adventure is the *originality of ideas*. Again many Matrix adventures don’t provide the space for that. The linearity of the plot often limits the integration of new ideas, except on a very small scale. With no sudden twists in the plot, no great surprises are possible – otherwise it wouldn’t be a Matrix adventure.

It’s also important to have a real *dramatic development* in your adventure. This might be seen as one of the little advantages of the Cthulhu Matrix, because here the dramatic development basically exists. Unfortunately, it is anything but exciting to have the same dramatic development repeated in each session. Such repetition quickly kills the excitement of an adventure.

Another vital factor for a satisfying adventure is *consistency and probability*. Whatever the characters encounter must sound likely and be consistent with logic. An adventure needs to be carefully constructed, it mustn’t contain major logical errors, and it must not try to explain away problematic aspects with banal or absurd explanations. In brief, an adventure wants to be taken seriously. An example can be found in a Cthulhu adventure recently released on the Internet (very well-presented, by the way). In this case, an important handout had been lying around in the attic of a museum, seemingly neglected and undiscovered for decades. The players, however, can discover on their first visit with a simple skill roll. An inconsistency like this couldn’t readily be explained to a critical group of players. Maybe the adventure is well done, the players are motivated, the mood is good – and then something like this happens. Well, possibly the entire adventure becomes flawed by the logical inconsistency and that the players won’t be able to take it seriously any longer. And it would have been so easy to correct with a little bit of thinking about a more likely explanation, without the need to rewrite the whole adventure. Especially when the layout and the careful research of an adventure are very satisfying, a thing like that is a real pity.

The next factor focuses in a similar direction: *consistency with regard to Mythos references*. If an adventure is well structured, but the author includes incompatible elements that by no means can be reconciled with the Mythos, a problem can arise. This might not prove a great hindrance to beginners, but experienced players will not be able to take that adventure seriously any longer, and probably not enjoy it. I have one example in mind where a group of cultists manage to call the Great Cthulhu virtually in their village pond! How the old fellow got from R’lyeh in the Pacific Ocean to this place remains a mystery. Probably the home of one of the investigator’s neighbours is going to explode next after some neighbours (hobby cultists) have conjured up Cthulhu in their sink? With H.P. Lovecraft’s *Call of Cthulhu*, it is not so problematic as with other role-playing systems where you can easily find yourself in conflict with the official rules and descriptions even when you’re just adding little ideas of your own. There is a purpose behind it, in that the Mythos as a whole hasn’t been fixed in detail, thus leaving space for the keeper’s imagination while

maintaining the eerie atmosphere. Some aspects, however, should be treated with the necessary respect to detail, if the adventure wants to be taken seriously.


Nobody will doubt that the *creation of atmosphere* is a particularly important factor for a good Cthulhu adventure. *Call of Cthulhu* has the advantage that a huge amount of research already has been done for the game. Good research is an important factor that improves both the quality of an adventure and the joy of playing it. And yet, we shouldn't forget that good research alone is never enough to make a successful adventure. Other factors must be included. Original ideas, a compelling plot, and an interesting dramatic development are by far more important than a big idea and painstaking research. Doing research is basically a matter of effort, turning it into a brilliant adventure is an art.

There are surely more factors involved that, put together, add to a successful story. Even professional authors don't always produce first-rate material. As a result we get excellent, good, and not-so-good adventures. Since all these factors play a role to a certain extent, it is not automatically true that Matrix adventures are bad whereas all the rest are good. As already mentioned, if everything else is fine in a Matrix adventure, it is always more enjoyable than a scenario that doesn't follow this pattern but is otherwise uninspiring and boring.

Your players will
be grateful!

I cannot emphasize enough that an otherwise well-done Matrix adventure becomes even better if the author succeeds in leaving the Cthulhu Matrix frame behind. And it also remains true that an author following the Cthulhu Matrix pattern has much more difficulty at including anything truly original. Hence, an adventure automatically gains much by not following the Cthulhu Matrix, because authors are forced to generate their own ideas about an adventure beginning and the plot development of the adventure. Thinking it through willy-nilly lets keepers come up with original ideas. Keepers following this approach are basically forced to be original. In any case, the adventure can only improve by doing this.

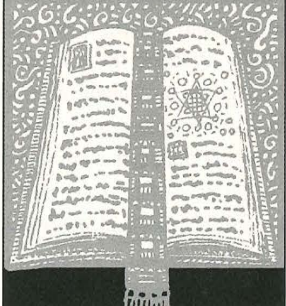
Everyone of us should be brave, now that the Cthulhu Matrix has been detected, and create completely new scenarios, come up with new ideas, different beginnings, and unexpected twists and turns of plot. And, it doesn't always have to be a cult that is behind the "evil." Let your brilliant imagination, your new ideas bring forth a new villain. Both you and your players will be grateful!



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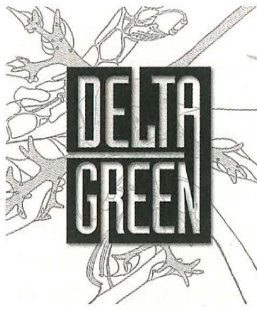
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Regular observations from the world of

Directives from A Cell

By A. Scott Glancy

Directive 101: New Foreign Intelligence Agency Threats to Delta Green

Greetings agents, and welcome to the first of what will hopefully be many articles here at *Worlds of Cthulhu* concerning the sub-genre of *Call of Cthulhu* role-playing known as Delta Green. For those of you new to Delta Green, this is a sub-genre of modern *Call of Cthulhu* combining elements of modern conspiracy theory, cloak and dagger espionage and international intrigue with that perennial favorite, the supernatural horrors of the Cthulhu Mythos. In this world, Delta Green is a conspiracy, a secret society if you will, made up of federal law enforcement and intelligence agents who have dedicated themselves to fighting the threat of the Cthulhu Mythos. Delta Green's origins begin with the Federal raid on Innsmouth MA, but their glory days were WWII, when they led the fight against the Nazi's occult super weapon program, the Karotechia.

In the first *Delta Green* source book we came up with a number of organizations for Delta Green to grapple with. Chief among these was Majestic-12, a rogue US intelligence agency dedicated to exploiting the technological secrets of the alien object that crashed in the desert outside Roswell NM in 1947. Majestic-12 doesn't care who gets hurt or who they have to make deals with to accomplish their goals. If Delta Green represents the America whose dedication and sacrifice saved the world from the horrors of fascism, Majestic-12 represents the cynical and ruthless America that recruited Axis scientists, Nazi intelligence officers and even war criminals to fight the Cold War.

Once *Delta Green* worked its way overseas, a number of European readers complained that *Delta Green* was too *America-centric* and that it was difficult for European players to access because it concentrated on US-style conspiracy theories and US law enforcement and intelligence agencies. So when we published our second source book, *Delta Green: Countdown*, we took great pains to expand the DG universe to include foreign agencies and locals. We included two new Mythos-aware (or tainted) agencies left over from the battle against the Nazi Karotechia during WWII. From Great Britain came Paranormal Intelligence Section for Counter-intelligence Espionage and Sabotage, or PISCES, dedicated to exploiting psychic ability for covert operations. In the USSR there was GRU SV8, which fought not only the Nazis Karotechia, but also destroyed Stalin's attempts to harness the Cthulhu Mythos to win the Cold War.

Delta Green: Countdown, however, did not silence the folks who wanted more Delta Greens around the world, if anything it encouraged them. If Britain and Russia get Mythos-aware agencies, then what about France? What about China? Weren't they both major

power victors in World War II? And what about modern Germany? Or Japan? Didn't they have Mythos-aware agencies during the war?

The thing to keep in mind about *Call of Cthulhu* and *Delta Green* is that these games are about a secret world of supernatural horror hidden behind the patina of normality we all commonly accept. If we continue to expand the cannon of *Delta Green* to include more and more government agencies that are Mythos-aware then that secret world is going to have an awfully hard time staying secret. The more government agencies that know, the more likely it is that some government is going to decide that the Mythos is no more dangerous than plutonium and try and add Azathoth to their list of weapons of mass destruction. And besides, if you start adding government anti-Mythos agencies where do you stop? Does Belgium get an anti-Mythos agency? What about Brazil? Or Belize? Or Burundi? And if every nation on earth has a cult-busting agency then how the heck do the cults survive long enough to make an interesting role playing game threat?

The nation that comes up most often when new Mythos-aware agencies are discussed is France. There are a couple of good reasons for this. For one thing, France is one of the premier powers of the European Union, with a high tech military, its own nuclear deterrent and the lion's share of the European Space Agency's assets. Secondly, France has one of the creepiest, scariest, most intrusive, and lethal intelligence communities this side of the Iron Curtain. Their spooks have performed operations that would shock even those who've grown jaded by the CIA's crimes and misdemeanors. France's spy agencies have powers and authority that are nebulous and ill defined and they routinely poach on each others' jurisdictional turf, not to mention attempting to covertly influence politics in France by supporting one politician or party over another. Furthermore, France runs its diplomatic relations with a slipperiness that borders on the frictionless, playing fast and loose with the concepts of 'ally' and 'enemy'. But the most important reason is that Delta Green was translated into French, so we had more than a few French readers out there and they did not want to be left out of the DG universe.

Originally, we at Pagan Publishing envisioned no Mythos-tainted or Mythos-fighting government agencies in France. The rational behind this was that since the agencies of the world of DG universe were forged in the furnace of WWII, mostly as a reaction to the Nazis' attempt to use the Cthulhu Mythos as a weapon of war, only the USA, the UK and the USSR would have emerged from the conflict aware

of the existence of the Cthulhu Mythos. While the French, through the Resistance, would have helped agencies like PISCES and Delta Green fight the Karotechia, it is unlikely that the Americans or the Brits would have shared what they knew of the supernatural with the Resistance, especially give the possibility of their capture by the Gestapo. Another problem with using the French Resistance as the seed for a Mythos-aware spy agency is that the Resistance was principally composed of communists and socialists. An ugly truth about US post war policy in Europe is that we were more comfortable with ex-fascists in power than communists who had helped us defeat them. American influence made sure that the men and women who fought in the Resistance did not end up in France's police and intelligence services, although a lot of former Vichy officers did.

The problem with using Vichy as a jumping off point for a French agency's connection to the Mythos is that the Nazis weren't about to share their Mythos knowledge with people they considered conquered servants. Furthermore, the Nazi Karotechia recruited, shanghaied or executed every genuine (and fraudulent) expert in the occult sciences they could lay their hands on throughout the occupied territories of Europe. That meant that at the end of WWII, there would have been a shortage of experts on the occult and the Cthulhu Mythos across the continent. Those who were left behind after the Nazis had scoured the country were likely to be isolated cultists or sorcerers with their own agendas.

However, it seems a shame to leave France out of the DG universe, so instead I have been toying with the idea of introducing a French agency into the world of Delta Green, but one that has had no contact with the Mythos. This agency would instead come into contact with agencies like Delta Green, Majestic 12, GRU SV8, and PISCES, and thus begin the process of becoming Mythos-aware. Players working for this agency would be in a position to shape the agency's Mythos policy from the ground up, unlike those other agencies where policy has been set by decades of experience with the Mythos.

For the time being let's refer to this undefined agency as Section Disparu, or 'the Section That Does Not Exist'. Section Disparu makes a good working name since not only does this imply a super secret agency, but since we haven't written it yet, it genuinely does not exist.

When we start designing Section Disparu we are going to have to figure out its scope, mission, history and theme. Scope defines the agency's budget, manpower, jurisdiction, official sanction and chain of command. Mission defines how the agency will come into contact with the DG universe, how it will relate to the Cthulhu Mythos. History defines how it came into being and how its scope and mission changed since it was founded. Finally, theme defines what concepts we hope to represent through the use of this fictional agency. Delta Green's theme is the burden of responsibility that comes with knowledge. Majestic-12's theme is the corruption of power. PISCES' theme is paranoia. The theme of GRU SV8 is fading hope. So what is the theme of Section Disparu? After all, if we develop a theme, then matters of scope, mission and history will fall into place.

Well, to Americans, the French represent a bunch of ingrates who hate us all the more for having saved their bacon twice in the last century. The last time they gave us anything it was a two-decade long war in their former colony of Indochina. They've treated our tourists like crap for the last sixty years. They feel that their culture so threatened by the crass American materialism of things like

Disneyworld, Coca Cola and McDonalds, that they go to great lengths to purge what few English words have worked their way into their vernacular. Despite wielding an influence in NATO completely out of proportion to their commitment, current French policy seems to be to undermine and eventually dismantle NATO. It looks to America as if the French plan on replacing the US-dominated NATO with a unified European Union military that they plan to dominate. Perhaps most frightening, France has been leading the effort to lift the post-Tiananmen Square arms ban against China so that the People's Liberation Army can be equipped with Western European arms and thus provide a counterbalance to the hegemony of US military power. Maybe Section Disparu represents the American fear that France hates us, fears us, resents us and covets our power?

With that as the theme Section Disparu's mission is going to be pursuing a policy of undermining America's global hegemony. Now that may sound pretty sinister, but let's look at it from France's point of view. The Soviet/Communist threat is gone and yet America is still throwing its weight around Europe, trying to dominate the continent through NATO. From the French point of view they are liberating Europe from American domination. Of course, the resulting European Union dominated by France is just a side benefit... much the same way that access to all that oil was just a side benefit of freeing the Iraqi people from Saddam's tyranny.

There have always been elements in France that resented the domination of the Post-war western world by the UK and the USA. This anti-Anglo sentiment had to take a back seat to the very real threat of communism fueled by anti-colonialism. As the Cold War progressed and France's faltering colonial empire was eroded, France discovered that the Anglo-American partnership could not, or would not, protect France's empire. Many French politicians began to wonder why they were part of an alliance that was not protecting their interests. While the colonial empire could not be saved, France has developed new ideas about empire beyond the 19th century model. Section Disparu has been created just as the communist regimes of Eastern Europe and the USSR were collapsing. Officially, it was supposed to handle the covert action needs of the French Republic in the post-Cold War era. Unofficially, Section Disparu would help France build its new empire.

Section Disparu's natural enemies will be Majestic-12 and PISCES, but not for the same reasons as Delta Green. Section Disparu will come into conflict with these agencies because they have technologies and information that Section Disparu wants, not because they have fallen under the influence of the Mythos. Section Disparu may not even notice Delta Green; after all, Majestic-12 is the one with the official status, and secret budget and the access to all corners of the intelligence community and the Pentagon, and Delta Green is little more than a renegade conspiracy. As part of its agenda to end America's global hegemony, Section Disparu will attempt to steal Majestic-12's technological secrets, including the gene altering secrets of the 'Cookbook', the mind controlling technologies of the Outlook Group and the time travel and gate technologies of Project Rainbow. Once they find out about The Accord, Section Disparu might try to woo the Greys away from their exclusive relationship with Majestic-12. They would also be interested in acquiring any knowledge PISCES has about applied psychic ability, and once they start poking around PISCES, it won't be long before they want to know about the Mythos.

With the current state of world politics, it might be possible for Section Disparu and GRU SV8 to become allies. After all, France and Russia often find common cause in opposing the US on foreign policy issues. Perhaps Section Disparu can offer the Russians a better deal than Delta Green can? Once Section Disparu has access to all the Mythos knowledge of GRU SV8, the big question is whether they will use that knowledge to fight the Mythos, or use it to fight their fellow humans?

With theme, mission, and history covered, let's take a look at the scope of Section Disparu. Section Disparu is going to need the jurisdiction to operate both inside and outside Metropolitan France. It would have the authority to tap the assets of the other agencies. Their agents would have the power of arrest and detention, but also the authority to carry out covert operations at home and abroad, including assassinations. Their budget would be comparable to other first world intelligence agencies, with the added benefit that it is subsidized by conducting illegal arms sales and illegal technology transfers, much of which Section Disparu has stolen from all corners of the globe, from both from the public and private sectors. This gives Section Disparu the feel of being the intelligence community's version of 'privateers', mixing free enterprise with espionage.

No doubt I've hacked off some of our French readers with these musings about France's possible contribution to the world of Delta Green, but come on! The Fungi from Yuggoth have the directors of Majestic-12 corrupted, compromised, deceived or enthralled to the point where they are selling out humanity. Insects from Shaggai have cerebrally infested the directors of PISCES and have hijacked the agency to serve their alien agenda! At least humans are running Section Disparu for the benefit of humans, and they're not even cultists for that matter. They're just good old-fashioned sneaky bastards looking to get ahead of the competition and not too picky about how they do it. If Section Disparu is going to undermine and damage Majestic-12 or PISCES, can you be sure they are the bad guys?

dennis detwiller's

DENIED TO THE ENEMY

AS WWII rages, the SS Karatechia calls upon the obscene powers of the Cthulhu Mythos to ensure a Nazi victory. Even as **Delta Green** moves against the Nazis' plans, an epc-old alien conspiracy threatens the future of all life on earth. These are the glory days of Delta Green. It is also humanity's darkest hour...







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A regular column for

The Twenty Sides of Terror

By Mike Mearls

In 2002, Wizards of the Coast published a d20 edition of the *Call of Cthulhu* RPG. Some rejoiced, others claimed blasphemy. Regardless of how you feel about the adaptation, d20 fans heralded *Call of Cthulhu* as one of the best games written for the d20 engine to date. Even two years on, it still holds up as an excellent design. Furthermore, its compatibility with other d20 games allows fantasy GMs to send paladins, dwarves, and wizards against shoggoths, deep ones, and other terrors of a Lovecraftian bent. HPL's legacy in gaming form has reached a whole new generation of role-players.

This column delves into the *d20 Cthulhu* rules and presents new takes on old subjects, systems you can use in your game, and creatures, NPCs, and artifacts useful in any game. This month's installment looks at some alternate character rules and new rules for combat that more closely model the skill-based combat system of BRP *Call of Cthulhu*. Finally, it closes with some notes on limiting character hit points as a method to emphasize the futility of using combat against bizarre creatures.

Anatomy of a Victim: Investigators in d20 Cthulhu

One of the criticisms leveled at *d20 Cthulhu* is the emphasis on combat amongst its character options. These optional rules present a variety of new choices for players. They outline several new investigator options that model different backgrounds that a PC might come from, such as academia, law enforcement, or the criminal underworld. Rather than tie your skill selections to your career, this system makes you saves, base attack bonus, and a few other abilities the key traits tied to it.

These new backgrounds are presented as an alternative to, rather than a replacement for, the offensive and defensive options from the core book. You can continue to use them as normal. Skill selection, feats, and other aspects of character creation remain the same. If the options given here don't fit your character concept, you can use the default choices to create a character from the ground up.

Before continuing with this article, refer to table 1-8 from the *d20 Cthulhu* rule book. A saving throw that starts with a +0 at 1st level, such as progression 1 on table 1-8, is referred to as a bad save, while progression 2 and 3 show a good save, one that provides a +2 bonus at 1st level. This shorthand description is used throughout this article.

In addition, base attack progression is described in terms of level. For example, a character skilled in combat might have a base attack

equal to his level, while one poor in fighting could have an attack bonus equal to his level divided by 4, rounded down.

Each of these expanded professions also lists a hit die used to determine hit points and a base skill rank per level. Multiple a character's base skill ranks by 4 for a 1st level PC, modified by Intelligence as normal.

The Academic

You are involved in a profession that demands intense academic study, a level of expertise found only amongst members of your field, and research into esoteric lore. You might be a professor, an antiquarian, or a historian. This character option is a good choice for investigators who focus on lore, knowledge, and learning.

Base Attack: You are trained to handle a pen or a fawning graduate student, not a gun or knife. Your base attack bonus equals your level divided by 4, rounded down.

Good Saves: Will.

Bad Saves: Fortitude and Reflex.

Hit Die: d6.

Base Skill Ranks: 8.

Abilities: You are an expert in several academic fields. At 1st level, you have 8 ranks in two Knowledge skills of your choice. Your intense academic study and long years of graduate work have given you a much deeper level of knowledge than is normal for an inexperienced investigator. These ranks are in addition to the ranks you normally gain for your Intelligence and level. Your maximum ranks in the two Knowledge skills you choose equal your level + 7.

In addition, you gain a +2 bonus to all Research checks, as you are well acquainted with scouring libraries and old books for critical information.

The Criminal

Others may have gained an education through school, you earned yours on the streets. From running numbers to extortion or even hired killings, you have earned, and spent, a fortune through crime. This option is ideal for a bootlegger, a pickpocket, or even a private investigator with a shady past.

Base Attack: Your base attack equals your level times 2/3rds, rounded down. For ease of reference, this is the same progression as the rogue or bard class in fantasy games.

Good Saves: Fortitude, Reflex.

Bad Saves: Will.

Hit Die: d6.

Base Skill Ranks: 8.

Abilities: Your criminal past has taught you how to fend for yourself in a situation where violence is always an option. You gain

one bonus Weapon Proficiency feat. In addition, you gain a +2 competence bonus to any two of the following skills: Appraise, Bluff, Disable Device, Drive, Forgery, Hide, Innuendo, Intimidate, Move Silently, Open Lock, and Sleight of Hand. The skills you choose should be ones that had a direct role in your previous criminal endeavors.

The Investigator

Your job is to track down information in potentially difficult situations, whether it's evidence of an unfaithful husband's philandering or an ancient Aztec idol hidden in a crumbled, snake-infested ruin. You might be a private investigator or a detective on the police force, but this category also applies to archaeologists and researchers who brave jungle ruins, trackless deserts, and other hostile climes in the finest adventure movie tradition.

Base Attack: Your base attack bonus equals your level times 2/3rds, rounded down. You have learned to defend yourself, either as part of a police academy training program or a crash course in handling the bandits who are eager to steal the ancient relics you have unearthed.

Good Saves: Fortitude and Reflex.

Bad Saves: Will.

Hit Die: d8.

Base Skill Ranks: 6.

Abilities: You gain one bonus Weapon Proficiency feat. In addition, you gain a +4 competence bonus to all Gather Information and Research checks.

The Medium

You have always been sensitive to psychic forces. Perhaps this ability manifested at an early age, as you had an uncanny knack for catching glimpses of the future or picking up on what occupied someone's mind. This ability might also arise as a result of contact with otherworldly forces. Fortunetellers, psychics, and others are a good fit for this character type.

Base Attack: You can barely defend yourself in a fight. Your base attack bonus is your level divided by 4, rounded down.

Good Saves: Will.

Bad Saves: Fortitude and Reflex.

Hit Die: d4.

Base Skill Ranks: 8.

Abilities: You gain Sensitive as a bonus feat. You have a +2 bonus on all Psychic Focus and Sense Motive checks, as you have a natural talent for delving into others minds and relaxing your own to tap into your potential.

The Professional

You work in a field that demands rigorous training or knowledge of a specific field that few layman possess. In general, your profession requires additional years of schooling before you can begin practice. You might be a lawyer, a doctor, or an engineer.

Base Attack: You base attack equals your level divided by 2, rounded down. You can take care of yourself, but you have never received any formal training.

Good Saves: Will.

Bad Saves: Fortitude and Reflex.

Hit Die: d6.

Base Skill Ranks: 8.

Abilities: You are an expert in your chosen area of study. You gain 8 ranks in one skill of your choice at 1st level. This represents your focused study and many years of training in a specific area of knowledge. This can be any skill, as this character type represents a broad range of experts. You may have a maximum number of ranks in this skill equal to your level + 7.

In addition, you gain a +2 competence bonus to any two skills of your choice that tie to your area of expertise. For example, a lawyer may have a bonus to Diplomacy and Research to reflect his oratory skills and his ability to find and utilize obscure cases. The Keeper may rule that the skills you choose are inapplicable.

The Socialite

You are skilled in dealing with others. This might be the result of training or practice, or you might have grown up in a cushy, wealthy environment where social connections are worth everything. In either case, you excel in handling social issues. This is a good choice for dilettantes, salesmen, politicians, and similar characters.

Base Attack: You prefer words over fists. Your base attack equals your level divided by 4, rounded down.

Good Saves: Will.

Bad Saves: Fortitude, Reflex.

Hit Die: d6.

Base Skill Ranks: 8.

Abilities: You gain a +2 competence bonus to all Bluff, Diplomacy, Gather Information, and Intimidate checks.

You have contacts throughout the world. When in a city with an international airport, train depot, or some other transportation hub, you may make a Gather Information check with a DC assigned by the Keeper. This DC should be 10 in major cities, such as London or Paris, 20 for smaller ones, such as Panama City or Cairo, and 30 for cities in remote areas or where people from your home nation rarely travel. In addition, the Keeper can grant you up to a +10 bonus to this check if your character's background indicates you have traveled to the city before. On a successful check, you come into contact with a friendly NPC who has business or social ties to you. This NPC can provide you with a safe place to stay, such as an apartment or townhouse, and he or she can serve as a local guide and translator. This person is always friendly and loyal, but he refuses to risk his life for you or place himself in danger.

The Soldier

You have received extensive combat training and know how to handle a variety of weapons. You may have gained this knowledge through a formal training program, such as in the military, or you could learn it due to a tough upbringing in a lawless area or as a foot soldier for a criminal organization.

Base Attack: Your base attack bonus equals your level.

Good Saves: Fortitude.

Bad Saves: Reflex and Will.

Hit Die: d10.

Base Skill Ranks: 4.

Abilities: You gain two bonus Weapon Proficiency feats. In addition, you gain +1 hit point per level.

Alternate Combat Rules

Some Keepers prefer combat rules that allow the players to treat their attack abilities as skills. If a player chooses to devote ranks to the Rifle or Melee skill, her character is better in a fight. These optional rules allow you to change the d20 system to that it more closely resembles BRP.

Under these rules there are several separate combat skills for weapons. They are listed below along with the ability score that modifies their use:

Melee Weapons (Str): Unarmed attacks, swords, clubs, and grapples/wrestling.

Thrown Weapons (Dex): Grenades, knives, spears.

Pistols (Dex)

Rifles and Automatic Rifles (Dex)

Shotguns (Dex)

Submachine Guns (Dex)

All PCs have a base +0 attack bonus with these weapons. You can spend skill ranks in a skill if you have the appropriate Weapon Proficiency feat, with the standard cap in skill ranks equal to your level + 3. Your skill ranks equal the base attack bonus you have with that weapon. Use a PC's Melee Weapons skill to determine his grapple check bonus.

Since Weapon Proficiency is less useful under these rules (it shifts from removing a -4 penalty to merely giving you more things to spend skill ranks on), you should allow that feat to grant proficiency with two weapon groups rather than one.

A character's base attack bonus progression translates into bonus skill points that can be spent only on weapon skills. A character with a base attack bonus equal to his level gains 8 bonus skill ranks at 1st level and 2 bonus skill ranks each level after. A character with a base attack bonus equal to two-thirds of his level gains 2 bonus skill ranks at 1st level and 1 each level afterward.

A character with a base attack bonus that progresses any slower gains 1 bonus rank for weapon skills at each level that his attack bonus would increase. These characters may choose to ignore their combat skills. In this case, they can exchange their combat skill ranks for normal ranks as they gain them.

Alternate Hit Point Rules

Many Keepers may wonder if a d20 PC's steadily increasing hit points may ruin the tone of *Call of Cthulhu* at higher character levels. The short answer is that they do not. The damage save threshold rule, which states that a PC must make a DC 15 Fortitude save whenever he takes 10 or more points of damage from a single attack or die. This rule emphasizes the lethality of powerful creatures, explosives, and heavy weapons.

However, you may feel that this still fails to account for a PC who might survive dozens of knife stabs, pistol shots, and other hazards. In this case, you have two options to use in addition to the damage threshold rule.

In the first case, PCs gain bonus hit points at each level equal to their Constitution modifier. All characters lose their hit die for levels other than 1st. This rule severely limits a PC's potential hit point total and makes all attacks, not just heavy ones, while allowing higher level characters to still defeat lesser foes. This represents the middle ground between flat and increasing hit points.

In the second case, PCs have hit points equal to their Constitution scores. This value remains the same at each level, though feats such as Toughness can increase it.

Keep in mind that BRP characters have more options, such as the Dodge skill, to survive attacks. In *d20 Cthulhu* armor is rare and unwieldy. The best AC in the group might be around 14 or 15, a ridiculously easy target for a skilled shooter or a supernatural entity. D20 PCs may have more hit points at higher levels than their BRP counterparts, but they sustain hits more often. In the long run, the two systems even out. If it helps any, think of hit points as a sort of dodge pool. A character loses points from it to avoid suffering the full physical effects of an attack. The strike that drops him to zero was the blow that got through.

Continued from page 56.

Pronunciation of Proper Names

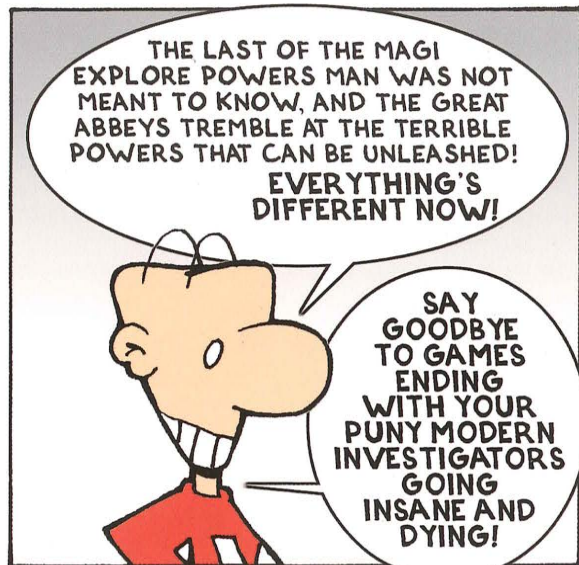
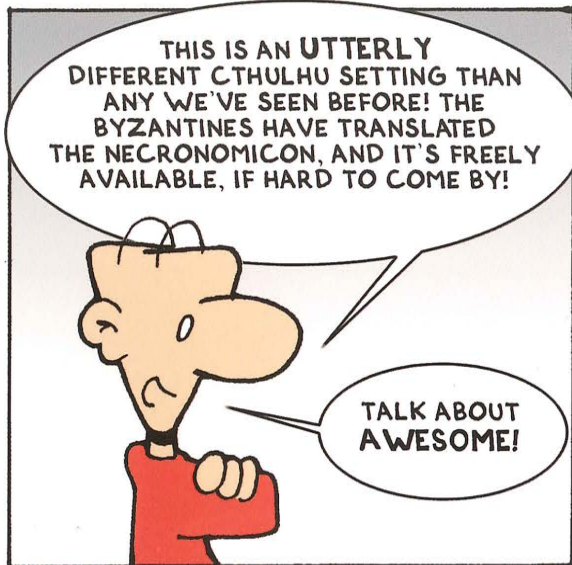
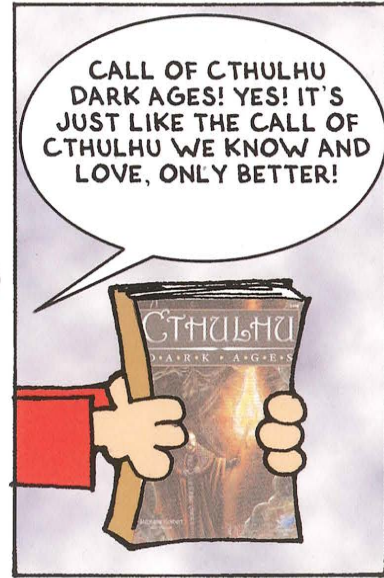
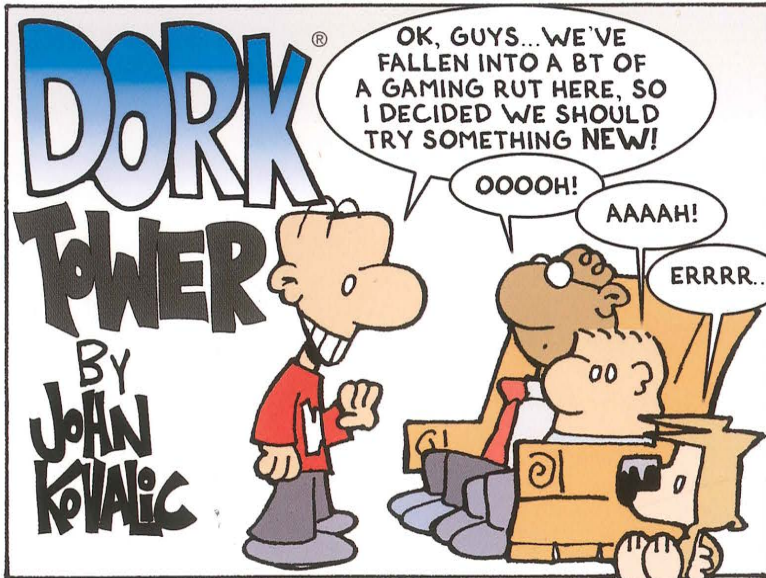
None of the names in the adventure look particularly difficult to pronounce, but if the English-speaking Keeper wishes to interject a sense of authenticity, he can use the following German pronunciations.

<i>NPC's name</i>	<i>Pronunciation</i>
<i>(in order of appearance in text)</i>	
Waldemar	VAHL-deh-mahr
Benjamin	BEN-yah-meen
Winfried	VINN-freed
Fabian	FAH-bee-ahn
Hagen	HAH-gen
Elsbeth	ELLS-bet
Hiltraud	HILL-trowt
Christian	KRIS-tee-ahn
Jeremias	yeh-reh-MEE-ahss

Maria	mah-REE-ah
Friedrich	FREED-rikh
Eberhard	AY-bayr-hart
Bernhard von Wilhelm	BAYRN-hart fonn VILL-heim
Beben	BAY-ben
Samuel	ZAHM-oo-el
Esther	ESS-tayr
David	DAH-vit
Ruth	ROOT
Annegret	AHN-nay-grayt
Ludwig	LOOD-vikh
Michael	MIHKH-ah-el

Places

Schwarzbrunn	shvarts-BRUNN
Bistum	BISS-toom



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Cthulhu
Jens Weber