

CALL of CTHULHU®

23148

DOORS TO DARKNESS

FIVE SCENARIOS FOR BEGINNING KEEPERS

Christopher Smith Adair, Glynn Owen Barrass,
Brian Courtemanche, Tom Lynch,
Kevin Ross, and Brian M. Sammons



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BRIAN M. SAMMONS,
KEVIN ROSS,
CHRISTOPHER SMITH ADAIR,
BRIAN COURTEMANCHE,
GLYNN OWEN BARRASS,
AND TOM LYNCH



CREDITS

Written By

Brian M. Sammons, Kevin Ross, Christopher Smith Adair,
Brian Courtemanche, Glynn Owen Barrass, and Tom
Lynch

Editing by

Brian M. Sammons and Mike Mason

Development by

Mike Mason

Cover Art

Victor Manuel Leza Moreno

Interior Art

Celeste Burcham
Pat Loboyko
Eric Lofgren
Loic Muzy
Wayne M. Miller
Jonathan Wyke

Cartography

Dean Engelhardt

Layout

Nicholas Nacario

Licensing

Michael O'Brien, James Lowder, and Mike Mason

Clear Credit

Introduction and None More Black written by Brian M. Sammons, Sharing Nightmares written by Kevin Ross, The Darkness Beneath The Hill by Christopher Smith Adair, Genius Loci by Brian Courtemanche, Servants Of The Lake by Glynn Owen Barrass, and Ties That Bind by Tom Lynch

Play Testers

William R. Hennings, Wilmon Black, William Messerschmidt, Gordon Wiley, Michael Benoit, and Brett Bossert

This supplement is best used with the *Call of Cthulhu* (7th Edition) roleplaying game and, optionally, the *Pulp Cthulhu* sourcebook, both available separately.

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INTRODUCTION

By Brian M. Sammons

The idea behind this book came from a number of different sources that seemed to go together just like peanut butter and jelly or the tiny town of Innsmouth and unsafe sex. First, many Keepers always seem to want one-shot scenarios that can be completed during a single sitting, with as minimal a muss and fuss as possible. Whether it's for a quick adventure when the majority of the usual gang can't make it to game night, or for use at conventions, these scenarios were designed with that purpose in mind. Each can usually be completed within four to five hours. To further enhance the book for pick-up *Call of Cthulhu* games, ten diverse and fleshed out pre-generated investigators have been included to promote quick, anytime, anywhere gaming.

Another thing many Keepers, both old and new, kept asking for are scenarios to introduce new players to *Call of Cthulhu*. While there is always the classic *The Haunting* from the *Call of Cthulhu Quick-Start Rules*, we felt that more choice is always a good thing. So these scenarios were also written with the neophyte Keeper and players in mind. Each scenario here will introduce those new to *Call of Cthulhu* to roleplaying horror, mystery, investigation, character interactions, monsters, magic, the basics of the Cthulhu Mythos, Sanity point loss, and combat. Furthermore, sprinkled throughout each scenario are a number of Keeper Suggestions. These should be treated exactly as suggestions, that is, ideas and pointers on how to run the game—but they are not rules set in stone. The Keeper should feel free to use those they find interesting, and ignore the ones they don't like.

To further help those new to this game, veteran *Call of Cthulhu* writer and editor, Kevin Ross, has penned a chapter full of advice on how to run *Call of Cthulhu* and what makes it so different than almost any other roleplaying game out there. Even those Keepers already well versed in the game and the Cthulhu Mythos might want to check this chapter out as it is jam packed with good advice.

Speaking of experienced Keepers and players, do not mistake these scenarios to be an easy walk in the park. While their overall lethality has been purposely scaled back a little to eliminate the dreaded "Total Party Kill", each adventure does offer plenty of challenges and new mysteries to explore. Each could easily be slipped into an ongoing campaign to break thing up a bit, offer side missions, or an interesting night of red herring investigation. And as mentioned earlier, *Doors to Darkness* can be a quick jolt of horror for those times when not all the regular players can make it.

Towards the back of this book you will find ten ready to use investigators for pick-up and play games, but of course, if you prefer to create your own or have the players roll-up investigators, then that's fine too.

In closing, all of us involved in this book hope you enjoy opening these *Doors to Darkness* and discovering what secrets and dangers lie within. We hope that if you're new to *Call of Cthulhu* these little slices of Cthulhu Mythos horror whets your appetite so you continue playing this award winning game, and can discover for yourself just how deep the darkness goes.



SHARING NIGHTMARES

Tips for game mastering and playing Call of Cthulhu.

By Kevin Ross

INTRODUCTION

This article presents an overview of various aspects of running and playing *Call of Cthulhu*: from creating investigators and learning the rules, to devising mystery plots and creating the atmosphere of a horror game. This is intended as a collection of tips, and Keepers and players are urged to heed only those suggestions they feel comfortable with using in their group. Perhaps the most important thing that needs to be remembered about playing *Call of Cthulhu*—or any roleplaying game, for that matter—is that it’s *your* game. You should play the game according to your own tastes and desires. Published rules, adventures, and supplements are there for you to use, tinker with, or ignore as you wish. Once you’ve bought it, it’s yours, and no corporate mandated rules or company meta-plot or purist agenda should stop you from doing what you want with the rules of any roleplaying game. For this reason, you shouldn’t expect every group to play the game exactly the same way.

STYLES OF PLAY

This brings us to the first step in our journey: what kind of game do you want to run or play? A good way to ensure a healthy campaign or game is to have the Keeper and the players get together to discuss the type of game they want to create before they even create characters. This discussion should result in a game that appeals to all involved, since everyone will have some input into the nature of the game.

Do you want games that seek to emulate the fiction of Lovecraft or another of the many authors who have created “cthulhoid” fiction in the past ninety-odd years (or perhaps longer, in the cases of proto-Lovecraftians such as Machen, Stoker, Le Fanu, Hodgson, etc.)? There’s quite a range of styles to be mined from Cthulhu Mythos fiction.

Lovecraft’s works tended to feature scholarly protagonists who typically fled or went mad (or both) when the eldritch antagonists showed up, while the fictional heroes of August Derleth and Brian Lumley utilized Mythos magic and alien technology to fight Cthulhu and his minions. The default tone of the game lies somewhere within that range, with scholarly research and detective work usually leading to healthy dollops of cliffhanger action, à la Indiana Jones and other pulp adventures. The most popular *Call of Cthulhu* adventures include the campaigns *Masks of Nyarlathotep*, *Horror on the Orient Express*, and *Beyond the Mountains of Madness*, and these run the gamut from globetrotting adventure (à la Derleth and Indiana Jones) to a European tour by turns genteel and exotic, to a lengthy journey to the ultimate Lovecraftian nightmare in the Antarctic wastes.

For games of a more pulp-oriented bent, Keepers and players may try to keep the investigators alive longer. This may be done through house rules, discreetly fudged die rolls, non-player character “cannon fodder” (think *Star Trek*-ian “red shirts”), or other means. Of course, for those wishing to play all out pulp action, then consider picking up a copy of Chaosium’s *Pulp Cthulhu*!

So-called “purist” games strive for a tone more akin to Lovecraft’s philosophies and fiction. These games tend to be much darker and more fatalistic: often the best the investigators can hope to achieve in such adventures is to escape with their lives. Purist threats tend to be much more powerful and harder to comprehend or defeat. Investigator casualty rates tend to be higher, whether through death or insanity.

Again, this is not to say that any given game master or campaign should or will consistently adhere to either a pulp or purist tone. Most games vary between these extremes, from quiet investigation to thrilling adventure and devastating climaxes that leave minds and bodies shattered. Any style of play can produce fun and memorable games. Players may remember spectacular deaths as fondly as narrow escapes, tragic or hilarious insanities, or nail-biting combats.

Creating Investigators And Bringing Them Together

Before creating investigators, players should discuss what type of character they want to play, perhaps with an eye toward optimizing the choices of occupations and skills to help ensure successful investigations. One player might choose a scholar with a range of academic skills or languages, another might want to play a nosy reporter with good communication and stealth skills, while another might choose a tough private eye or professional athlete for better combat skills, and so on. No one should be forced to play a character or profession they don't want, and even if a party of investigators ends up with several intellectual-types and a lone private eye or police detective, well, that should make for an entertaining campaign as well: *"Ya know, doc, I'm kinda tired of bein' the first one through the door all a 'da time, so howsabout you open the mausoleum door this time, huh?"*

Once characters have been created, or perhaps as they are being created, the Keeper and players may wish to discuss how or if the investigators know each other—they may normally work together, have family in common, belong to the same social club, hang out at the same bar, or have other reasons to be acquainted: college friends, war buddies, teacher and students, reporter and confidential police source, and so forth. The investigators need not all know each other, as long as there are links between some of them. If the Keeper has another idea in mind for bringing the investigators together, there may not be any links at all: perhaps they are all strangers aboard the same car when something goes awry in the subway. Or maybe the investigators are all witnesses to some bizarre murder or other crime—perhaps they are even suspects! It's less work for the Keeper if relationships are predetermined, but this is not necessarily required.

The Adventure Hook

As of this writing, *Call of Cthulhu* is over 30 years old, and in that time, hundreds of scenarios have been published for the game. With that in mind, it should come as no surprise that finding new and original opening scenes and hooks for adventures can become a little difficult. By now, veteran players of the game have grown tired of the same old beginnings involving murdered relatives, letters from long-lost friends, vanished archaeological expeditions, and occult-tinged murder sprees. The fact is, it's hard to come up with an original hook for a scenario, not least of which is because every group is going to be different, and circumstances that seem compelling to one group may not be appropriate for another. Many veteran players are going to have seen just about anything a Keeper or scenario author can throw at them.

For these reasons, the Keeper should tailor scenarios to his or her group as much as possible. If you are writing your own scenarios this can be much easier, but if using published adventures, the Keeper should make adjustments as needed.

One such adjustment method is replacing personalities from the adventure with non-player characters of a similar nature or background from within the Keeper's own campaign—people already known to the investigators. As the campaign progresses, non-player characters met in earlier adventures may recur, perhaps developing from lesser roles in earlier adventures to being central figures or victims in later ones. Alternately, non-player characters from published scenarios could be introduced into the Keeper's campaign well before their "starring" roles in the published adventure. Strategies such as these can help create the illusion of a deeper, more realistic game world.

The burden of drawing investigators into a scenario shouldn't fall upon the shoulders of the Keeper alone, however. There needs to be an unwritten covenant between Keeper and players, in that the latter must be willing to follow the carrot on the stick held by the former. Player-characters in *Call of Cthulhu* are called "investigators" for a good reason: they're supposed to *want* to investigate weird events. Players who insist that the Keeper bend over backwards to drag him or her into a scenario can be a something of a nuisance (the Keeper has enough to keep track of without having to seduce uncooperative players into following the lead). Give the poor Keeper a break, otherwise he or she can spend a few minutes having you roleplay your college professor giving lectures, grading theses, attending staff meetings, reading the newspaper, having dinner with the family, taking the dog for a walk, and so on. Meanwhile, the rest of the group will be bored as hell, waiting for you to quit screwing around and get back to being an *investigator*.

In short, be willing to work with the Keeper to get things started. He or she means well, and they probably have some really interesting things up their sleeve, if you'll just play along...

Learning The Rules (plus bending and breaking them)

Different Keepers deal with rolling the dice differently; most allow players to roll their own dice but in some cases Keepers will roll the dice in secret to conceal information from the players. Keepers may call for specific skill rolls or players may ask to attempt one on their own.

The results of successful die rolls are pretty straightforward—but what about failed skill rolls? (Especially those involving an important clue in the scenario at hand.) This has long been a bugaboo among critics of the game—what happens when a pivotal skill roll fails and the investigators don't find the key clue or learn the vital piece of information from an informant, preventing the adventure from going forward? The answer depends on how much the Keeper and players want to allow the dice to be the final arbiters of story progress within the game, as well as making sure that such important clues can be found in more than a single manner (see **Creating Mysteries**

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And Investigating Them). For most people, telling a good story is more important than adhering to a strict reading of the rules. The latest version of the *Call of Cthulhu Rulebook* includes rules for pushing skill rolls (allowing players a second attempt), using Luck points to adjust dice rolls, as well as other advice for keeping games moving forward.

Individual Keepers should treat die rolls and their results as they see fit within their own games, as long as they're fair and consistent about their judgments. This is especially true when it comes to combat damage rolls. *Call of Cthulhu investigators* aren't as hardy as player-characters in other roleplaying games—a single swipe of a monster's claws, or a lurking cultist's baseball bat can easily reduce an investigator to zero hit points in a heartbeat, bringing an investigator's career to an ignominious end. Given the lethality of combat in the game, Keepers may wish to be merciful in cases where an investigator is struck down by bad luck, or at a particularly inopportune moment (*e.g.* the stricken fellow was the only one who knew the key clue to keep the scenario going). The Keeper might be forgiven if he or she halves a particular damage result or leaves the stricken investigator unconscious and lying at death's door rather than slaying him or her outright; the investigator will be weeks in recovery as it is, and may suffer long-term crippling effects, perhaps even permanent statistic loss. On the other hand, investigators who have tempted fate or barged hell-bent toward their death, ignoring all signs of danger, should be left to the mercy of the dice.

Sanity is a sort of "mental hit points" statistic, and it tends to go down faster than it goes up: as an investigator learns more about the true workings of the nihilistic Lovecraftian universe, his or her ability to remain sane wanes. Most scenarios offer possibilities for increasing Sanity by thwarting the agents and goals of Mythos entities: defeating major cultists and creatures, and preventing sacrifices and summoning rituals should always result in some increase in Sanity, however modest. Sanity losses usually don't take a character out of commission, as major wounds can; an insane investigator may exhibit signs of a given phobia or insanity, but usually only the worst of these require institutionalization. Watching a favorite investigator's Sanity slide toward zero is one of the highlights of playing *Call of Cthulhu*. Playing an insane investigator can be fun as well, as he or she creates problems for their comrades, who try to manage the illness while dealing with the Mythos at the same time.

The thing to remember is, the dice are there to determine random chances, but not everything should rely on random chance and the capriciousness of the dice. Sometimes, the story is more important than the rules.

Using Information

So we've seen that investigators are frail and fallible beings in a world of very dangerous entities on whose turf they are often trespassing. How can mere humans hope to deal with

the machinations of beings of incredible power and antiquity are able to travel across space and time and dimensions?

In *Call of Cthulhu*, knowledge is power. Successful investigators will try to accumulate as much information as possible before they face the agents of the Mythos. Following up clues and talking to witnesses, researching in libraries, and consulting experts—these should be the first and most important steps in any investigation.

Most adventures offer initial clues that should be followed up by the investigators. Newspaper articles may mention important witnesses, experts, authorities, or relatives who may need to be interviewed to discover further information. Investigators should treat every handout and clue as a breadcrumb that might lead them on to the next one. Interview anyone mentioned in the article or handout, talk to victims' families, police officials, and so on. Research the background of people, places, and objects, and track down books about the subject at hand—especially Mythos tomes, which we'll discuss later on. Players should delegate the investigators' tasks according to their areas of expertise: journalists and private eyes should interview witnesses and officials, scholarly types do the library research, and so on. With any luck, the clues, like puzzle-pieces, will start to indicate a fuller picture of what is going on, and the group won't blunder into a dangerous situation totally unprepared.

Smart investigators will develop contacts at newspapers, libraries, universities, and with officials at the local police station or morgue. Other useful contacts include book and antique dealers, criminal informants, and street-level laborers (cab drivers, longshoremen, newsstand operators, etc.), who might be invisible to others but whose eyes may have seen more than the average citizen. Cultivate sources wherever the opportunity arises.

Of course not every witness or contact is going to cooperate, so some coercion might be necessary, be it bribes, charm, physical threats, or blackmail. Investigators should take care not to alienate sources they may need later, whether in the current case or in future ones.

And when push comes to shove, do the investigators necessarily have to face danger by themselves? No, especially if they have proof of criminal activity that can be presented to the authorities. If they have established good relations with the police, bringing them into a case is even easier and more logical. This may be off-putting to people who believe that the investigators must personally deal with the monstrous forces they'll meet in most *Call of Cthulhu* adventures. But logically, if the investigators alert the authorities to suspicious or criminal activity beforehand, it could save them from criminal charges of their own if they break into some place or shoot it out with a bunch of cultists later. In some cases, it's better (certainly safer) to let the authorities deal with large-scale dangers—though the investigators should also lose at least a few points of Sanity if they send in the police who end up decimated by horrible alien

monsters. Of course, if the party keeps running to the police with outlandish stories and unsubstantiated claims that fail to pan out, the authorities may either lock them up or ignore them when they need the help most. Don't forget that the investigators are the main characters, though, and avoid shifting the spotlight away from them to other non-player characters.

Creating Mysteries And Investigating Them

Call of Cthulhu scenarios usually begin with some sort of strange event or criminal activity. This may be as obvious as a strange statue stolen from a museum or the murder of a prominent anthropologist or as subtle as strange lights seen hovering over the local cemetery. As stated earlier, since the player-characters in the game are called *investigators* it's assumed that by hook or by crook the Keeper can coax them into inquiring into the matter at hand.

Once the players have been hooked, the Keeper's job really begins: laying out the clues and leads that will point the investigators toward the solution of the mystery, whether it's discovering a murderer's identity or stopping the machinations of some bizarre cult. The *Call of Cthulhu Rulebook* likens this process to the peeling away layers of an onion to get to the truth at the center. In scenario terms, the layers of the onion are made up of clues, witness testimony, and other forms of research. Sometimes the investigators may have to resort to illegal searches or physical combat to gain clues.

In the case of published scenarios, the clues sought will already have been created for the Keeper, along with whatever antagonists the investigators may have to face on the way. Keepers wanting to invent their own adventures will have to create their own clues and leads, which may seem daunting at first.

Creating mysteries isn't as difficult as one would think. There are millions of plot and clue ideas to steal from movies, books, history, and the news. Things will usually start fairly simple, with newspaper articles or eyewitness testimony. What does the newspaper article say about the event in question? Who saw it happen? Who were the authorities (police, medical, morgue) quoted? Who was the victim (if any)? From the initial information, the next step involves interviewing police, family, and co-workers, or researching newspaper files at a library. What do these people know? What did they see? Who might they be able to point the investigators toward for more information? What does the victim's background suggest? Does the site of the event have some significance? Have events such as these happened before? Are these events (or the clues that have sprung from them) discussed in historical or occult works? There may be multiple levels of these initial steps, as research suggests additional expert or witness interviews, which in turn leads to more research, and so on. The Keeper will have to decide which of these questions are pertinent to the case, and where and how the answers can be found.

If the investigators miss a key clue or lead in the case, the Keeper may need to have the information available from more

than once source in order to keep the investigation progressing. Perhaps an overlooked detail in a newspaper article is later mentioned by an eyewitness, or a reference in an un-translated tome of occult lore is also known to an expert the investigators consult about another matter entirely. Also, if the players really get stuck, despite them having found all the necessary clues, then an Idea roll can get them back on track (see page 199 of the *Call of Cthulhu Rulebook*).

Sooner or later the investigators are bound to end up breaking the law in one form or another, whether it's threatening a witness, hurting the wrong person, or breaking into an important site. And, more than likely, there will be people or things to confront before the scenario reaches its conclusion. Which brings us to...

Foes, Human, And Otherwise

Roleplaying games need antagonists, and in *Call of Cthulhu* these foes include criminals, madmen, cultists, sorcerers, possessed people, and monsters ranging from mortal creatures with some kinship to humanity to alien beings as vast and powerful as gods. Players and Keepers alike must be careful how they handle these entities. Foolhardy investigators who rush into combat with even the weakest of opponents may find themselves outclassed, and Keepers who spring too-potent horrors on an unsuspecting party may find the campaign ended in a single encounter.

As stated earlier, investigators in *Call of Cthulhu* tend to be more fragile than the heroes in other roleplaying games. Even a casual knowledge of the rules reveals that a single gunshot or significant melee wound can kill the average character, so even human opponents are formidable. Madmen may use weapons typical of their ilk, such as knives or axes. Criminals and cultist goons are more likely to use guns while priests and sorcerers might use magic as well as guns. Any of these opponents or weapons can be deadly for investigators, so Keepers should scale opponents against the investigators carefully. Lightly-armed opponents might outnumber the average well-armed investigator party, while more heavily-armed opponents should be fewer, or at least not particularly skilled in the use of their weapons.

Mythos creatures, such as deep ones, mi-go, and ghouls, are roughly equivalent to human opponents in combat strength, though, the investigators have an advantage in that some of these races don't use ranged weapons. Still, even the ghouls and mi-go (among the least powerful monsters in the game) are resistant to some forms of attack. Investigators would be wise to enter combat only when they are well informed and prepared to do so—attack the enemy at a distance, or when it can't fight back effectively. Avoid direct confrontations with larger or more powerful entities. If necessary, use magic or explosives to deal with greater horrors such as these. A good guideline is: the bigger or more alien it looks, the less likely the investigators are going to be able to hurt it. Don't be afraid to run, regroup, research, and retry.

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Keepers are advised to introduce monsters carefully for many of the same reasons discussed above. Players will eventually get tired of having their heads handed to them by creatures that are either too powerful for them to handle or are sprung on the party by surprise. Give fair warning of what's to come, whether it's through eyewitness reports, the fate of previous victims, claw marks or other tracks, hideous odors or slime-deposits, primitive carvings or other depictions, Mythos tome references, and so on.

Rest assured that no matter how much warning you give, the investigators' curiosity is going to compel them to see the beasts in the flesh, and that's usually when the fun really begins. First off, most monsters cause Sanity loss, and even this psychological blow can disable an investigator. Kindly Keepers might rule that some monsters will ignore physically or mentally incapacitated characters (a good example of this from Lovecraft's fiction would be when the protagonist of "The Lurking Fear" was left unmolested, while the companion whom he was sleeping next to was horribly murdered). More powerful entities, such as Great Old Ones or Outer Gods, may not even recognize humans as any kind of threat, unless the puny mortals actually attack or harm them in some way. Again, depending on the flavor of your game and how strictly you want to follow the rules, the Keeper can be as merciful or as ruthless as the campaign or scenario dictates.

Common Elements of Lovecraftian Plots

Cultists and monsters are among the most familiar elements found in *Call of Cthulhu* scenarios, but there are other, potentially more interesting and irresistible ones as well: old diaries and journals, volumes of occult or Cthulhu Mythos lore, bizarre artifacts and magic items, strange dreams and horrible nightmares, eldritch spells, and frightening cult rituals. These are useful tools for the Keeper to deliver clues and warnings, as well as confuse, frighten, and harass investigators—heightening the atmosphere and building suspense.

Diaries and journals are common sources of information, perhaps left behind by recent victims or long-dead persons reporting on events that have some bearing on a present case. Such texts may offer useful hints and pertinent historical details, but are likely to have minimal occult or Cthulhu mythos knowledge and no spells. Alternatively, they might be found in the lairs of madmen, cultists, or magi; insane ramblings or painstaking plans for the apocalypses. Such journals are more likely to include Mythos knowledge (usually no more than 5-6 points) and possibly spells (1-3), in addition to whatever other clues and information the Keeper needs them to impart. Sanity losses for diaries and journals should be fairly low, depending on the nature of the contents (0 to 1D4 points for non-Mythos knowledgeable persons, and up to 1 to 1D8 for Mythos sorcerers).

More potent are the rare volumes of Mythos information, including the dreaded *Necronomicon*. These volumes are

valuable not simply for their use in a given scenario, but also as sources of information in ongoing campaigns. Mythos tomes are given a Cthulhu Mythos value and this skill increase and the corresponding Sanity loss might not be incurred all at once, but rather doled out over however long it takes to read the book. Investigators can search their Mythos tomes for research, using the tome's Mythos Rating to see if it contains pertinent information—another method the Keeper can use to relay clues the investigators might have otherwise missed.

Investigators who discover strange artifacts can research them using their Mythos and occult tomes to see if they can be identified. Items may merely be grotesque depictions of alien gods or monsters, or they may have magical effects: causing horrible nightmares, draining POW, attracting monsters, or aiding in the casting of certain spells. Investigators possessing such devices, whether modern, of impossible antiquity, or even alien origin, may draw the attention of cultists, sorcerers, or unscrupulous collectors.

Many Mythos tomes contain eldritch magic spells or rituals, some of which may be useful to the investigators. Spells that call or dismiss deities are often presented as the principal means of defeating cult ceremonies. Spells for summoning and binding (or contacting) Mythos races can also be useful to investigators as these creatures can sometimes be bargained with to carry interested parties or targeted enemies to distant locations (even off-planet!) or to attack human or monstrous enemies. Other spells include magical wards, such as the potent Elder Sign, and for enchanting magical weapons and devices. Still others are magical attacks that can blast the bodies and minds of their targets. All of these Mythos spells come at a cost (magic points and Sanity), with the most powerful ones calling for drastic sacrifices of energy, and even the permanent expenditure of POW. Investigators should choose the magic they learn with care and be even more wary of actually using such potent powers.

Lovecraftian scenarios commonly feature dreams and nightmares to some extent, whether they are suffered by bystanders or witnesses, or the investigators themselves. People who have been exposed to Mythos objects, entities, or events may suffer dreams about these elements, though, they may or may not remember details of their nightmares. These nightmares frequently offer clues to the nature of the Mythos threat which caused them—if they can be remembered and deciphered. The Keeper can also use dreams and nightmares to supply clues that the investigators may have overlooked—often at the expense of a Sanity point or two. Such nighttime dreaming need not be literal; play-up the surreal, nonsensical, cryptic, and confusing nature of dreams. Keepers can even frame dreams in such a way that the sufferer cannot tell whether he or she is sleeping or awake (although it's beyond the scope of this essay, the *H.P. Lovecraft's Dreamlands* supplement for *Call of Cthulhu* offers an entire world for the investigators to explore in their dreams).

Atmosphere

Call of Cthulhu is a horror game and the Keeper should try to create an atmosphere conducive to the genre. Many Keepers play their games in low light, even by candlelight. Where you play your game can make a huge difference—it's much easier to create a suitable mood by playing in a darkened basement as opposed to the crowded gaming room of a local comic shop. Light-hearted banter or excessive out of character chatter can kill a mood, so Keeper and players may wish to limit these activities as well, or at least know when to curb them. Some Keepers use background music as a soundtrack to their games, using everything from 1920s jazz to classical music, horror movie soundtracks, ambient music, soundscapes, or music made specifically for horror gaming. It's a matter of taste, as some people find such background music too distracting, so the group should perhaps try things out first and discuss what, if anything, works for them.

To maintain an appropriate atmosphere, remember that *Call of Cthulhu* is as much a game of mystery and wonder as it is of horror. The investigators will be doing a lot of mundane legwork and research, and so may become jaded and inattentive. The Keeper should introduce minor setbacks and “stings” (as some filmmakers call them) to shake things up: a stranger seems to be following the investigators (he's actually not—this time...), a strange sound in a nearby alley (two cats fighting), a book is missing from the library (someone else was browsing through it), and so forth.

Sounds, smells, and half-seen things are also helpful in creating unease. When tensions are high anything can look or sound suspicious, and investigators who keep jumping at every rattle of a window are eventually going to drop their guard—and then the real threat can spring upon them. Use the clichés of the horror genre, but try to use them sparingly. Wind sighing through the trees, branches brushing against the window, strange lights on the hillside, rain, storms, lightning, shadows, and suspicious or downright sinister people—all of these can a little atmosphere if used in small doses.

Find out what scares your players (or their investigators) and make use of those fears if possible. Afraid of confined places? The sea? Certain animals? Knives? Doctors? Any of these can be used to unnerve or terrify the players and investigators.

When things get serious, ratchet up the tension by asking for quick decisions. In moments of tension or horror try not to allow humor to break the mood. Keeper die rolls made in secret can also make the players nervous.

When it comes to describing Mythos creatures don't simply tell the players they're being attacked by a ghoul, describe the monster as evocatively as possible: a scabrous man-like thing, dressed in old rags, covered with grave mold and dirt, stinking of the crypt, with long taloned fingers caked with grime and blood; its strange feet almost hoof-like, its human face hideously elongated, snout-like, with filthy lips and sharp teeth; unguessable stains smeared across its mouth, its eyes bestial but with a glint of mocking intelligence.

The more alien the entity, the less specific the description; be vague and abstract. For a flying polyp, for instance, the air should shimmer like a heat haze, with suggestions of writhing shapes or limbs within the haze; shapeless shadows like smoke beneath where the thing should be, eerie sub-sonic whistling and chanting assault the investigators' ears, making their skin crawl. Likewise, foreshadow the coming of some creatures with blasts of stinking wind, liquescent sliding, shambling, dragging feet, the flap of tattered or buzzing wings, and so on. Sometimes even just the suggestion of the unearthly can be enough to send the investigators into flight.

The Play's The Thing

Ultimately, *Call of Cthulhu* is your game and you should play it according to your tastes, using the rules as you see fit. Make sure everyone is having fun—or at least as much fun as they can have if the fungi from Yuggoth are eviscerating their favorite investigator!

The most important thing to remember is that the Keeper and players are creating a story in which the investigators are the protagonists. Games that constantly end in failure aren't going to be much fun in the long run, but not every investigation is going to have a happy ending—just like the stories of Lovecraft. Make the successes memorable and thrilling, and make the defeats at least as meaningful as, “*Well, we gave it a good shot, but we were just no match for powers such as these.*” In the end, according to Lovecraft, mankind will perish anyway. But at least, we—and the investigators—can say we gave it a good shot. Save the day or no, hopefully your exploits will make for a great story just the same.

*Don't hesitate to take inspiration from non-fictional sources!
What secrets lie in the Voynich Manuscript?*

THE DARKNESS BENEATH THE HILL

By Christopher Smith Adair

INTRODUCTION

This scenario is suitable for two to six investigators, although with a little modification it can be run for a single player. The events can take place in any season of any year during the 1920s, and could be moved to other eras with a minimum of effort. The investigators are contacted by an associate, Josh Winscott, who has recently discovered a tunnel beneath his cellar.

KEEPER INFORMATION

The placid city of Providence, Rhode Island, still retains much of its historical charm. The legacy of New England, from the colonial period forward, can be experienced through its charming architecture and antiquities. Not all of this history is as fondly remembered or cherished, however. Rhode Island was the only New England colony to use slaves for both trade and labor. After the American Revolution, Rhode Island remained important to the slave trade, even after the state began the process of emancipation and outlawed the trade itself in 1787. John Brown, a wealthy merchant and politician, was tried in 1797 for violating that law and the Slave Trade Act of 1794. His acquittal demonstrated that the laws might exist, but their enforcement was another matter entirely.

Gradually, things changed. Rhode Island was the first state to respond to President Lincoln's call for troops, and it desegregated its schools in 1866. By the 1920s there are, however, still those who desire to keep Rhode Island racially "pure," and the years after the Great War have seen an increase in membership of the Ku Klux Klan.

Over the years, there have been rumors that slavers constructed tunnels from the wharves on Canal Street to their mansions on College Hill so as to circumvent the laws. And now, a local writer named Josh Winscott believes he may have found the truth behind the legends in his own basement.

There are tunnels beneath Providence, but these are far older than anyone suspects. The serpent people created these caverns and tunnels in the wake of the fall of their first empire during the age of dinosaurs. After a brief resurgence during the early years of humanity, many of the serpent people fled back to the safety of the depths. The civilization of the serpent people declined, and many of them went into hibernation, dreaming of a time when they would reawaken and rule the Earth once more.

When the antislavery laws began to be enacted, many slavers worried that their livelihood was in jeopardy. One slave trader, Elijah Winscott, thought it was a stroke of good fortune when the construction of a drainage tunnel beneath his new property unearthed a preexisting tunnel. It was wide enough for a group of people to walk through and went in the direction of the river. Winscott had his workers secretly connect the tunnel to the waterfront. But a trial run ended in tragedy. As slaves were marched beneath the city, they were set upon by ghosts—unwholesome bi-pedal monsters. Some slaves and their captors were slain, but most were dragged further into the depths. When Winscott and his men searched the tunnel for the whereabouts of his human cargo and their overseers, all they found were hideously dismembered corpses. They hurriedly sealed up the ends of the passage. Far below the earth, the captives became slaves to S'syaa-H'riss, a serpent-person sorcerer.

S'syaa-H'riss, recently awoken, was still shaking off the effects of a millennia of sleep. The world had changed greatly, and he was displeased to see that humanity still flourished and that the climate was not more agreeable. He has remained in his caverns, patiently continuing his arcane research, waiting for the right time to restore the greatness of his people.

THE CITY OF PROVIDENCE

The capital of Rhode Island is old, as far as the colonized New World is concerned. It was founded in 1636 by a small

THE DARKNESS BENEATH THE HILL

group of settlers led by Roger Williams looking for religious freedom not only from England but also from the Puritans of the Massachusetts Bay Colony.

After the original settlement was established, near a freshwater spring in what is now College Hill, it slowly spread out from there, until its growth was spurred by the establishment of a wharf in 1680. This wharf became integral to the “triangular trade”: molasses, rum, and slaves shipped between the West Indies, Africa, and the American colonies. After the slave trade ended, Providence remained an important seaport. By the late 1800s, it was one of the first cities in the United States to establish industrial manufacturing, and this “Beehive of Industry” produced textiles, metals, machinery, jewelry, and silverware. Industrial manufacturing in general slowed down precipitously in the 1920s, but jewelry manufacturing continued to grow.

Providence lies at the head of Narragansett Bay, and the Providence River runs through the densely populated city’s center. Many of Providence’s street names recall its history of religious tolerance and maritime trade. Providence is said, like Rome, to be founded on seven hills. Its downtown area has numerous buildings from the 19th century in Federal, Victorian, and Art Deco styles. The East Side still retains many buildings in the late Georgian style of the 18th century. Stately old mansions and other houses, with their fanlights set above

double flights of stairs with wrought-iron railings, and their gable or gambrel roofs, line the hills and hide the modern world. There are some structures even older, such as the oldest Baptist church in the United States, established by Roger Williams two years after he founded the settlement. Providence is also a seat of learning, with Brown University (moved to Providence in 1770) and the Rhode Island School of Design (1877) being the most prominent educational institutions, followed by Rhode Island College and the Roman Catholic Providence College.

MEETING WITH JOSH WINSCOTT

Josh Winscott is from proud and once-wealthy New England stock. He makes a living writing magazine articles on a variety of subjects, supplemented by occasional short stories. One or more of the investigators might know him from school, through social or professional circles, or perhaps even be related to him. Whatever the case may be, Winscott is friendly with the investigators and trusts them enough to share his discovery with them.

Winscott excitedly invites the investigators to his recently inherited house, telling them that he’s found something



The John Hay Library (photograph from the Library of Congress)



KEEPER SUGGESTION: AVENUES OF RESEARCH

None of the research is necessary for the completion of the scenario, but it does provide more context and atmosphere for the players. This is also an opportunity to introduce a traditional aspect of *Call of Cthulhu* to novice players. Keepers may want to suggest and recommend that the investigators conduct a little research before heading into the unknown.

A good example of interesting information that's not strictly necessary for the investigators to find, but which adds some color to the scenario is the letter from Jacob Bishop. As written, there is one location where this information can be found—the Athenaeum. Investigators may not visit that particular library while conducting research, or they may balk at the membership cost. In that case, a Keeper who would like the investigators to have an opportunity to find the letter has a few options. The Keeper could simply move the letter to an institution that the investigators are visiting; almost any local library could have the letter in its collection. The Keeper could also point the investigators to the Athenaeum through a Know roll, or by having a librarian at another library recommend it for further research. Moving information like this around isn't cheating; it's just making sure that cool information ends up in the player's hands.



incredible that he wishes for them to see. The house is on College Hill, nestled among other residences surviving from the 18th and 19th centuries. Its two stories can be found at 79 Power Street, overgrown bushes and trees obscuring its dilapidation. When the investigators knock, the door creaks open. Investigators calling out for Winscott soon hear an apologetic reply, which sounds like it's coming from below. He shouts up for them to come on in.

Soon, Winscott appears on the stairs leading from the basement into the kitchen. The investigators can see tools, debris, boxes, and covered furniture strewn about the house. Winscott invites them to sit down for coffee, while he lights a Turkish cigarette and explains why he's asked them here.

During restoration, he discovered that a bricked-up wall in the cellar storage area covered up an extensive tunnel. At first it appeared to be an old drainage system, but then he found that it connected to a larger corridor. Thinking this might have something to do with the rumored slave tunnels of old, he dismissed the Italian laborers he'd hired. He's been working alone since then, clearing the way so that he—and hopefully the investigators too—can

explore the tunnels. He's obviously excited to get started but admits that he's too exhausted, as he's been working all day. Explorations could start as early as tomorrow if the investigators are willing?

He asks them to keep the discovery quiet and to come equipped, recommending that everyone bring suitable equipment, like sturdy boots and a rope—a flashlight at least. He doesn't know what the conditions will be like or how far the tunnels extend; however, they should prepare for anything.

Winscott is happy to be led by the investigators in the matter of when to begin the exploration, so if anyone wishes to conduct some research before going into the tunnel then Winscott is prepared to wait.

CONDUCTING RESEARCH

During their preparations for the expedition, investigators may look into various topics, such as the history of the Winscott family and the house, slavery in Providence, and the slave-tunnel legends.

There are various libraries in town, as well as the offices of the *Providence Journal*, the longest running daily newspaper in the States. Two libraries, in particular, are useful sources of information on the early history of Providence, both of which are about half a mile north of Winscott's house: Brown University's John Hay Library, and the Providence Athenaeum.

- **John Hay Library:** The current home of Brown University's library collection was opened in 1910 and can be found at 20 Prospect Street. The library is a marble edifice in English Renaissance style, and it is already proving too small to adequately contain the enormous collection. The ground floor's public area consists of one long reading room with reference shelves and periodicals. The mezzanine floor above the entrance is the Harris Room, with its two-story stack and inscribed fireplace. The third floor contains a rare book room, large exhibition area, and specialized collections, including the Rider Collection of Rhode Island history.
- **The Providence Athenaeum:** The Athenaeum at 251 Benefit Street is a private lending library within a beautiful Greek Revival structure built in 1838. The library includes many historical documents, but access is limited to members who pay an annual fee of \$15.00.

Possible clues to be found from conducting research follow.

The Winscott Family

Investigators can either ask Josh Winscott for more information about his family history, or they can research it independently by looking up county records, newspaper articles, and similar sources.

THE DARKNESS BENEATH THE HILL



The Providence Athenaeum (photograph from the Library of Congress)

The house at 79 Power Street was built by Elijah Winscott, a slave trader, in 1796. He lived in it briefly before becoming ill, at which point he retired to the countryside, where he died in 1811. Micah Winscott, Elijah's nephew, inherited the house. With the end of the slave trade, the family's various remaining business ventures, such as textile manufacturing and rum distilling, maintained a good portion of the family's wealth until after the Civil War. With the closing of their textile factory, the family's fortunes steadily declined. Josh's widowed aunt Florence lived in Elijah Winscott's home until her recent death, when it was bequeathed to Josh.

Slavery In Providence

The following facts can be discovered at any local library with a successful **Library Use** roll. Investigators who are local to Providence might also know of this information with a successful **History** roll.

Rhode Island was one of the most active Northern colonies in the slave trade, controlling over half of the trade in all America. Newport was the most important Rhode Island port, but Providence was also greatly involved. Despite the emancipation began during the Revolution, the ownership of slaves continued until the 1840s. Originally, the slaves were primarily sold in the West Indies or brought back to Rhode Island to work on its own plantations. When Congress gave the trade an expiration of 1806, Rhode Island served the

hungry slave markets of the South, shipping as many slaves as they could, as quickly as they could. Conditions for their human cargo, already poor, quickly deteriorated.

John Brown was tried in 1796 for violating the slave-trade laws, but he was found not guilty. A year later, he was tried again, and his slave ship, *Hope*, was confiscated. The Brown family of Providence had been successfully involved in the slave trade for decades, becoming one of the region's most prominent mercantile and political families. Rhode Island University was renamed Brown University in honor of their donations.

Over the years, the discovery of drainage tunnels and bricked-over cold-storage rooms under some of the houses on College Hill have stoked speculation that they were once used to smuggle slaves into Providence after the laws against the slave trade were passed. In 1901, a cornerstone and nearby tunnel was rediscovered during renovations on the house of John Brown. The stone was inscribed with Brown's name and a date of 1786 and appears to have stood at the entrance of a large tunnel running towards Benefit Street. It was wide enough for two grown men to crawl through. While the head architect dismissed it as a drainage conduit, the tunnel's discovery revived rumors that it had been used to smuggle slaves.

The Letter

If the investigators visit the Providence Athenaeum to research the Winscott family or the slave-tunnel legends, they have

CHAPTER 2

Handout: Darkness 1

Providence, January 5th, 1811

Dear Phillip,

It is with immeasurable sadness that I tell you that Elijah Winscott has part from this World and is now in the loving Arms of our Lord. We had all known that he was not in good health for some years, in both his Body and his Spirit. He had made it most hard to know his troubles, for he had quit the Company of his Fellows. I did visit him in the Country House where he had lived for some Years now. As he lay in his Sick Bed, he broke his Silence and told me a Tale that I cannot properly reckon. I do not rightly know if I should tell it now to you, but I know you worry'd greatly for our friend.

He recalled me that 15 Years past he had pondered how we might continue our Trade which had served us so well. The hateful Laws against our Livelihood, and the Troubles that beset good John Brown caused him no end of upset. Well I remember, as you must, Elijah's character and speaking in the Tavern during this time. We thought it idle fancy and too much Drink. We all of us laughed to hear him speak of how we should dig Tunnels 'neath the Town. We did not know then that 'twas not idle fancy altogether. We did not know that he had been making plans in secret. For when the Cellar 'neath Elijah Winscott's Home was laid, a Tunnel was found. This Tunnel did go close to the River, and it was no matter to dig it yet closer. He would use this Passage to shepherd Slaves to and from the Town.

All had been set, and Elijah did wait happy in his Home for his Men to bring him his Slaves. But they did not come.

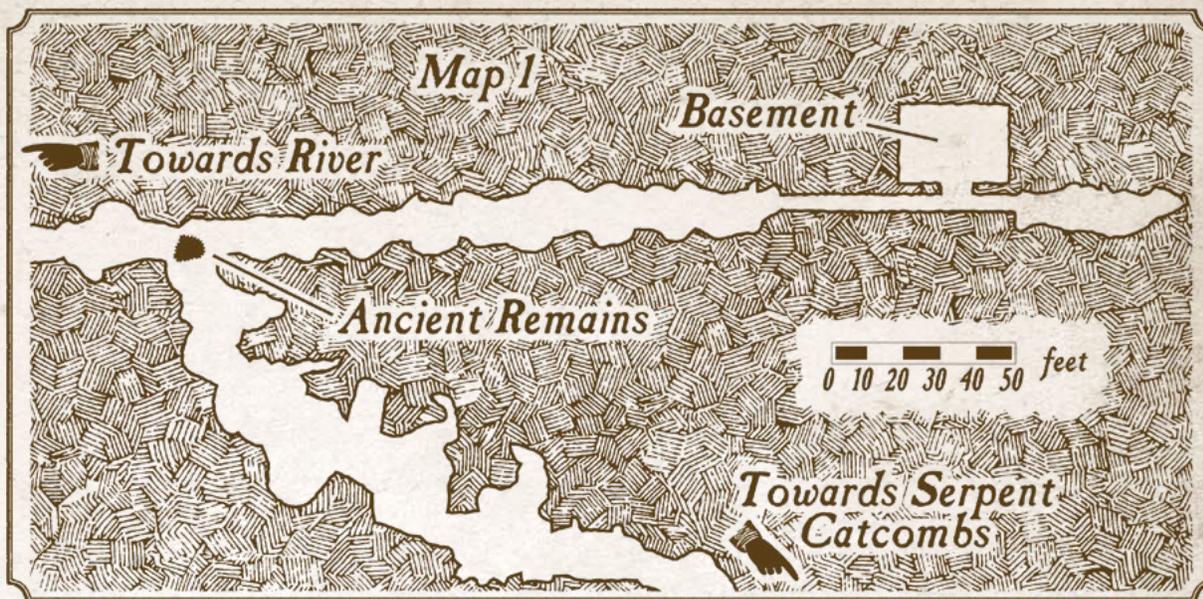
When he began to wonder what had kept them, he and the Men he had to hand went down to see what they might find. They found death. In straining Voice, he told me of parts of Men strewn like Rags across the Tunnel, White Man and Slave alike. He could not be sure, for he did not linger, but he did think that not all Men were accounted for, nor did he note anything of the Slave Women. But where could the others have gone, and what had come for them? The shadows of the Caverns did seem to lurk at him, keeping the mystery from him. Quickly he returned, and quickly he made Walls of strong Brick underneath his Home and near the River to keep out whatever may be below.

He knew no rest from that Day forward, certainly not while he remained in that House. All we knew then was that he fell ill and spoke no more of schemes to thwart the Laws. From his Sick Bed at the end of his life, he said that Chasms plunge deep beneath the Town he had quit. He peered out his Window at the swaying red Maple Trees and seemed to calm. I can only think that this Country House was some peace to him as he breathed his last. May his heirs have better fortunes in that House in Providence than he.

With sincere Esteem,

Jacob Bishop

THE DARKNESS BENEATH THE HILL



a chance to find a unique source of information among the archives of colonial materials. With a successful **Library Use** roll, an investigator finds a letter from Jacob Bishop (see **Handout: Darkness 1**).

INTO THE DEPTHS

Investigators returning to Winscott's house at the predetermined time receive no response to their knocking. The door is unlocked, but this time, calling out brings no answer.

Making their way to the basement, the investigators find a cooling cup of coffee. Tools lie near a brick wall in which a hole (big enough to get through) can be seen. On the other side of the hole is a brick lined tunnel that quickly branches into what looks like a wider natural cavern (assuming the investigators remembered to bring their flashlights).

A successful **Track** roll finds a man's footprints going west into the tunnel, though, they disappear once they pass the debris and dust from the excavation. To the east, after about 50 feet, the tunnel has completely collapsed, apparently some time ago. Heading west along the tunnel, after walking about 200 feet, the investigators come across ancient human remains, ten feet away from an opening on the south wall. These belonged to about six people, and there are the remains of iron manacles around the limbs of three of them. A successful **Science (Biology)** or **Medicine** roll estimates the age of the bones as about 150 years old. A successful **Archaeology** or **History** roll determines that the rotting clothing present on the remains without manacles is from the Colonial era. Many bones have become separated, possibly due to violence or vermin. A successful **Spot Hidden** roll discovers that there are tears and bloodstains on the

clothing (no roll required if an investigator states they are examining the rags closely).

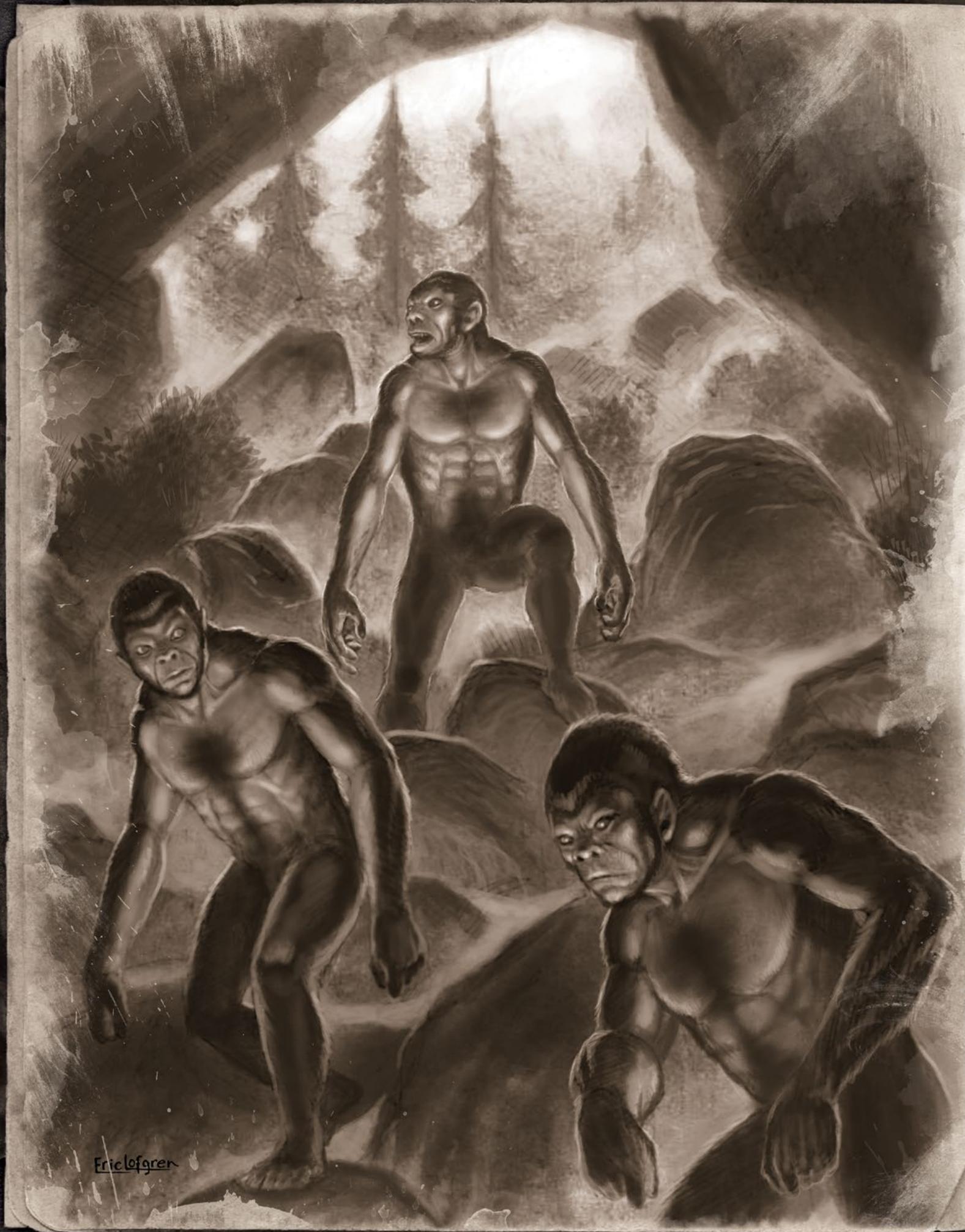
The western tunnel continues for half a mile before ending in an old brick wall (an investigator making a successful **Navigate** roll realizes that this is close to the river). Near the opening on the southern wall (in the area of the remains), an investigator making a successful **Spot Hidden** roll notices the stub of a Turkish cigarette (left by Winscott). The opening leads to a downward sloping passage. The corridor twists and turns, and after about a half a mile and a depth of 200 feet, the investigators come around a bend to see a steady, dim light. The passage straightens out, and the light ahead grows brighter, though the light source remains unknown. Soon, the passage opens into an enormous chamber lit by phosphorescent lichen.

THE SERPENT PEOPLE'S DOMAIN

The strangely lit chamber is the entrance to one of the ancient domains of the serpent people. Keepers should refer to the map on page 23, which details the location of various areas that are described in the following text.

ENTRY HALL

The hall is filled with an ambient light emitted by lichen cultivated by the serpent people for this purpose. Most of the tunnels and caverns throughout the complex are dimly lit, as if filled with candles. The investigators do not need to rely on their own light sources entirely, though they will want to use them to inspect fine details, see things at a distance, or



Ericlofgren

UNSAVORY INHABITANTS OF THE CAVERNS

Apart from S'syaa-H'riss the serpent-person, other monsters lurk in the cavern complex.

The Degenerates

These pathetic creatures are descended from the slaves and their smugglers (captured over a century ago) and are the result of generations of inbreeding in bizarre and horrible conditions. They are stunted and hairy, resembling some unknown breed of pallid ape as they scamper and lurch through the tunnels. Their skulls have sloping foreheads, large eyes, and pronounced, snout-like jaws, and their arms are longer than those of the average human. Anyone studying a subdued or dead degenerate and making a successful **Science (Biology)** or **Hard Know** roll recognizes the beast's disturbing relationship to humankind; requiring a **Sanity** roll (1/1D3 Sanity points loss).

The degenerates are vicious and will eat practically anything, including each other; however, they are cowardly if confronted with superior force. They prefer to attack helpless or outnumbered foes, sneaking up and ambushing anything they consider to be prey. They are able to evade danger by wriggling down tunnels far too small for larger (human-sized) pursuers.

At first, these creatures may watch the investigators unseen, perhaps stealing items by reaching out from the small dark tunnels or cracks in the walls (perhaps allowing the investigators **Listen** or **Spot Hidden** rolls to see a pale and hairy hand pulling a possession through a crack in the wall). The Keeper should try to pace encounters and build suspense. The degenerates and their presence might be found anywhere in the caverns. Some examples follow:

- **Bones:** The investigators find tracks, droppings, or remains. Foot- and handprints resembling those of children, but which a successful **Science (Biology)** roll notes as slightly ape-like, possibly due to deformity. Investigators discovering skeletal remains might initially think they've found monkey bones—a successful **Science (Biology)** roll is not able to place the species; however, there are disturbing resemblances to human bones calling for a **Sanity** roll (0/1 Sanity point loss). The first bones found should be old, while later bones might be relatively fresh. No intact skeletons are found, and all bones show evidence of having been gnawed upon and sucked dry.
- **Sounds:** The investigators hear (**Listen** roll) something scurrying, though it's impossible to tell where it's coming from. It might be rats or something similar, but at some point, the investigators realize that something bigger than a rat is making the sound.
- **Close Encounters:** As the investigators enter an area, they see or hear something quickly leaving through a small tunnel. It's just a fleeting glimpse of some sort of small pale animal. Later they may get a full view of degenerates, who may flee, attack, or cautiously observe the investigators from a distance.
- **Fighting:** The investigators come upon two degenerates locked in struggle together. The fighting is savage and vicious, and the combatants won't react to the investigators unless they intervene, in which case they stop to attack anything near them. Eventually, one degenerate tears out the throat of the other and devours its victim. Watching the degenerates fight calls for a **Sanity** roll (1/1D6+1 Sanity points loss).
- **Ambush:** A degenerate tries its luck with a lone investigator (or perhaps one who is in the rear of the group). Allow the investigator to make a **Listen** roll to hear the beast behind him or her; otherwise, the degenerate makes a surprise attack before the investigator can do anything.

No fixed number of degenerates is given, allowing the Keeper to have as many as required—at least one degenerate per investigator +1D4. Statistics for the degenerates can be found in **Appendix A: Characters and Monsters**.

Ghasts: Monstrous Henchmen

There are two ghasts surviving from the original slave stock of the serpent people. Primarily, the ghasts are left to roam the caverns, much like watchdogs. Occasionally they are needed by S'syaa-H'riss for physical tasks.

The Keeper should use encounters with the ghasts when dramatically appropriate, as well as in response to the actions of investigators. If investigators make considerable noise or linger in an area for too long, there is a good chance that a ghast will find them. Before first encountering the ghasts, investigators may find their tracks in particularly earthy patches of loam or wet prints near water sources. The tracks resemble those that might come from the hooved feet of a goat or bovine but are slightly smaller than those of a full-grown human. A **Science (Biology)** roll is unable to determine what species could have made them, but a successful **Cthulhu Mythos** roll can identify them as the prints of the foul ghasts, beasts that are said to haunt darkened vaults below the earth.

Statistics for the two ghasts can be found in **Appendix A: Characters and Monsters**.



KEEPER SUGGESTION: MOTIVATING THE INVESTIGATORS

Faced with the unknown, novice players (or even experienced players with novice investigators) may have what they believe to be a perfectly reasonable response: run away! Other players may charge blithely into any mystery or danger. If the Keeper knows or suspects that the players belong to the more cautious group, more motivation may be needed to make sure the players engage with the plot.

As soon as the investigators realize that Winscott has gone into the tunnel by himself, they may rush off to get the authorities. An **Intelligence** roll may remind them that Winscott wanted them to keep his find a secret and that he is probably nearby. He may be injured and unable to respond, and while getting a professional rescue party together may seem like a good idea, time could be of the essence.

If it seems that the investigators are about to leave (either before going into the caverns or after exploring for a period), there are a number of ways to entice or cajole them. They could hear a scream or more mysterious sounds far away in the darkness. Degenerates or ghosts could drive them deeper. The Keeper could also block-off the way back with a mysterious and sudden cave-in. The investigators will be forced to push on, and the magical gate in S'syaa-H'riss's lair will be the only exit. Keepers may also stage a cave-in at some point if they don't want return trips to the caverns to be possible. In that case, they should also make the gate a one-way portal.



navigate rough or especially shadowy terrain. Describe the eerie twilight and how the investigator's flashlights make unsettling shadowing dance and twist along the walls.

As the investigators enter, they can see that the walls have been decorated with intricate carvings, including natural columns that tower to the ceiling a hundred feet above. The carvings are very old and covered with lichen; much of the fine work appears to have been damaged. Around 50 feet of the eastern wall has collapsed, obliterating any carvings or passages once there.

A successful **Archaeology** roll reveals only that the carvings are extremely ancient, possibly predating the oldest cave paintings so far discovered while showing a skill and style far beyond that of recognized primitive art. Serpent motifs predominate, some of which are enormous. Certain serpent designs are repeated, possibly having some sort of symbolic meaning. A white crescent appears on the forehead of many of the more elaborate serpent carvings. Abstract

and geometric designs, zigzags, and spirals accompany the serpent carvings. Some of the carvings could be some form of curvilinear script, consisting of curves, curls, and loops. A successful **Cthulhu Mythos** roll reveals that the words resemble Aklo, an occult language supposedly adapted from a pre-human one.

DEEPER INTO THE CAVERNS

The caverns are damp and there are stalactites, stalagmites, and other cave formations formed by water throughout the complex. Besides the glowing lichen, other forms of fungi can be found growing on the walls, ceilings, and floors. Generations of this growth have made the floors soft with a coating of loam. Moisture makes the floors slippery in places, and water pools in certain spots. Rock falls and collapses have blocked-off passages and created obstacles in some of the corridors.

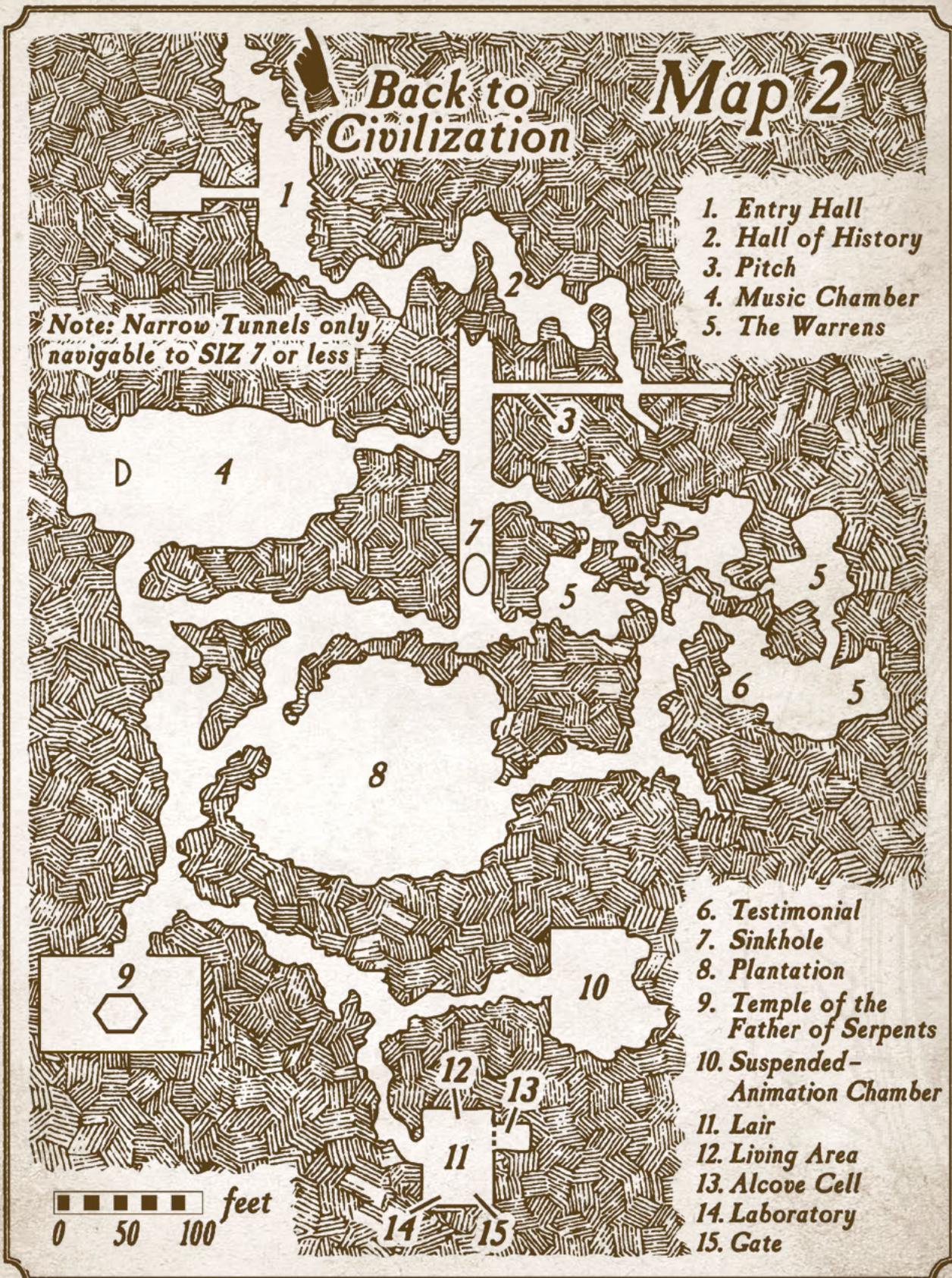
While there is evidence of worked stone throughout the complex, the serpent people used the natural formations as much as possible, digging tunnels, creating walls, expanding chambers, and building supports only when necessary. Some surfaces are decorated with more of the serpent and geometric carvings, as well as occasional unfathomable text. After the investigators have been in the caverns for a while, a successful **Science (Geology)** roll determines that the worked structures were created over the course of millennia, and the earliest appear to have been completed millions of years ago. Such realization can be a shock to most, provoking a **Sanity** roll (0/1D3 Sanity point loss).

The investigators do not have much difficulty making their way through the caverns most of the time. They can keep track of where they've been easily enough, but if they are in a hurry, Keepers may require a **Navigate** roll for the investigators to find their way back to a specific area. With a failure, the investigators come to a dead end and must retrace their steps.

Moving quickly through the caverns is dangerous and running or hasty investigators must make **DEX** rolls to avoid an injury causing 1D3 hit points of damage. If they aren't using their own light sources, the roll becomes Hard.

HALL OF HISTORY

This long, twisting chamber is decorated extensively with elaborate carvings. While the snake motifs and geometric designs are present, there is also a series of murals. First, there are carvings of landscapes, studded with towers and other structures. Robed serpentine figures are depicted engaged in various pursuits. Some images show them worshipping an enormous serpent with a crescent symbol on its forehead. Others depict the serpent people and their cities being attacked by gigantic reptiles. A successful **Know** roll recognizes the giant reptiles as various dinosaurs, including pterodactyls carrying hapless serpent people away. This revelation of ancient yet accurate representations of dinosaurs calls for a **Sanity** roll (0/1D3 Sanity point loss). The





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THE DARKNESS BENEATH THE HILL

end scenes show the serpent people abandoning their cities above ground to the reptiles and migrating underground, creating a new homeland under the earth.

THE PITCH

Here is a vertical descent that the investigators must navigate in order to explore further. The cavern floor beyond is 20 feet lower. A number of options exist:

- **Jump down:** A risky undertaking, calling for a **Jump** roll: if successful, the investigator only takes 1D6 damage from the fall; if failed, the damage is 2D6.
- **Climb down:** Using what hand-holds they can find in the wall, the investigators can make a **Climb** roll: if successful, they arrive at the bottom unharmed; if failed, the investigator hasn't been able to find suitable purchase on the walls and they may choose to push the roll by taking more time and trying a different route down. If the pushed roll is failed, the investigator is likely to fall, taking 2D6 damage (kindly Keepers might say they fell half way down and so only take 1D6 damage).
- **Use rope:** Presumably, the investigators thought to bring some rope with them? If no one mentioned it, then allow a **Luck** roll to see if one of them remembered. There is a

sturdy stalagmite nearby that a rope can be tied to, which the investigators can leave here for their return. Allow each investigator a **Climb** roll with one bonus die: if successful, they descend to the bottom unharmed; if failed, they begin to slip on the rope and will fall (taking 2D6 damage) unless they choose to make a pushed roll to regain their grip. A failed pushed roll means they fall and take 2D6 damage. Quick thinking investigators might be allowed a **Jump** roll, and if successful, reduce the damage by half.

MUSIC CHAMBER

The passage opens into a wide grotto where no phosphorescent lichen grows. Crystal deposits on the walls glitter in the investigators' light. The ceiling's apex is about 150 feet above their heads. Spreading across the far wall is a bizarre, twisted structure fashioned from interlaced bronze pipes and studded with crystals of various sizes and colors. The pipes pierce the wall in numerous places while the other ends ultimately end in spikes. There is a rock formation 20 feet in front of it, carved into a sort of chair, though, its curving seat and back aren't comfortable for humans.

When the investigators first enter, they are unable to see what perches atop some of the spikes. Drawing closer, they see that there are a score of human heads upon the spikes. As



The Hall of History and The Music Chamber by Eric Lofgren

they reach the chair, they hear what at first sounds like a low wind. They soon realize that the sound is coming from the heads, moaning softly in an ululating chorus.

The heads have been preserved, with sinuous runes carved into their leathery flesh. Their eyelids are closed, and their mouths and the muscles of their throats move as they sing. Some of the heads belonged to men of European descent, while others belonged to men and women of African descent. The whispering song issuing from the peaceful heads has a sort of beauty, but viewing this monstrosity calls for a **Sanity** roll (1/1D4 Sanity points loss).

If anyone sits in the seat, the singing grows much louder and more complex. The harmonies do not resemble anything the investigators have ever heard before. The alien nature of the song fills the investigators with dread provokes a further **Sanity** roll (0/1 Sanity point loss).

The structure is destroyed if the investigators can inflict 15 hit points of damage to it. Note that activating the full song or attempting to destroy the device most likely draws the attention of a ghast.

WARRENS

A series of connected chambers serve as the den of the degenerates. The warrens are filthy, strewn with bones and refuse, and consequently smell bad. There are always a few of the creatures resting or eating here, huddled in various corners. They savagely protect their territory and their young, but can be frightened away by a show of force—if two or more are badly injured or killed, or if guns are fired. Degenerates scurrying away might attract the attention of a ghast—gunshots certainly will.

If the investigators have the opportunity to search the warrens, call for a **Spot Hidden** roll to find a testimonial painstakingly chiseled into one of the walls (see **Handout: Darkness 2**).

SINKHOLE

A sinkhole breaks the floor of this wide portion of the corridor. If the investigators are relying on the lichen's illumination instead of flashlights and not walking cautiously, a successful **Spot Hidden** roll is needed to avoid falling into the chamber 10 feet below for 1D6 damage. The rubble-strewn chamber is roughly 20 by 30 feet, and the now-familiar carvings on its walls reveal that it was once connected to yet more caverns that are now blocked off. An investigator will find it hard to climb out of the hole unaided (Hard **Climb** roll, or a Regular roll if aided). An investigator above can either lower a rope or reach down and hoist the fallen investigator up (using a rope provides a bonus die to the roll).

There is a ledge, approximately 3 feet wide, that skirts the edge of the sinkhole, and this can be used to carefully walk around to the other side. Anyone engaging in combat while

near the sinkhole must make **DEX** roll to avoid slipping or being knocked into the hole.

THE PLANTATION

Strange fungi and lichens flourish in this great chamber, tended by at least two degenerates. Some of the fungi stalks tower over the investigators. A warm, moist mist sprays from apertures in the ceiling every 10 minutes.

The degenerates here are curious about the investigators' presence, but will continue working unless disturbed. If accosted by the investigators the degenerates will fight back, though, they will scatter if they receive severe wounds, one of them is killed, or if a gun is fired. A ghast might hear the sounds of combat and come looking for its source. Even if the investigators do not engage the degenerates, the ghosts sweep through here periodically, and one may find lingering investigators. The degenerates scurry away if a ghast attacks the investigators.

Only some of what is grown here is intended for direct consumption; much of it is grown for S'syaa-H'risss's experiments (cultivated specifically for its toxic qualities). Investigators deciding to eat a fungus must make a **Luck** roll: a success means they have picked an inedible but harmless specimen; a fail dictating that it is poisonous. Eating a poisonous fungus calls for a **CON** roll: if failed, 1D4 hours later, the investigator begins to convulse and throw up, as well as taking 1D10 damage (the stomach pains cease 1D4+1 hours later); if successful, the investigator suffers stomach cramps 1D4 hours later and takes 1D5 damage (reduced to zero if an Extreme success). Harsh Keepers might rule that those investigators suffering from failed **CON** rolls (and surviving) must take a penalty die on all skill rolls until the poison has passed from their system (1D4 hours).

TEMPLE OF THE FATHER OF SERPENTS

This grotto is dominated by an enormous natural column that has been carved into the likeness of a great, coiled serpent with a white crescent symbol upon its forehead formed from pale gemstones. In front of the serpent is a large altar marred by dark stains (bloodstains) and decorated with intertwined geometric carvings and runes. Spherical golden censers on stands flank the altar, each pouring forth clouds of perfumed incense.

Investigators exploring the temple should make a **POW** roll; those succeeding are bestowed a vision by Yig, the Father of Serpents. The vision takes the form of a cascade of snakes of various breeds erupting from the carved serpent's mouth, each bearing a white crescent on its forehead. The transfixed investigators are quickly engulfed by the writhing mass of snakes. The snakes do not bite or constrict them, but they crawl over them and flick their tongues across their skin. Soon, a titanic serpent's tongue pushes its way through the snakes,

MAYHAP SOMEONE WILL READ THESE WORDS
SOMEDAY, GOD WILLING. I, JOHN HARPER, WRITE
THEM HERE TO TELL MY SORRY TALE, AND THAT OF
MY FELLOWS. WINSCOTT SENT US TO OUR DOOM
WITH HIS CLEVER PLANS. HE THOUGHT TO ESCAPE
THE NOTICE OF THE STATE OF RHODE ISLAND WITH
THE TUNNEL HE HAD FOUND. HE SHOULD HAVE
THOUGHT FOR WHAT PURPOSE THIS TUNNEL WAS
MADE AT THE FIRST. HE CALLED HIMSELF LUCKY AND
SO DAMNED US. AS WE SHEPHERDED HIS CARGO
THROUGH THE TUNNEL, WHERE WE WERE SET UPON
BY HIDEOUS THINGS, AND THE FORTUNATE FELL TO
THEIR CLAWS AND FANGS. THE REST WERE DRAGGED
HERE. THE GOOD BOOK AND THE PREACHERS TELL US
THAT GOD CURSED THE SERPENT SO THAT IT MIGHT
CRAWL ON ITS BELLY FOREVERMORE. WHY THEN
DOES OUR NEW MASTER STILL WALK? HOW DID HE
AND HIS KIND ESCAPE GOD'S JUSTICE? DID THEY
SLEEP HERE BEFORE THE FALL AND SO PASS
BENEATH NOTICE? NOW WE SERVE THIS HATEFUL
SERPENT. HE SETS US TO WORK FOR HIM, ALL MEN
ALIKE. HE FORCES US TO MATE TOGETHER AS IF WE
WERE NO MORE THAN ANIMALS. I HAVE SEEN MY
FELLOWS DIE, WASTING AWAY OR AT THE PLEASURE
OF THE SERPENT. WE ARE HIDDEN FAR FROM THE
LOVING EYES OF GOD.



Friclofaren

THE DARKNESS BENEATH THE HILL

tasting the investigators. This vision calls for a **Sanity** roll (1/1D4 Sanity point loss) but also grants 2 points of Cthulhu Mythos.

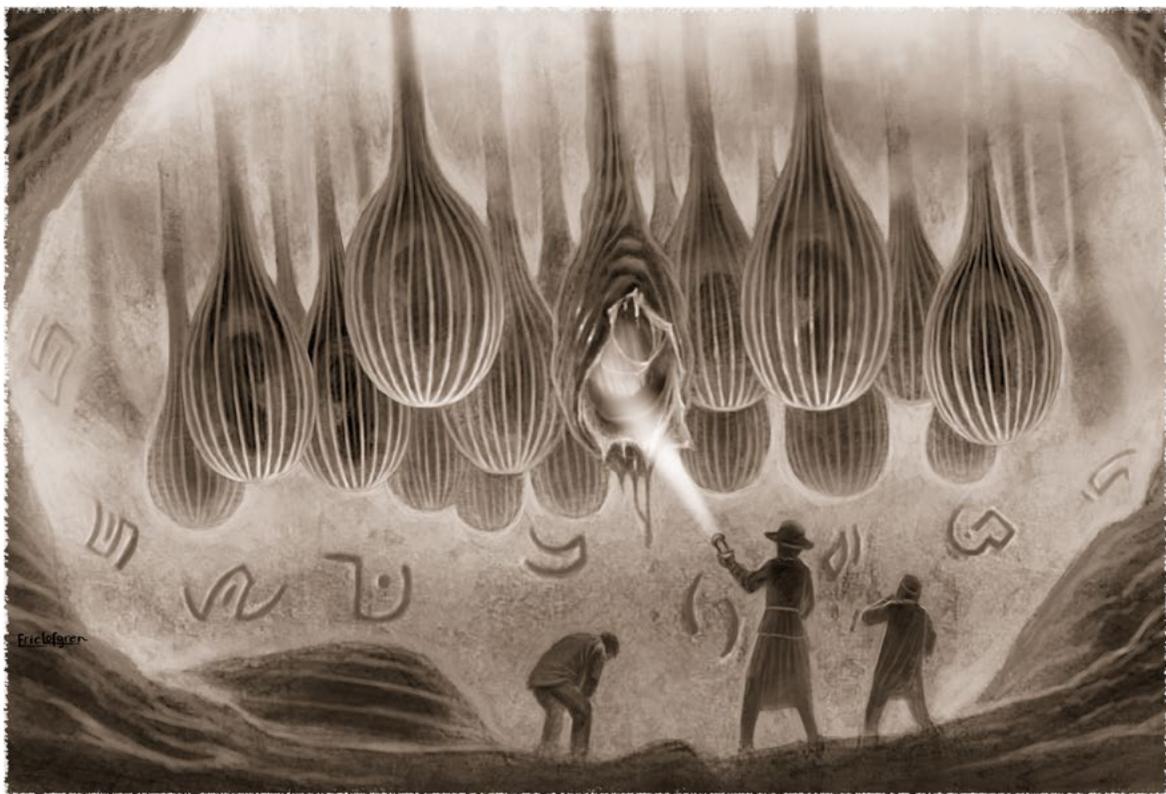
SUSPENDED-ANIMATION CHAMBER

Dangling from the ceiling of this chamber are twenty-one translucent yellow pods, swaying slightly in the humid mist that pours from apertures in the ceiling. Within the pods, serpent people can be seen floating in a frothy green fluid. One brown, leathery pod, however, is torn open and empty. This bizarre spectacle requires a **Sanity** roll (0/1D6 Sanity points loss).

The pods can be cut open, spilling their contents onto the floor. The serpent people within are not ready to awaken from their millennia-long sleep, and released from their pods, they quickly die. It takes several minutes to cut open all the pods, which may draw the attention of a ghost. The pods are also extremely flammable, and once the fluid inside them ignites, a suffocating gas is released. Unless the investigators are holding their breaths in anticipation, they must make a **CON** roll in the first round to avoid breathing in the gas. If the roll is failed, the investigator begins to choke and suffocate from the toxic fumes, taking 1D4 damage. Each round thereafter that they are exposed to the gas another **CON** roll is required (another 1D4 damage if failed). Unless a ghost is blocking their escape route, it

KEEPER SUGGESTION: WHISPERS OF THE SERPENT

If suffering a vision of Yig, the Keeper can make the alien images as vague or as detailed as desired. The investigators could catch glimpses of the ancient worship of Yig by the serpent people or prehistoric human cultures (some of which appear quite advanced). This includes human sacrifices, the victims' bodies bursting with poisons. The investigators may also see victims of the Curse of Yig, as those who offend the Great Old One are mutated with serpentine features or give birth to deformed monstrosities. If appropriate, the Keeper could also use the opportunity to show other visions (perhaps from other scenarios in this book) that could plant seeds for future scenarios. Don't forget to describe the sounds and smells of the visions, as well as the imagery. Providing multi-sensory information can make the scene come to life and has a greater impact upon the players. If anyone does fall temporary or indefinitely insane at this point, then a suitable phobia to give the investigator would be Ophidiophobia, the fear of snakes.



The Temple of Serpents and The Suspended-Animation Chamber by Eric Lofgren

CAPTURED!

The Keeper may decide that capturing some or all of the investigators is preferable to wiping them out—the ghosts are dangerous and tough, especially for investigators without an arsenal of weapons. Remember to call for CON rolls when investigators suffer a major wound. The ghosts could make knockout maneuvers (if successful, their target is knocked unconscious and loses a single hit point). Certainly their master, S'syaa-H'riss's, would prefer to have any intruders brought to him to be interrogated, enslaved, or used in experiments or other diversions.

The Keeper could take advantage of the ghost's Stealth skill (70%) to pick off stragglers. If a ghost successfully ambushes and knocks out an investigator, it can get away with its prize before anyone notices. But Keepers should be careful—capturing an investigator far in advance of the climax leaves that player idle while everyone else plays.

Captured investigators find themselves in the barred alcove in S'syaa-H'riss's quarters (see **The Lair Of S'syaa-H'riss**). Wincott is already there, but in his current mental state, he can't communicate, much less help. S'syaa-H'riss ignores his prisoners for two days, giving them no food or water, leaving them to suffer in the humid conditions of his chambers.

The investigators could try to escape. The bars to the alcove are sturdy but old, and an investigator making a STR roll can bend them enough to escape. There is only enough room for one investigator to do this at a time and its best accomplished while S'syaa-H'riss is away elsewhere in the complex. Those making a lot of noise may draw S'syaa-H'riss's attention (call for a Luck roll).

If S'syaa-H'riss realizes a captive is trying to escape, he'll punish him or her, most likely by casting the Enthrall Victim or Wrack spell (see *Call of Cthulhu Rulebook*, page 258 or page 265 respectively). An investigator brave enough to make another escape attempt later on must succeed in a Luck roll to avoid being noticed by S'syaa-H'riss, who will be paying closer attention to his captives.

After the initial two days have passed, S'syaa-H'riss pumps water into the cistern and tosses assorted fungus through the bars. Both water and food have been laced with a mild soporific poison. An investigator taste-testing the water and making a successful Science (Pharmacy) roll realizes that something has been added to it. Those ingesting the poison must make a CON roll: if failed, the victim falls into a coma-like sleep (for 1D6 days). This state can only be broken sooner through an antidote. If the CON roll is successful, he or she suffers a penalty dice on all physical actions (skill rolls) for 2D10 hours (if the result is an Extreme success the poison has no effect). S'syaa-H'riss assumes the investigators ingest what he has provided and doesn't closely watch to see that they do.

While he waits for the poison to take effect, the serpent man occupies himself with other pursuits. After some hours have passed, he comes to collect an investigator. He assumes that all of the captured investigators are suffering from the poison (if they all "play dead") and that they won't offer any resistance. S'syaa-H'riss opens the door to the alcove and has the degenerates drag one of the investigators out.

Once the serpent man has an investigator, S'syaa-H'riss ties him or

her to a table and applies the antidote (waking the unconscious investigator). S'syaa-H'riss then proceeds to question the investigator at a leisurely pace in order to learn more about the modern world. If the investigator resists, S'syaa-H'riss may begin harsher interrogation methods or he may decide to use the investigator as a test subject for his experiments. The Keeper should consider glossing over the details, using hints and allowing the player's own imagination to do the rest. The investigators should hopefully be spurred to action to either attempt escape or attack the serpent man. An investigator can get free from the ropes holding them by making either a STR roll to break them, or a Hard DEX roll (or a Regular Sleight of Hand roll) to free their hands.

If an investigator is tortured or experimented upon, that investigator should make a Sanity roll (0/1D10 Sanity point loss) and also lose 1D3 hit points. Those still in the alcove can hear the screams and might also be spurred into attempting an escape and rescue of their unfortunate colleague.



Ghast

Ghast by Loïc Mury

THE DARKNESS BENEATH THE HILL

only takes two of rounds to reach clean air. Clever investigators who contrive to set fire to the pods and quickly retreat (**DEX** roll) to a safe distance may avoid the gas.

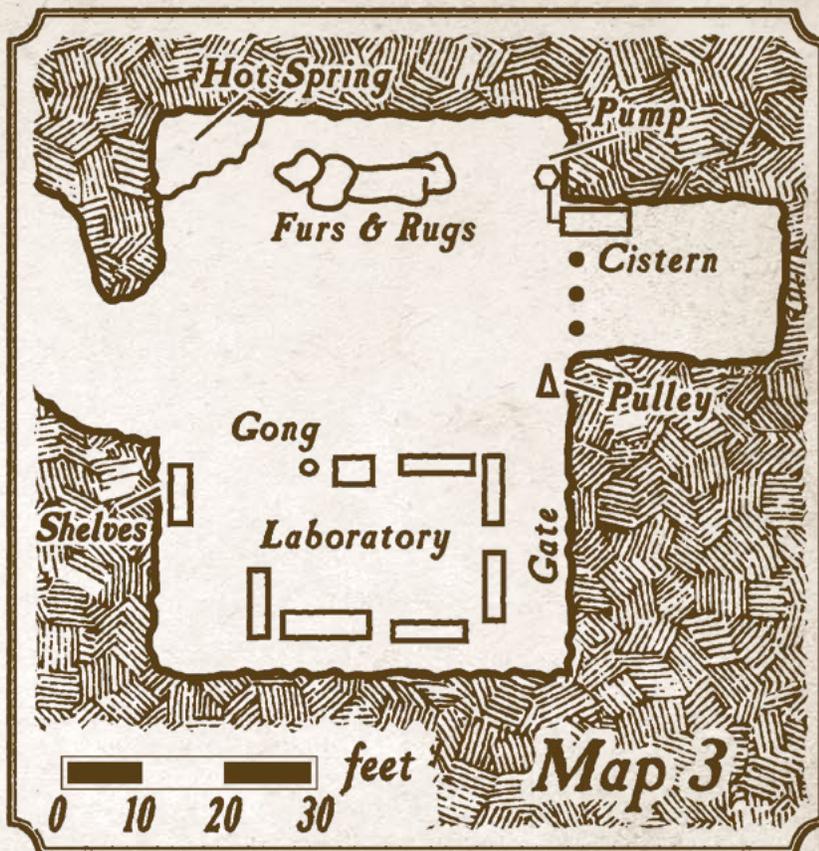
THE LAIR OF S'SYAA-H'RISSS

S'syaa-H'riss's living quarters are also his workspace. The air is heated by an unseen source, making it like a tropical jungle, humid and filled with strangely scented perfumes. S'syaa-H'riss's personal area consists of leather pillows and furs, and a hot spring bathing pool. Nearby is a large alcove fenced off by iron bars, in which a barred door is set. Within the alcove, three scrawny degenerate infants roll around and wail in their own filth while Josh Winscott, curled up in a fetal ball, mutters to himself.

The workspace comprises three shelves of leather scrolls (written in the curving serpent people script) and an enormous laboratory of bubbling alembics and retorts, along with other alchemical and arcane equipment spread out on tables. Near the tables is a large bronze gong.

The walls have the characteristic carvings found elsewhere in the tunnels, but the wall nearest the workspace stands out to anyone making a **Spot Hidden** roll (or carefully inspecting all the carvings). These carvings are in a compact space, have no pictorial element except for a plethora of spiraling lines, and do not flow over to and intertwine with the carvings on the other walls. A successful **Cthulhu Mythos** roll recognizes the patterns and swirls as indicative of a gate—a magical portal used for traveling. If someone walks into the wall or touches it, 1 magic point and 1 Sanity point are lost as he or she disappears. To the viewer, it looks as if the person has been sucked through the wall. Anyone using the gate in this manner reappears in another, unfamiliar, cavern, which eventually leads out to the river in the Pawtuxet area, 5 miles south of Providence. Where the user exits, the wall that they have passed through also has the same spiraling lines pattern, which allows for return to S'syaa-H'riss's chamber (at the cost of 1 magic point and 1 Sanity point). The ghosts and degenerates are unable to use the gate.

S'syaa-H'riss rarely goes elsewhere. He spends most of his waking hours in his laboratory conducting magical experiments or studying scrolls. Occasionally he wanders the tunnels for fungi specimens. He is assisted by three, smarter and better trained, degenerates, who he relies upon for fetching and



carrying items. He occasionally meditates in the temple or relaxes in the music chamber. He eats every few days, swallowing one of the degenerate infants whole (seeing this ghastly meal provokes a **Sanity** roll, with 0/1D2 Sanity point loss). He sleeps only occasionally, usually after eating. He is unable to close his eyes, and sometimes naps while sitting at his work area—investigators may not realize he is sleeping unless they observe his absolute stillness. His assistants sleep when he does.

Stealthy investigators may be able to observe S'syaa-H'riss or get the drop on him while he sleeps or focuses on his work. Investigators who recognize the gate might even be able to quickly sneak through it. If this is the investigator's first experience with the **Cthulhu Mythos** (thus, they have no **Cthulhu Mythos** skill) then the Keeper might elect to have S'syaa-H'riss use the gate once to allow the investigators to get the right idea about it).

Investigators secretly observing S'syaa-H'riss while he's awake should each succeed in a **Stealth** roll. If anyone fails, S'syaa-H'riss wakes up and snaps to attention. If he does not notice them, they may continue observing him or chose to attack him—this would count as a surprise attack. Note, investigators who go insane, either temporarily or worse, may draw attention to themselves.

Unfortunately, while the investigators might be able to sneak up to the cage in the alcove, they won't be able to open it without a further **Stealth** roll to operate the door without

making a sound.

The large bronze gong is used by S'syaa-H'riss to summon the ghosts to his aid—if he feels threatened he will do so. A ghost appears 1D10+2 rounds after the gong is rung. If things go against the serpent man, he will attempt to flee through the gate.

The laboratory is extremely volatile. Set on fire, hit with gunfire, or tipped over, the liquids combine and explode, causing 3D6 damage in a 1-yard radius, 2D6 damage 2-yards away, and 1D6 damage 3-yards away. Quick thinking investigators might be entitled to a **Dodge** or **Jump** roll to get out of the explosion zone (or reduce the damage caused). Note that gunfire within the chamber is likely to hit the chemicals (missed shots have a 30% chance to hit the laboratory equipment). Investigators may also pick up the various bottles and vials containing the chemicals, using them to throw at their foes. If they succeed in a **Throw** roll, the toxic liquid causes 1D6 damage per round for 1D3 rounds.

A FRIEND IN TROUBLE

Josh Winscott's exposure to the horrors of S'syaa-H'riss and his minions has sent him into a catatonic state, unable to act without guidance. He can be found curled up in a fetal ball, muttering to himself about "*Snakes that walk*," "*beast men*," and the other sights he has witnessed since foolishly heading out alone into the tunnel under his home.

A successful **Psychoanalysis** roll allows an investigator to calm Winscott and get him to silently comply with simple directions. Otherwise, the investigators will have to gently manhandle him out of the complex. If combat ensues, Winscott will retreat to a corner and revert to a fetal state. If the situation is dire and the investigators are in a tough spot, the Keeper could have Winscott momentarily come to his senses, comprehend what's going on, and throw himself at the danger, hopefully buying the investigators some time to get away or extricate themselves. As the investigators flee, the last they hear of Winscott is a muffled cry.

CONCLUSION

The main goal of the investigators should be to rescue Winscott and escape. Of course, the investigators may settle for simply escaping with their own lives.

It is dangerous to try to find their way back from whence they came, harried by degenerates and stalked by ghosts. The gate is the safest and most efficient way out if the investigators figure it out or accidentally activate it. The investigators could also kill S'syaa-H'riss, as well as his torpid fellow serpent people.

If rescued, Winscott is never quite the same again. His exposure to the terrors under his home have driven him indefinitely insane and he will be best cared for in a private

institution, if the investigators are kind enough to sort this out. Perhaps in time, Winscott is cured and quietly sells his home to move to a less worrisome location. Alternatively, his experience drives him to search for the truth about Earth's real history, and he begins to delve into other reports of strange encounters with "snake men" around the world—the Keeper might use Winscott to provide leads and clues into future adventures for the investigators.

If S'syaa-H'riss and the other sleeping serpent people survive, they are not an immediate threat to the surface world—yet. S'syaa-H'riss will patiently continue learning about the current era and look for a way to adapt to its cooler climate. His dreams of a new serpent empire will take some time to come to fruition, but woe to humanity when that day comes to pass.

There's nothing stopping the investigators from coming back, better prepared, to finish off the serpent people threat, but anyone going to the authorities to ask for help in taking care of the "snake man who lives under the ground," will be laughed out of the room. The investigators are on their own.

If the investigators decide to leave S'syaa-H'riss alone for the time being, the Keeper has the opportunity to bring him back at some stage later on (when they least expect it). Perhaps he seeks revenge or it's just fate that the investigator's paths cross him again.

Rewards

Depending on the outcome of the scenario, apply the following rewards to the surviving investigators:

- For rescuing Josh Winscott, +1D6 Sanity points.
- For leaving Josh Winscott to fate worse than death, -1D6+1 Sanity points.
- For escaping (without defeating S'syaa-H'riss), +1D4 Sanity points.
- For escaping and defeating S'syaa-H'riss, +1D6 Sanity points.
- For destroying the serpent people in their pods, +1D4 Sanity points.
- For defeating a ghost, +1D8 Sanity points (to a maximum award of 8 Sanity).





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APPENDIX A: CHARACTERS AND MONSTERS

JOSH WINSCOTT, *damned by his legacy*

STR 55 CON 65 SIZ 50 DEX 45 INT 75
APP 65 POW 50 EDU 85 SAN 36* HP: 11
Damage Bonus: 0 Build: 0 Move: 8 MP: 10

*Indefinitely insane when encountered in the caverns.

Combat

Brawl 50% (25/10), damage 1D3
Dodge 25% (12/5)

Skills

Climb 40%, Credit Rating 60%, Fast Talk 40%, History 30%,
Jump 35%, Library Use 25%, Occult 20%, Persuade 50%,
Psychology 35%, Stealth 30%, Throw 45%.

Languages: English 85%, French 65%.

DEGENERATES, *devolved humans*

char.	averages	roll
STR	50	(3D6 x5)
CON	35	(2D6 x5)
SIZ	20	(1D6+1 x5)
DEX	70	(4D6 x5)
INT	20	(1D6 x5)
POW	45	(2D6+2 x5)

HP: 5

Average Damage Bonus: -1

Build: -1

Move: 9

Sanity Loss: 0/1D4 to see a degenerate.

Combat

Attacks per round: 1 (claw, punch, or club)

Fighting 40% (20/8), damage 1D3-1
Club 40% (20/8), damage 1D6-1
Dodge 40% (20/8)

Skills

Climb 60%, Jump 60%, Stealth 50%, Steal Things 60%.

GHASTS, *loathsome overseers*

STR 110 CON 70 SIZ 130 DEX 65 INT 15
APP — POW 50 EDU — SAN — HP: 20
Damage Bonus: +2D6 Build: 3 Move: 10 MP: 10
Sanity Loss: 0/1D8 Sanity points to see a ghost.

Combat

Attacks per round: 2 (claw, punch, or bite)

Fighting 45% (22/9), damage 1D6+2D6
Dodge 35% (17/7)

Skills

Listen 60%, Stealth 70%.

Armor: None.

S'SYAA-H'RISSS, *serpentine scientist*

STR 50 CON 45 SIZ 65 DEX 70 INT 90
APP — POW 95 EDU — SAN — HP: 20
Damage Bonus: 0 Build: 0 Move: 8 MP: 19

Combat

Attacks per round: 1 (claw, bite, or weapon)

Fighting 50% (25/10), damage 1D3 (or knife, 1D6)
Bite 35% (17/7), damage 1D8 + poison*
Dodge 35% (17/7)

*Poison: victim must succeed with an Extreme CON roll or take +1D8 damage.

Skills

Intimidate 65%, Listen 40%, Sciences (Biology 70%,
Chemistry 90%), Spot Hidden 45%, Stealth 50%.

Languages: English 60%.

Armor: 1-point scales.

Spells: Brew Space Mead, Chant of Thoth, Cloud Memory,
Create Gate, Enthrall Victim, Mindblast, Wrack.

Sanity Loss: 0/1D6 Sanity points to see a serpent person.

GENIUS LOCI

By Brian Courtemanche

INTRODUCTION

This scenario is suitable for two to six players, although with a little modification it can be run for a single player. The action takes place in Danvers, Massachusetts, eighteen miles north of Boston, not far from Arkham and Salem. The year is nominally 1925, but can be accommodated to take place anytime during the 1920s.

KEEPER INFORMATION

The Danvers State Lunatic Asylum (also known as the Danvers State Hospital) broods atop Hathorne Hill like a medieval walled monastery, a great gothic pile of red brick and slate roof, harsh angles, and windows set like soulless eyes gazing out upon the countryside. The extensive buildings and grounds encompass patient wards, dormitories, offices, examination rooms, laboratories, kitchens, workrooms, service plants, greenhouses, garages, and a chapel. All in place to keep a small city of the mad running with minimal contact from the outside world, even unto the next life; a potter's field sits apart on the sloping hillside, claiming those lonely patients without next of kin.

The fact that the asylum sits on Hathorne Hill is the source of all the trouble brewing in this scenario. For centuries, a lloigor has dwelled upon the hill, an isolated place suited to its cosmic pessimism. The lloigor race—insubstantial, invisible intelligences, transients on this planet—view the true nature of the cosmos with unflinching clarity. They cannot abide the youthful composition of our planet, nor the innate dynamism of all creatures upon it. Hathorne Hill has thus always been an accursed place.

In colonial times, the lloigor worked its malign influence over Salem magistrate Judge John Hathorne, who then had his residence atop the hill. Hathorne prosecuted and persecuted the so-called Salem witches in a supposed fever

of righteousness like a man possessed. The establishment of the Danvers State Lunatic Asylum upon the same acreage a century and a half later agitates the lloigor once more. It stirs to find a veritable village of the mentally vulnerable upon which to prey.

Danvers State Lunatic Asylum had been under the sway of the lloigor for years. Locals assumed the many accidents and deaths at the asylum were the inevitable result of so many lunatics institutionalized in one location. All that was to change with the arrival of Dr. William Shine, the hospital's superintendent from 1890 to 1915. A world traveler and someone acquainted with the Cthulhu Mythos, Dr. Shine sized up the true situation at Danvers. Recognizing the telltale signs of the Mythos, he swiftly and quietly installed a large granite disk inscribed with the Elder Sign on the hillside. Restrained by the power of the sign, the lloigor became a prisoner, its malign influence upon the hill's occupants thwarted.

With time comes change. Dr. Shine retired from the hospital, replaced by Dr. James Berger. The new superintendent, unaware of the Mythos and the horror beneath his feet, had an amphitheater constructed on the hill, allowing the patients to take in the grand view overlooking the reservoir. Shine's Elder Sign disk, thought to be nothing more than decoration, was removed. The lloigor, now free, returned with a vengeance.

By the time of the start of this scenario, Dr. Berger, once a kindly, bright-minded alienist, has become twisted by the lloigor into something cruel and cunning. Berger runs the Danvers State Lunatic Asylum as his personal fiefdom, inflicting miseries upon his wards. Violent rites are held upon the dark of the moon to satisfy the perverse whims of the lloigor, the celebrants capering and maiming one another in an ecstasy of obeisance. Berger is safeguarded from consequences by the hospital's physical and social isolation, and his own professional prestige.

KEEPER SUGGESTION: HOOKING THE INVESTIGATORS

One way to really “hook” the interest of the players and their investigators is to change Lawrence Croswell into a “retired” investigator—a previous player character who succumbed to indefinite insanity in an earlier scenario. Alternatively, the character could have suffered terrible wounds and so required an extended convalescence, and who, on physically healing, has found that their mental scars also required recuperation at Danvers. This option does require the Keeper to modify the scenario a little, changing Croswell to the retired investigator, but presents a very compelling reason for the investigators to take notice of their former colleague’s cry for help.

INVOLVING THE INVESTIGATORS

Lawrence “Larry” Croswell is an author specializing in New England folklore, superstitions, and the supernatural. Ever in the pursuit of the next legend or ghost story, Croswell is a confirmed lifelong bachelor, maintaining a loose network of friendships and contacts across New England, including many who share his outré interests.

Croswell’s latest exploits have left him spiritually and mentally shaken and he has admitted himself into the Danvers State Hospital. Instead of sanctuary, Croswell finds the hospital under the perverse spell of the lloigor, as well as that of Superintendent Berger, who is a sadistic petty tyrant. Observation and conversations with fellow patients have made Croswell believe that something supernatural may be behind the hospital’s problems. The writer’s inquiries have drawn the attention of the lloigor, who wishes Croswell be detained. Consequently, Berger (under the dominion of the lloigor) has arranged to have Croswell’s stay at Danvers indefinitely prolonged. The docile Croswell has been labeled “most excitable” and transferred to the asylum’s J-Wing—the ward reserved for the most violent male patients.

Just prior to his imprisonment in J-Wing, Croswell was able to sneak a letter out to one of his investigator friends, a plea to rescue him from Danvers Asylum. The Keeper should choose one of the investigators to receive Croswell’s letter. Maybe the investigator is well known to the writer, or perhaps they have corresponded in the past. Another option is for Croswell be a family relation. Give the chosen investigator Croswell’s letter (**Handout: Genius 1**). The letter is scribbled in pencil on a rumpled sheet of lined paper, hastily stuffed into a creased envelope.

ON THE ACTUAL HISTORY OF THE DANVERS STATE HOSPITAL

Erected in 1878, Danvers State Hospital occupies a rural, semi-isolated location. “Moral therapy” was used to normalize patients: residents farmed the acreage, built greenhouses, dug tunnels connecting facilities, repaired utilities, and made crafts sold at local markets. Yet only a few decades after its establishment, the hospital was already overcrowded and understaffed. Earlier, gentler approaches to wellness were replaced by harsher, more expedient interventions: shock treatment, hydrotherapy, insulin therapy, and lobotomies. Residents rarely left their wards, drugged into submissiveness.

By the 1990s, the Danvers asylum was a decrepit ghost of its former self. Decades of cutbacks and decline in its resident population caused the hospital to close in 1992. It sat abandoned for fifteen years. Reputedly, much of the hospital’s equipment, furnishings, and patient records were simply left to rust and rot behind chain-linked fencing. Bulldozers finally moved in and an apartment complex was erected on the site. Only the facade of the central administration building was spared. The nearby potter’s field remained, filled with scores of unmarked graves, the last ghosts of the hospital’s past.

Keepers may find it useful to seek out and view the horror movie *Session 9* (2001, Dir. Brad Anderson), which takes place in the closed-down Danvers State Lunatic Asylum. Watching this film provides a sense of the asylum’s enormity and the uncanny atmosphere of the place in its extreme decline.

The following day, the same investigator receives another letter (**Handout: Genius 2**), this time, the letter is typewritten on official Danvers State Hospital letterhead. Reading over the second letter, a successful **Know** roll recalls that Croswell almost never uses his formal name “Lawrence” and instead usually goes by “Larry.” Also, Larry never uses a typewriter, instead dictating his manuscripts from longhand notes to a hired typist.

DEAR _____,

AS YOU KNOW, I HAVE RECENTLY COMMITTED MYSELF TO THE STATE HOSPITAL AT DANVERS FOR A LITTLE MENTAL RECUPERATION AFTER MY MOST RECENT FORAY INTO THE SUPERNATURAL. I HAVE MADE A TERRIBLE ERROR IN SELECTING DANVERS. I AM IN GREAT PHYSICAL, MENTAL, AND SPIRITUAL PERIL HERE. THERE IS A "WRONGNESS" ABOUT THIS PLACE. THEY WILL NOT LET ME LEAVE. I MUST SNEAK THIS LETTER OUT TO YOU AS THEY READ THE MAIL HERE.

PLEASE COME AND RECOVER ME FROM THIS DREADFUL PLACE. IT WOULD BE WISE FOR YOU TO BRING COMPANIONS, AS COMING HERE ALONE IS A MISTAKE.

YOUR FRIEND,

LARRY CROSWELL

Danvers State Hospital

450 Maple St • Danvers, MA

Dear _____,

Please disregard my earlier letter to you.

I was having an anxiety attack.

Everything here is fine. Do not come here.

I need more rest and counseling.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

Lawrence Crosswell

VISITING DANVERS STATE HOSPITAL

“With the first glimpse of the building, a sense of insufferable gloom pervaded my spirit.”

—Edgar Allen Poe, *The Fall of the House of Usher*

A winding drive up a rural hillside through a set of tall iron gates leads to the sprawling hospital at Danvers. Featuring a central building with a front tower, flanked by angular adjoining wards, the asylum’s layout suggests a bat with outstretched wings. Numerous outbuildings surround the main complex, as do copses of broadleaf and evergreen trees. Grassy fields and woodland ring the hill. Normally a beautiful vista, there is a leaden, dulled quality to the scene.

A large oval reservoir is set into the western slope of Hathorne Hill, surrounded on three sides by trees; its eastern shore faces the asylum. The surface of the reservoir has an odd, almost metallic blue-grey sheen. A semi-circular amphitheater occupies the eastern slope of the hill, its backdrop the shore of the reservoir. The amphitheater appears to be a fairly new construction.

Investigators on asylum grounds making a successful POW roll experience a visceral sensation of palpable dread, siphoning off a single Sanity point. Those succeeding with Extreme successes on the POW roll also feel a disconcerting thought—that the asylum is somehow “aware” of their presence and hostile to their visit. Each vacant, staring window appears to be a cold, soulless eye boring into their most private thoughts. A leaden gloom pervades the atmosphere of the place, leeching away happiness and hope.

Within the cheerless interior of the central administration building, investigators notice a strong antiseptic odor and freshly mopped floors. Grillwork covers all windows. Listless, gown-clad patients slump in wooden chairs or shuffle about aimlessly. A severe-looking desk nurse brusquely shows visitors to the office of asylum superintendent Dr. James Berger. A successful **Spot Hidden** roll shows that half of the nurse’s left ear appears to have been chewed or torn away.

Dr. Berger is a stern, unfriendly man in his late thirties, dressed in a white lab coat, with an officious-looking clipboard. His office features numerous framed diplomas and certifications, a large desk, several overburdened file cabinets, and a curious painting of St. George and the Dragon. In this version of the painting the dragon is mauling St. George; his eviscerated horse lies nearby. The painting is particularly detailed and quite gruesome. If asked about the painting, Dr.



Danvers State Hospital (photograph from the Library of Congress)

KEEPER SUGGESTION: THIS PLACE DRIVES ME CRAZY

Sanity point losses need not always be occasioned by exposure to slime-covered monsters from beyond or gory incidents of violence. A supernaturally charged atmosphere can, occasionally, prompt calls for Sanity rolls as a subconscious warning that something is fundamentally wrong with the location. Such rolls can alert discerning players that the area may warrant further investigation. Care must be exercised not to overuse this trope, lest every spooky locale gradually exhausts Sanity points and the players' patience.

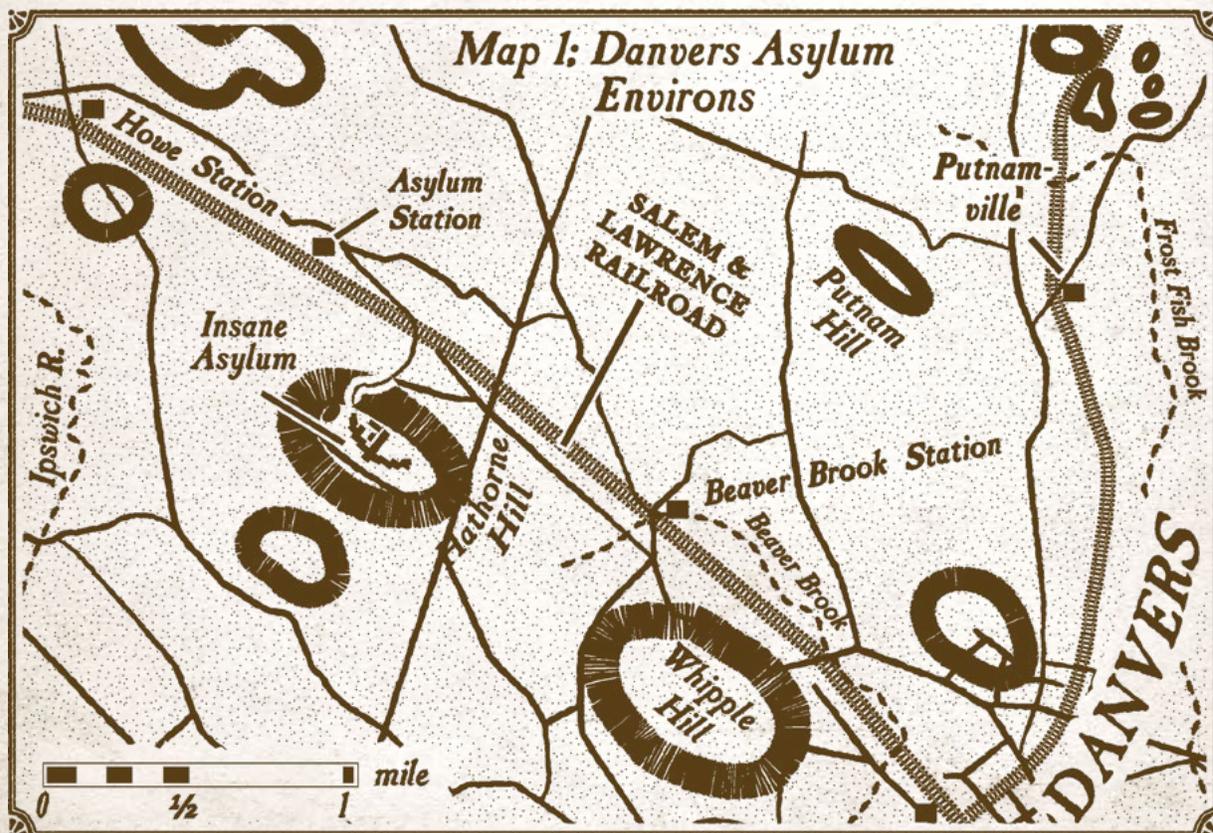
Berger tersely explains that it was a gift presented to him by the patients for his caring stewardship of the hospital.

There is also a framed *Salem News* photograph of a younger, happier-looking Dr. Berger shaking hands in front of the hospital's central administration building with a smiling, bespectacled older man. The caption under the photograph

reads: *Dr. James Berger takes over Danvers State Asylum from Dr. William Shine.*

Asking for Larry Crosswell, Dr. Berger informs investigators that the patient is most excitable and assigned to the facility's J Ward, a place reserved for the most violent male patients. No visitations are allowed at this time. If pressed (with successful **Law, Medicine, Intimidate**, or **Persuade** roll), Dr. Berger grudgingly allows a brief visit. Two surly, taciturn orderlies escort the investigators through the locked wards to Crosswell. A successful **Psychology** roll detects that all the patients in the wards are visibly afraid of the two orderlies.

Progressing through the wards, the severity of the patients' conditions correspondingly increases. As the investigators finally reach J Ward, their senses are assailed: shrieks, sobs, and giddy laughter echo down corridors; the stench of urine and feces is barely masked by strong cleansing agents. Doors become metal. A shocking number of patients lack fingers, hands, or even limbs. One figure behind a metal door stares out at the investigators with raw, weeping empty eye sockets. Even among the less-afflicted, long scars and gouges pockmark flesh. If asked, the staff curtly explains away these injuries as, "Results of infection or self-mutilation." A successful **Spot Hidden** roll reveals a puffy red scar on the wrist of one of the orderlies that vanishes up his coat sleeve. The more the investigators scrutinize the staff, more half-hidden marks and



disfigurements will be seen, though never explained. Simply visiting J Ward for the first time requires a **Sanity** roll (0/1D2 Sanity points loss).

Croswell is within cell J-12, looking haggard. He (yet) lacks the horrible disfigurements displayed by many on J Ward. Croswell is heartened to see friends but wary of the surly guards hovering nearby. If the investigators do not ask the orderlies for a few minutes of privacy, Croswell will. The orderlies relent with mute glares at their patient.

Momentarily free of minders, Croswell speaks freely:

- Something is very wrong with Danvers State Hospital. Patients are kept like prisoners and are very afraid of the staff, especially Dr. Berger.
- After expressing his desire to leave the hospital, Croswell was consigned to J Ward. He is now a virtual prisoner despite originally admitting himself to the hospital.
- Before his banishment to J Ward, Croswell befriended a fellow patient called Andrew MacBride, who is interred in H Ward. Croswell says, "*MacBride is as touched as the others, yet also he seems to know what is really going on.*"
- Dr. Berger threatened Croswell that, "*He is in for quite an experience when the sky prepares to welcome the new moon.*" This fills Croswell with dread.

After a few moments, the orderlies return, escorting the investigators back to the superintendent's office. Dr. Berger will not allow investigators to have Croswell discharged under any circumstances, maintaining the pretense that Croswell is delusional and dangerous. Completely in the thrall of the lloigor (as are the rest of the staff) Berger is beyond persuasion. Given his lofty, credentialed position, even investigators with high Credit Ratings, legal connections, or other social advantages will not be able to contravene the doctor's orders, at least not in the time it takes to save Croswell from the fate Berger has planned.

Investigators checking the lunar calendar learn that the new moon—when the night sky is darkest—is just a few days away. This time is left flexible so Keepers may keep the pace of the scenario dramatic and exciting. Investigators should have perhaps three days to conduct research, ponder options, and experience the weird menace of the lloigor—but still ensure a sense of urgency.

The investigators have a quandary: abide by doctor's orders and leave their friend imprisoned in the asylum, or find a way to free their friend, perhaps putting them at odds with the law of the land.

Note that statistics for Dr. Berger and the asylum attendants can be found in **Appendix A: Characters and Monsters**.



KEEPER SUGGESTION: HERE'S LOOKING AT YOU

Be mindful that anything investigators say or do in the vicinity of Hathorne Hill is 100% observable by the pervasive lloigor. The creature may communicate telepathically to Dr. Berger, thus the alienist may also be preternaturally aware of investigator acts and intentions, and so able to anticipate their actions.



THE LLOIGOR TAKES NOTICE

The lloigor's sentient presence on Hathorne Hill is pervasive. Aware of the investigators the moment they arrive on the scene, it does not appreciate their intrusion. For tension and danger, Keepers may assign any of the following incidents at opportune moments, representing the lloigor's reaction to the investigators:

- A hulking patient ambushes one of the investigators, slamming him or her up against a wall or table. He grips the victim by the shoulders with vise-like hands, angrily screaming, "*What do you know? What do you know?*" Orderlies quickly intervene, roughly hauling the patient out of sight. There are no apologies or explanations offered by the sullen staff.
- In a shallow pool of fetid water (a puddle, a sink, a bath), something reptilian and much too large for such a small pool slithers and submerges out of sight. It is only a moment's glimpse, and examination of the shallow puddle reveals the absurdity of the vision—yet the surface of the pool ripples as if something did disturb the water. Call for a **Sanity** roll (0/1 Sanity point loss). The water itself has an odd blue-grey tint that defies explanation and chemical analysis.
- A random investigator (or two) is suddenly overcome with a bout of weakness and chills, not unlike a sudden onset of influenza. The affected investigator(s) must make a **CON** roll or lose 5 points of CON. These lost points may temporarily reduce hit points. Lost CON points return after a night's rest away from the asylum.
- Descending a set of stairs, an investigator is pushed from behind by an unseen force. The investigator must succeed with a **DEX** roll or take a nasty tumble for 1D4 points of damage.



- The investigators pass a patient who is scrawling with chalk upon the wall tiles. The image is that of an obscene creature, a dragon-like toad with a multitude of eyes. A short time later, investigators pass another patient drawing an eerily similar creature on a sketchpad. Still later, an orderly is spotted wiping bloody smears off of a door. The smears appear to be a drawing suggesting the same creature, provoking a **Sanity** roll (0/1D2 Sanity points loss).
- Any photographs taken within the asylum or on hospital grounds uniformly come out black, and compasses become demagnetized.

RESEARCH AND RUMINATION

Concerning the Danvers State Lunatic Asylum

Investigators researching the history of Danvers Hospital have their choice of local libraries and historical societies to consult. Nearby is the Peabody Institute Library of Danvers (the town's public library), the Phillips Library at the Peabody Essex Institute in nearby Salem, the Danvers Historical Society, and the records at Danvers Town Hall. There are also the archive-morgues of the *Danvers Herald* and *Salem News*, the

local newspaper outlets. Each clue listed below is followed in italicized parentheses by potential location and suggested skill roll to find it.

- Researching the Danvers State Lunatic Asylum itself discloses basic facts of its existence: erected in 1876 at a staggering cost of 1.5 million dollars; grounds encompass nearly 200 acres; patient counts (approximately 2,775 in 1925), staff listings, financial reports, other normal bureaucratic details. (*Where found: town hall or local libraries. Skill: Accounting or Library Use*).
- The land occupied by the asylum complex was once the homestead of Judge John Hathorne, lead magistrate of the Salem Witch Trials, and the man personally responsible for sending approximately two dozen "witches" to their trial, imprisonment, and death. Hathorne was the only executor never to repent for his actions. (*Where found: local libraries or historical society. Skill: History, Law, Library Use, or Occult*).
- Newspaper articles report that the asylum is overcrowded and is a residence of last resort for many unstable, indigent citizens of Massachusetts. (*Where found: local libraries or newspaper offices. Skill: Library Use*).
- A dark reputation cloaked the asylum soon after its construction, with a high number of accidents and patient fatalities. No official, conclusive investigation is on record

related to these troubled early years. (*Where found: local libraries, historical society or newspaper offices. Skill: History, Law, Library Use.*)

- Warren A. Herrick, M.D., original superintendent at Danvers, died on the job after falling down a flight of asylum stairs in 1890. Dr. William Shine was appointed new superintendent that same year. Soon after Shine's appointment, asylum mishaps and fatalities drop dramatically. (*Where found: Local libraries, historical society, newspaper offices, town hall. Skill: Library Use.*)

Whether at the newspaper office, town hall, or local library, a successful **Library Use** roll uncovers a *Salem News* article, dated three years ago—see **Handout: Genius 3**. Alongside the article is a photograph of laborers kneeling by the water's edge, holding fragments of a large stone disk. The fragments suggest a symbol of a flame bounded by the outlines of a star. A successful **Cthulhu Mythos** roll recognizes the symbol as an Elder Sign. Failing that, an **Occult** roll recognizes that the fragments bear a mystic sigil, though its particular significance or purpose is unknown.

Should investigators fail to find any of the clues, generous Keepers may introduce a loquacious librarian, helpful clerk, or gregarious reporter handy with a few stories to tell, who can recant some of the details with a successful **Persuade**, **Charm**, or **Fast Talk** skill roll (or the price of a drink).

Note that further clues can be found by specifically researching Dr. Shine, Dr. Berger, and Judge John Hathorne (see **Researching Doctor Shine** nearby; **Researching Doctor Berger**, page 44; **Researching Magistrate Judge John Hathorne**, page 44).

Researching Doctor Shine

Investigators researching the background of former Danvers superintendent William Shine find a *Salem News* article with a successful **Library Use** roll—see **Handout: Genius 4**.

Those investigators who are happier to mix with the locals can ask around in the Salem and Danvers communities about Dr. Shine. Call for **Persuade**, **Fast Talk**, **Charm**, or possibly **Intimidate** rolls as necessary to encourage a former colleague, shop owner, or resident into talking about their memory of Dr. Shine:

- A native son of Salem, Dr. Shine ran the Danvers Asylum from 1890 to 1915. A lifelong bachelor who seemed to really care for the people in his care and in his life. He died soon after his retirement in 1916 of natural causes.
- Prior to his tenure at Danvers, Dr. Shine was a medical doctor and world traveler. His excursions took him to exotic destinations across the globe, like Africa and Asia. Rare for his time, Dr. Shine credited the native peoples he encountered as having valuable knowledge that could benefit the modern world.

DANVERS ASYLUM SUPERINTENDENT BUILDS AMPHITHEATRE FOR PATIENTS

Workmen at Danvers State Lunatic Asylum broke ground today for the establishment of a small amphitheater to be enjoyed by the patients. Residents will enjoy quiet conversation space, poetry readings, and musical performances in an idyllic outdoor setting next to the asylum's reservoir. "A beautiful place where water and earth meet," says superintendent Dr. James Berger.

Asylum resident and chief laborer, Andrew MacBride, added that his team had some difficulty breaking up and removing a large granite disk bearing an artistic design, set into the hillside where the amphitheater is to be built. The Asylum's prior superintendent, Dr. William Shine, had the disk placed on the side of Hathorne Hill. Dr. Shine, a world traveler, is said to have believed that the granite disk was a symbol of good luck for the asylum.

Local residents question the expense of building an amphitheater for mentally ill patients. However, Dr. Berger defends the creation of the amphitheater, explaining, "It is important to remember that we must look to the betterment of all our citizens, especially those deemed too delicate or damaged to be a part of the ebb and flow of the greater world."

- The asylum had a dark reputation before Dr. Shine's appointment: rife with accidents, lax discipline, and a low patient recovery rate. Dr. Shine turned things around. During his twenty-five year tenure, the asylum rebounded to become a model treatment center.
- When he retired, Dr. Shine donated his personal and professional papers to the archive at Salem Hospital.

SHINE RETIRES FROM DANVERS ASYLUM

Salem native Dr. William Shine, veteran superintendent at the State Lunatic Asylum at Danvers, is to retire after twenty-five years of service. Known for his great erudition, kindly demeanor, and progressive treatments, Dr. Shine is credited with a renewal of the facility for the betterment of its patients. Prior to his 1890 arrival, the asylum had suffered from a poor reputation and staff morale was low. Patient accident and mortality rates were among the highest in the country.

Superintendent Shine could occasionally appear as idiosyncratic as the institution he so successfully stewarded. Longtime readers may recall the complaints when Dr. Shine, then less than a year into his tenure, had a sculpted granite disk placed at the edge of the property's reservoir at taxpayer expense. Dr. Shine was then, as he is now, adamant that the decorative disk remain unmolested, even as the superintendent takes leave of the institution. Regardless of his idiosyncrasies, Dr. Shine's ability to transform the asylum into a success story over his long stewardship will be his enduring legacy.

A world traveler to exotic locales during his early years, Dr. Shine declares that he now looks forward to a quiet retirement in his native city of Salem. The doctor has stated his intention to bequeath his personal and professional papers to Salem Hospital.

Regarding his successor, Dr. James Berger, Dr. Shine has high praise: "Doctor Berger will no doubt be a sincere protector of the afflicted and a good master of the institution." Shine adds, "I sincerely hope that Doctor Berger will leave a few old stones unturned and instead focus his attention on the asylum's bright future." We at the newspaper wish Doctor Shine a long and happy retirement.

Shine's Papers At Salem Hospital

Dr. Shine's papers have languished unread since their donation in a dusty corner of the hospital's archives. The archives are accessible with successful **Law, Persuade, Charm, or Fast Talk** roll. Once admitted, a successful **Library Use** roll uncovers the documents.

Most of the writings are inconsequential accounts of Dr. Shine's personal and professional life, including his travels around the globe. Diligent perusal of the papers does prove fruitful, see **Handout: Genius 5**.

Researching Doctor Berger

After a few hours of sifting through papers at Danvers Town Hall and a successful **Library Use** roll, the investigators can uncover Dr. Berger's professional appointments prior to his tenure at Danvers. Alternately, investigators with a medical background may know the facts given below with a successful **Hard Know** roll:

- Prior to becoming superintendent at Danvers State Lunatic Asylum, Dr. Berger had a successful tenure at the State Lunatic Asylum in Austin, Texas. There he was known as a genial and thoroughly professional practitioner.
- Dr. Berger's professional record is impeccable, although his contributions to professional journals and attendance at professional conferences has slackened-off in recent years. Colleagues assume that he is overburdened with his work at the overcrowded Danvers facility.
- Dr. Berger has presided over Danvers Asylum for approximately ten years. In recent years, Berger has let professional contacts slip and has apparently discouraged contact from perplexed colleagues.
- Dr. Berger is unmarried and does not have any immediate family in the area. He has living quarters at the asylum provided for his personal use.

RESEARCHING MAGISTRATE JUDGE JOHN HATHORNE

Research at local libraries or the Danvers Historical Society regarding Hathorne Hill, or its namesake, Judge John Hathorne, reveal the following with a successful **Library Use** or **History** roll:

- The asylum occupies land that was once the homestead of Judge John Hathorne, lead magistrate of the Salem Witch Trials. Hathorne was personally responsible for sending nearly twenty witches to their trial, imprisonment, and death. Hathorne was the only executor never to repent for his actions.
- Originally from Salem, Hathorne moved his residence to the hill in 1690. The hill was known locally as "witches' ground" and a place where the "natives" once trucked with devils and spirits. An ancient stone disk with Pagan markings once sat

atop the hill. The disk was revered by the indigenous peoples, who spoke of, “*One who came from the sky,*” and placed the stone, stamping out an evil spirit that haunted the hill.

- Hathorne, a stalwart Puritan, removed the disk and deliberately claimed the land for God, building his homestead upon the site. The fate of the disk (and a more detailed description of its markings) have faded from the historical record.
- Although never a genial fellow, Hathorne built his reputation in Salem as a fair and even-handed magistrate. This changed dramatically soon after Hathorne build his home on the hill. The magistrate became remarkably vindictive in both his professional and personal life, making many enemies. Hathorne persecuted supposed witches and fanned the flames of the witchcraft hysteria with shocking zeal, reaping horrific results that haunt the region to this day.

UNWANTED ATTENTION

“When you stare into the abyss, the abyss stares back at you.”

—Friedrich Nietzsche.

In the course of their research, the investigators will come to realize that they are being watched and followed. While in a library, newspaper office, or similar, a successful **Spot Hidden** roll notices a stranger hovering just at the edge of the investigator’s perception. If looked at or approached, the figure fades into the woodwork, quickly disappearing. An **INT** roll recalls the face of one these “spies” as a member of the asylum staff, dressed in normal street clothes.

If somehow cornered (Keepers might like to use the full chase rules from the *Call of Cthulhu Rulebook*) the person denies any involvement, though a successful **Psychology** rolls discern the lies that they are. If pressed, these folk turn to veiled threats, warning investigators to, “*Let things be,*” and “*stay away from Danvers if they know what is good for them.*” At the first opportunity, the cornered spy will run away—perhaps hoping onto a passing bus, or into a waiting car. The men are under orders from Dr. Berger to follow the investigators and see what they are getting up to—they also fear Berger and will not reveal their master to the investigators unless their lives at stake (Extreme **Intimidate** roll on the part of the investigators).

Statistics for asylum staff can be found in **Appendix A: Characters and Monsters**.

KEEPER SUGGESTION: KEEP IT MOVING

Call of Cthulhu is unlike many other roleplaying games with its emphasis on investigation, detection, and research. A character with high Library Use skill or ability to read Latin may ultimately save the day beyond the capabilities of others more proficient in marksmanship, or who exhibit physical prowess. However, don’t let a failed Library Use, Spot Hidden, or other roll grind the investigation to a halt. Investigators will fail, often spectacularly. Allow for pushed rolls (as well as the use of spending Luck points—if that optional rule is used), interpreting the results within the context of the scenario. Think about inventive, alternate ways to present the investigators with useful information in order to keep the adventure moving forward. Don’t forget that even though they might fail a pushed roll, they can still find the clue, although the price for discovery will be harsher!

For example, if the investigators simply must find a journal hidden in a cluttered library in order to move events forward, give the players multiple opportunities to find the journal. A pushed roll might mean that extra time is spent in the library instead of finding the information right away. Maybe a failed roll requires the investigators to take their problem to a skilled non-player character for help. That non-player character (often invented on-the-fly by the Keeper) can demand a bribe or favor for their cooperation, or otherwise complicate the lives of the investigators. Perhaps a failed skill roll means that, even lacking some piece of information, the investigators are going to have to move forward regardless—sometimes the clue isn’t that important. The Keeper should be ready to provide players with alternate avenues of progress when necessary. In short: failed rolls are not the death of the scenario; they merely complicate matters in entertaining ways.

If the scenario-as-written states that certain clues are found at the local library, and instead the investigators make tracks to city hall, the Keeper may quietly shift that information from the library to city hall, so the clues may be found and the action moves forward. The investigators (and players) will never know that clues were originally intended to be found at the library. The important thing is that they have found needed information and the investigation can advance. Discreet, ongoing modification of the scenario-as-written during actual play is a typical Keeper maneuver ensuring a lively investigation and a good time for all at the table.

If all fails, and the players are in a mess and just don’t know which way to go next, then its time to use the Idea roll. Such a tactic will give the players the most important clue they have missed and ensure the scenario gets back on track.

June 2nd, 1890

The troubles afflicting the asylum run deep, and are of a kind my esteemed colleagues would never accept as part of a rational, orderly universe. Indeed, if I were to communicate my convictions to my peers, I would find myself consigned to these very walls as patient, not administrator. However, I have seen these problems before in my travels and must act swiftly. The thing, aware of my suspicions, has moved against me. But I have spoken the words of protection that I learned so long ago in that queer ancient city and so far have been safe. I must find Hathorne's disk, and soon, so as to lay down that thing which torments all here, twisting already damaged and vulnerable minds. Hathorne had the disk removed, thinking it a Pagan symbol of heathen spirit worship. What a terrible mistake by a zealous preacher. Heaven grant that I find the disk, and if found, that it will restrain the thing which moves against us all on Hathorne Hill.

November 12th, 1890

I have found Hathorne's disk. It is, as I suspected, an ancient sign from elder times, a ward against that which lairs in the very earth and air of the hill. Mercifully the disk has weathered the years and neglect remarkably well. The sigil etched upon its surface is as clear as the day it was placed there, but by whose hands? Best not to dwell on such Aeolian mysteries. My task now is to install it once more upon the hill, restraining that which, like others of its kin, is inimical to we who have inherited its world.

December 3rd, 1890

It is done. The sigil has been placed upon the earth, forcing down that which lairs upon the hill into an uneasy torpor. The taxpayers question the expense of having such a "useless decorative piece" installed at the asylum, but they pose no serious threat to its removal and are mercifully unaware of its true purpose. But to those who know, the sign shall serve as a ward for now and the future. Already I see signs of recovery in the patients and staff, as if they are surfacing from a long, waking nightmare.

May 7th, 1915

I have met with my successor. Dr. James Berger seems a cheerful and capable young fellow. Noting his active character, I have admonished the young doctor to never to remove the disk that lies at the edge of the reservoir upon the hill. Will he heed my words? It was impossible to impart to him my true reason for planting the disk all those long years ago. I had to fabricate reasons of sentimentality to impress upon him the importance of leaving the disk unmolested. I pray that he will remember his promise to leave the disk undisturbed.

If investigators persist in their investigation, the intimidation efforts are redoubled:

- A selected investigator's telephone rings in the dead of night (at home, the home of a friend, or in a hotel). Answering the call, there is only hissing static and pops on the other end of the line. The sense of a presence on the other end of the line is palpable.
- An investigator's automobile is vandalized and the tires slashed. There is a messy smear across the front windshield, a finger-painting done in blood. The image resembles a many-eyed dragon.

Drawing upon a nearly unlimited reserve of magic points from the asylum's population, the lloigor can also make attempts upon the investigators at a distance—it has marked them. Using its telekinetic abilities, a series of unfortunate events befalls investigators. Some suggestions include:

- An automobile's steering wheel suddenly jerks from the control of its operator. A **Drive Auto** roll must be passed or there is an accident. The vehicle occupants each suffer 1D6 points of damage.
- A heavy, bound bundle of newspapers fall from an overhead window, potentially striking for 1D4 damage. The investigator must succeed with a **Dodge** roll or be struck.
- If the investigator lives in the area, or if they are staying with friends, the basement pipes are loosened, causing significant water damage. This will likely short out the electrical supply. Weirdly, there is no forced entry into the residence, although the pipes have clearly suffered tampering.
- A loud noise draws an investigator below ground, perhaps into a basement or culvert. On the way down, the lloigor telekinetically pushes the victim, who must make a **Hard STR** roll or risk tumbling and taking 1D4 points of damage.
- Making a **POW** roll, an investigator gets the uncanny impression of unfriendly eyes cast upon his or her back. A stranger glares malevolently at the investigator. A successful **Psychology** roll gives the investigator the unmistakable impression that they were about to be attacked. The observer, if confronted, turns brusquely and stalks away. A simpleton, the stranger cannot coherently explain his behavior and seems to have forgotten all about it.

A Visit From Andrew MacBride

Dr. Berger allows for the "escape" of asylum patient Andrew MacBride. Berger instructs MacBride to eliminate the most meddlesome of the investigators—only things don't go quite as planned. An investigator wakes in the night to find a hulking, shadowy stranger looming over their bed. MacBride has an aggressive demeanor and a harsh voice but does not intend physical harm. Read aloud or paraphrase the following:

"You listen to me. I'm Andy MacBride. They know I'm out and about. They want me to fix it so you won't come around the hospital no more. But instead, I'm telling you what I shouldn't. So you listen good! There's something terrible living at the hospital. It's always been there. It's a power that lives in the walls and the halls and the gardens. Dr. Berger is going to sacrifice your friend Larry to the thing at the next dark of the moon. Larry don't have much time!"

His warning given, MacBride slips away into the night. Within a day of his visit, investigators see a Danvers Herald article—**Handout: Genius 6**.

Investigators checking with the Danvers Police or the newspaper editorial office can, with a successful **Law, Persuade, Charm, or Fast Talk** roll, learn more details. Reportedly, MacBride slit his own wrists, expiring from massive blood loss. With no known relatives, MacBride will be buried in the potter's field atop Hathorne Hill. In truth, MacBride was murdered by the asylum staff for revealing secrets to investigators.

BUSTING OUT LARRY CROSWELL

Investigators who are action orientated may decide to cut through the fog of weird menace and simply break into the Danvers asylum, spiriting their friend to safety. Even as the scenario-as-written shepherds investigators toward the final climactic scene, if the investigators execute cunning and selfless plans to rescue their friend Crowell before the dark of the moon ritual, the Keeper is well within rights to go with the flow and let it happen. There is no point in railroading investigators to the final scene just for the sake of presenting the final scene if the players are having a great time plotting and deploying a tense incursion into the asylum to liberate a friend.

A raid to bust out Crowell can be made as difficult and dangerous the Keeper desires for the scenario to be suspenseful and fraught with peril. A raid to this effect is no mean feat. However, the Keeper should suitably adjust the odds to match the investigators' capabilities, making events challenging but not impossible. An investigator group consisting mainly of brainy librarians and elderly antiquarians may encounter far less physical resistance than a group mainly consisting of hardened private detectives and gun-slinging adventurers. Tension is the key to a memorable sequence.

A ten-foot high spiked wall, patrolled by pairs of burly orderlies, encloses the asylum's grounds. Though there are a few exceptions, the orderlies are hired mostly for their brawn than for any mental acuity or strength of character. Fearful of crossing Dr. Berger and in thrall to the lloigor, some of these small-minded men may yet be susceptible to bribes, coercion, or false promises. Asylum doors are typically stout and locked (a **Hard STR** roll to break down, or **Locksmith** roll to pick the lock), though some orderlies and nurses have

key rings jangling on their belts or tucked in apron pockets. Tool sheds and medical cabinets throughout the facility may provide all manner of implements useful to skullduggery in the service of virtue.

Those caught by patrolling orderlies are bludgeoned into submission and taken directly to Dr. Berger. The superintendent imprisons captives, filing no reports. Torture and sacrifice to the lloigor at the dark of the moon can be expected. The lloigor, however, may appreciate this game of cat-and-mouse played by the humans on its hill, allowing the captured investigators to experience mysteriously unlocked cell doors or other uncannily fortuitous developments (see following for more on this).

The lloigor: a malign, utterly alien, ever-aware presence on Hathorne Hill. How will it react to the incursion? The monster may yet allow events to unfold, dispassionately curious as to how the raiders will fare, feeding on the tang of their anxiety. Alternately, the lloigor may deploy any number of its paranormal tactics to harry and distress asylum raiders, while yet allowing them to execute their rescue mission. After all, the paroxysm of fury erupting from a desperate asylum superintendent who loses his sacrificial captive may engage the lloigor's interest as much as receiving that hostage as sacrifice at the next dark of the moon. The lloigor is an alien, malign intelligence leeching sustenance out of human hate, fear, and misery; if it can sup on the rage of a thwarted Dr. Berger while simultaneously luxuriating in the investigators' anxiety that suits the lloigor just fine.

Beyond the insanity of the lloigor-dominated asylum, those who go in guns blazing may also find themselves at odds with law enforcement and the press for their efforts. These uninformed outsiders are more likely to accept Berger's account of a brazen patient abduction by criminals than anything the investigators are likely to come up with in their defense.

THE DARK OF THE MOON

I live in the weak and the wounded.

—Session 9

It is the dark of the moon and Superintendent Berger plans to sacrifice Larry Crosswell to the lloigor. Yard patrols by orderlies are recalled that evening by Dr. Berger so that the staff may participate in the debased ritual. At that time, discreet investigators may make their way to the ritual area without interference—the Keeper should not relate this fact to players, but rather keep them in suspense by asking for **Stealth** rolls.

At midnight on the appointed evening, a torch-lit procession shuffles from J Ward to the amphitheater at the edge of the reservoir. The torches cast an eerie blue-green glare (seemingly supernatural, a successful **Chemistry** roll suggests

DEATH AT DANVERS LUNATIC ASYLUM

Danvers State Hospital reports the death of patient Andrew MacBride, age unknown. MacBride was found unresponsive in his cell early this morning. Cause of death is declared a suicide, reports Superintendent James Berger. “It is a tragedy when these things happen,” says Dr. Berger, “yet we cannot reach every soul that comes into our care. He is in a better place now.” MacBride leaves no known relatives.

that torches have been treated with copper sulfate and copper chloride, which would turn the flames a blue-green color).

Allow the investigators to determine a plan of action. Probably they will attempt to sneak onto the grounds and find a suitable hiding place to watch the proceedings before diving in to save their friend. While they watch and wait, call for **Spot Hidden** rolls to notice the following (investigators who have come prepared with binoculars are not required to make a roll):

- The celebrants are all from the asylum: patients, doctors, nurses, and orderlies.
- Larry Crosswell is brought out, strapped to a wheeled gurney. He is rolled into the center of the amphitheater.
- Dr. Berger leading the throng, his face a mask of unholy zeal.

The figures gather at the amphitheater in a semi-circle, facing the central space and the reservoir beyond. Dr. Berger stands before them, over the gurney restraining Crosswell. The doctor shouts a long invocation in a strange (unknown) language. At his signal, the assembly falls upon itself in a bestial orgy of violence. Flesh is bitten, torn, and gouged. Participants screech in an ecstasy of delight and pain. Dr. Berger does not participate in the violence, instead clapping his hands and laughing maniacally at the spectacle. Witnessing this sickening celebration calls for a **Sanity** roll (1/1D4 Sanity points loss).

The following text describes the events that take place—unless the investigators step in and take action. Modify the following as appropriate based on the investigators' actions. As noted earlier, investigations attempting to capture the

ceremony on camera film will find the resultant images are blackened and without any clear details.

The celebrants descend upon the shrieking, helpless Crowell time and again, punching, kicking, and biting. Each round, Crowell loses 1D2 hit points until unconsciousness or death. The investigators have only a few rounds to get to Crowell and pull him from the chaos.

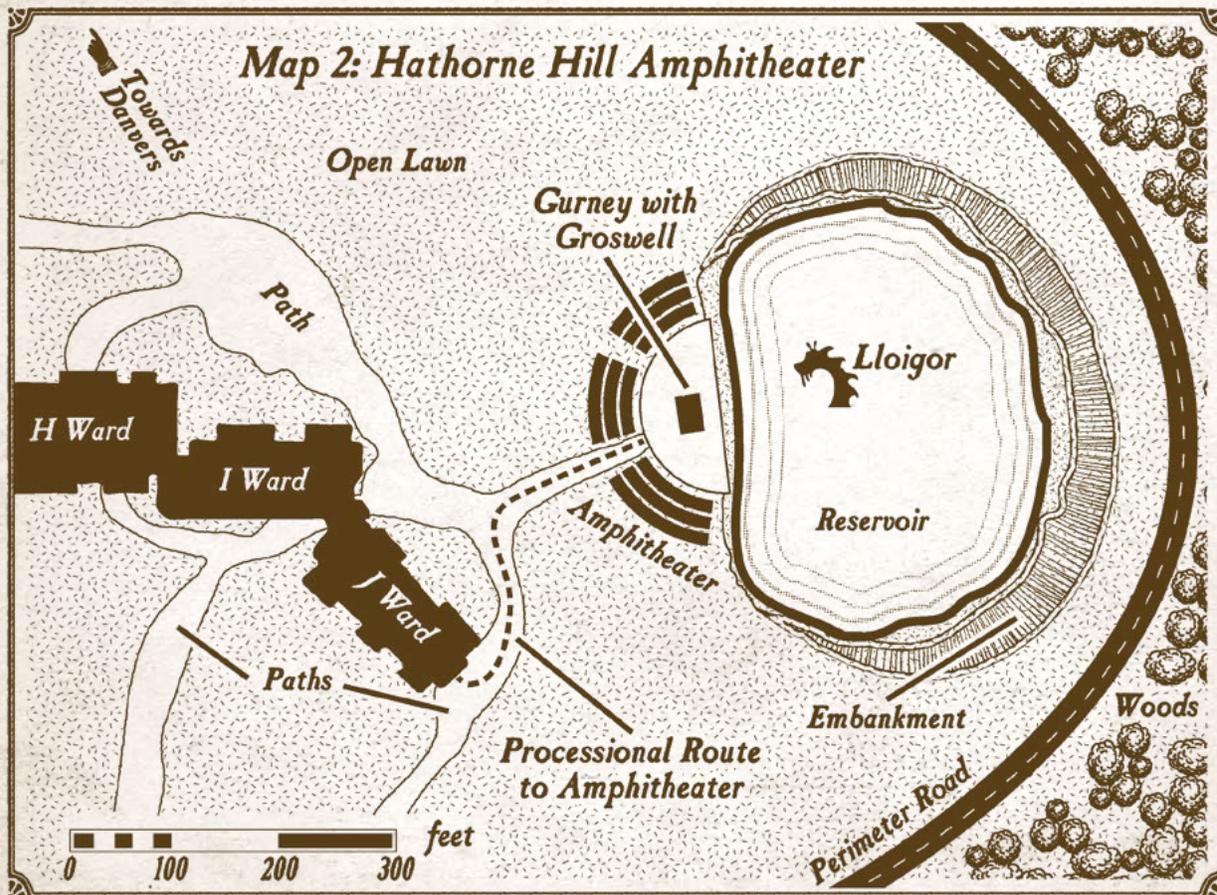
Intervening investigators are attacked. Celebrants have no regard for their own safety, overcome with a crazed bloodlust. Ask those in the melee to make **Hard Spot Hidden** rolls notice something very odd occurring in the water of the reservoir, near the edge of the amphitheater. While those hanging back from the melee need make no roll to observe an unearthly blue-grey glow emanating from the depths of the reservoir. After several rounds, a huge, dragon-like form breaks the surface of the water, its saucer-sized reptilian eyes impassively observing the carnage done in its honor. Call for **Sanity** rolls (0/1D8 Sanity points loss to see the lloigor). Although formidable, the lloigor does not attack, instead it basks in the pain offered up to it, soaking up huge amounts of magic points.

Interruptions notwithstanding, the violent orgy finally ends. Bloodied and exhausted, the participants straggle back up to the asylum (in the following days, those who suffered major

injuries are reported as having “an accident” or as “having been attacked by a patient,” and so on). The lloigor sinks back into the reservoir, gluttoned on magic points.

Should the investigators attack the lloigor, they confront it in its reptilian form (see statistics in **Appendix A: Characters and Monsters**). The investigators are very unlikely to be able to cause any serious damage to the monster (its 8-point armor making most weapons near enough ineffectual). Let the investigators know that the monster appears to be unaffected by the damage they cause, so they get the idea that their key task should be rescuing Crowell and escaping—not killing the monster, which will surely end in their deaths. After several rounds (when the Keeper judges appropriate) the creature grows bored of combat—or has taken a significant amount of injury—and dematerializes, leaving only a sheen of strange, unearthly blue-grey color upon the water.

The lloigor is not finished. Dissatisfied at the disruption of the rite, and marking Dr. Berger as weak for letting it happen, the lloigor gathers its energies to strike. Brimming with magic points, the lloigor unleashes its devastating area attack. The air in a ten-meter radius (focused on the center of the amphitheater) shimmers with unearthly bands of energy. A deep thrumming vibration pervades all, felt more than heard. If the investigators’ attention is elsewhere, allow for **Listen** or



Opposite: The Bestial Orgy by Pat Loboyko



POW rolls for them to detect the unnatural vibration—they have 4 rounds to leave the area or be caught in the lloigor's magical vortex. Each round, investigators must succeed in a **Luck** roll: failure indicates that a frenzied celebrant engages them in combat that round, preventing egress. Reward investigators with a bonus die to skill rolls if they come up with clever ways to evade such manic celebrants.

Finally, the amphitheater erupts in a blast of kinetic energy, causing 1D100 damage points to everything within ten yards. Many asylum celebrants are rent apart on the molecular level, as is the amphitheater itself. The massive implosion creates a huge sinkhole that rapidly fills with water from the reservoir. All present must make a **DEX** roll or be knocked off their feet. In nearby Danvers, those up late hear the sound of distant, rolling thunder. It is the Keeper's choice whether or not Dr. Berger survives the mayhem.

CONCLUSION

Should investigators fail to rescue Croswell by the dark of the moon, the writer is sacrificed to the lloigor. The following day, an earthquake is reported in the local newspapers. The lloigor lives on under the hill, awaiting the time to stir once again. If Dr. Berger is alive, he continues his work at the asylum unless the investigators are somehow able to unmask his evil deeds—in this event he will try to flee and may return at a later time to exact vengeance on the investigators. Of course, the authorities will not believe wild tales of violent hillside rites and water dragons; the investigators will have to bring more compelling (and believable) evidence to bear if they wish to focus the authorities on Dr. Berger. Indeed, those making outlandish claims with talk of monsters and magical rites are more likely to be sent to the Danvers asylum for treatment!

Some investigators may feel that they need to return to somehow deal with the “water dragon” once and for all. Such a task will be near impossible to accomplish without being better prepared. The Keeper might wish to remind investigators that further research would be beneficial to combat such a creature and that, for the present, it doesn't appear to be going anywhere—perhaps in time, once they have gained a greater knowledge of such monsters and their magic, they might return in a few years better equipped. The task of tracking down information about the creature and how it might be dispelled or killed could form the basis of an on-going campaign.

Rewards

Depending on the outcome of the scenario and the investigators' actions, apply the following rewards to the surviving investigators:

- Letting Croswell be sacrificed to the lloigor, -1D8 Sanity points.
- Awareness that the foul monthly rites continue haunts investigators for a further -1D6 Sanity points.
- Rescuing Larry Croswell, +1D8 Sanity points.
- Killing Dr. Berger, +1D4 Sanity points.
- Having Dr. Berger's practices at the asylum exposed so he is arrested, +1D8 Sanity points.
- Investigators who believe that they have stopped the threat of the lloigor (whether or not this is actually the case—perception is reality), gain an additional +1D6 sanity points.

APPENDIX A: CHARACTERS AND MONSTERS

LAWRENCE “LARRY” CROSWELL, age 52, writer and asylum captive

A friendly “bard of the bizarre,” Larry is a respected chronicler of New England superstition and folklore. His book signings at libraries and bookshops draw small crowds of avid readers who share his interests in ghosts and the supernatural. Croswell has lately seen too much of the otherworldly and it has left him shaken. Admitting himself to the State Hospital at Danvers was an unfortunate decision.

STR 50	CON 40	SIZ 55	DEX 45	INT 75
APP 45	POW 35	EDU 70	SAN 33	HP 9
Damage Bonus: 0	Build: 0	Move: 8	MP: 7	

Combat

Brawl	50% (25/10), damage 1D3
Dodge	22% (11/4)

Skills

Art/Craft (Writing) 60%, Credit Rating 40%, Fast Talk 45%, History 60%, Library Use 60%, Occult 60%, Persuade 55%, Psychology 65%, Stealth 40%.

GENIUS LOCI

DR. JAMES BERGER, age 39, *possessed asylum superintendent*

Once a kindly and dedicated alienist, James Berger's mind has been warped by the lloigor so that he is now its willing servitor. Through the lloigor, Berger devises unspeakable cruelties to inflict upon his wards. Thin, with piercing green eyes, and straw-like blond hair. If he survives the scenario, Berger may become a recurring foe of the investigators, depending on their actions.

STR 50 CON 60 SIZ 60 DEX 70 INT 85
APP 55 POW 50 EDU 90 SAN 00 HP 12
Damage Bonus: 0 Build: 0 Move: 8 MP: 10

Combat

Brawl 50% (25/10), damage 1D3
.32 Auto 25% (12/5), damage 1D8
Dodge 30% (15/6)

Skills

Credit Rating 60%, Cthulhu Mythos 10%, Intimidate 45%, Language (Latin) 55%, Library Use 50%, Medicine 65%, Persuade 50%, Psychoanalysis 75%, Psychology 75%, Sciences (Biology 70%, Pharmacy 70%), Stealth 40%.

ANDREW MACBRIDE, age 56, *asylum patient*

STR 80 CON 70 SIZ 80 DEX 55 INT 45
APP 40 POW 25 EDU 35 SAN 05 HP 15
Damage Bonus: +1D4 Build: 1 Move: 8 MP: 5

Combat

Brawl 60% (30/12), damage 1D3+1D4
Kitchen Knife 60% (30/12), damage 1D4+1D4
Dodge 27% (13/5)

Skills

Climb 60%, Fast Talk 45%, Jump 45%, Listen 35%, Stealth 60%, Spot Hidden 35%.

STAFF NURSE, *thrall to lloigor*

Use these statistics for a typical asylum nurse.

STR 45 CON 60 SIZ 50 DEX 65 INT 70
APP 70 POW 45 EDU 70 SAN 10 HP 11
Damage Bonus: 0 Build: 0 Move: 8 MP: 9

Combat

Brawl 40% (20/8), damage 1D3
Dodge 32% (16/6)

Skills

Charm 40%, Credit Rating 20%, First Aid 65%, Medicine 30%, Persuade 60%, Psychoanalysis 25%, Psychology 60%, Sciences (Biology 40%, Pharmacy 40%).

STAFF PHYSICIAN, *thrall to lloigor*

Use these statistics for a typical asylum doctor.

STR 60 CON 60 SIZ 60 DEX 65 INT 70
APP 50 POW 45 EDU 80 SAN 10 HP 12
Damage Bonus: 0 Build: 0 Move: 8 MP: 9

Combat

Brawl 30% (15/6), damage 1D3
Dodge 32% (16/6)

Skills

Credit Rating 40%, Fast Talk 35%, First Aid 70%, Medicine 70%, Language (Latin) 30%, Persuade 50%, Psychoanalysis 35%, Psychology 50%, Sciences (Biology 65%, Pharmacy 60%).

ASYLUM ORDERLIES, *thralls to lloigor*

Use these statistics for a typical asylum orderly.

STR 80 CON 65 SIZ 75 DEX 55 INT 40
APP 40 POW 35 EDU 35 SAN 15 HP 14
Damage Bonus: +1D4 Build: 1 Move: 8 MP: 9

Combat

Brawl 60% (30/12), damage 1D3+1D4
Baton 60% (30/12), damage 1D4+1D4
Dodge 27% (13/5)

Skills

Credit Rating 15%, First Aid 30%, Intimidate 45%, Listen 40%, Psychology 40%, Smile Menacingly 70%, Spot Hidden 35%, Throw 40%.

ASYLUM PATIENTS

Use these statistics for a typical asylum patient.

STR 50 CON 50 SIZ 45 DEX 50 INT 50
APP 30 POW 30 EDU 40 SAN 05 HP 9
Damage Bonus: 0 Build: 0 Move: 9 MP: 6

Combat

Brawl 40% (20/8), damage 1D3
Dodge 25% (12/5)

Skills

Charm 40%, Intimidate 50%, Jump 50%, Spot Hidden 50%, Throw 50%.



THE LLOIGOR, *the feaster under the water*

Vortices of power in their natural form and completely invisible to human eyes. On rare occasions they can create tangible, visible bodies for themselves. Such bodies are monstrous and bear some resemblance to enormous dragon-like reptiles. Lloigor have an outlook of absolute pessimism that results in a pervading atmosphere of gloom that makes lloigor minds and actions incomprehensible to humans.

STR 200) (**CON** 140) (**SIZ** 250) **DEX** 50 **INT** 100
APP — **POW** 70 **EDU** — **SAN** — (**HP** 39)
(Damage Bonus: +5D6)(Build: 6) Move: 7/3 through stone
MP: 200*

(Parenthesis denotes while in reptilian form)

**This is the amount of magic points the lloigor possesses at the start of the scenario. This is an arbitrary number as it has been feeding on the humans at the asylum for many years, so essentially as an unlimited supply of magic points stored.*

Combat

Attacks per round: 1 (2 while in reptilian form)

Fighting attacks: Lloigor can attack in many ways, including strikes, claw, and bite attacks while in reptilian form. Otherwise they may use one of their special powers or a vortex attack.

Fighting	40% (20/8), damage 1D6 + DB (+5D6 in reptilian form)
Dodge	20% (10/4)

Special Powers

Vortex Attack: The lloigor's most fearsome weapon is a type of implosion (sounding like the roll of distant thunder). Things in the blast area are torn to pieces and the ground is ruptured. At least 100 magic points are needed for an area 10 yards (10 meters) in diameter. Everything within the circle loses 1D100 hit points. Alert investigators (**POW** or **Listen** roll) may notice the tell tale effects of swirling lines appearing in the air and a half-unheard throbbing noise penetrating their bodies.

Drain Magic Points from Humans: Typically their human servants come from families with histories of mental instability, the lloigor need humans to survive as these immaterial entities

must draw energy from intelligent beings to perform necessary tasks. By expending one of its own magic points a lloigor may drain 1D6 magic points (per night) from a sleeping human to use in performing some magical action. A lloigor can drain energy from several sleeping humans at once, from up to several miles away despite intervening obstacles.

The victims wake complaining of headaches and bad sleep. With continued draining, such individuals become physically and spiritually weak, leading to sickness and possibly death. Whenever a victim is drained of any magic points in this way, a **CON** roll must be made before any magic points can be recovered. If the **CON** roll succeeds, the victim regains 1 magic point and wakes. If the roll is failed no magic points are recovered and the victim continues to sleep, whereupon the lloigor may drain another 1D6 magic points from the victim over the next hour, after which another **CON** roll is attempted and so on.

Telekinetic Effects: The lloigor can push people and manipulate objects such as a compass needle or a door latch via telekinesis. The (presumably immaterial) lloigor must be directly present and within a few yards of the effect. Usually, it costs the monster 10 magic points to create a telekinetic force of **STR** 5 above ground (20 magic points for **STR** 10, and so on).

Reptilian Manifestation: To take the shape of a monstrous reptile, the lloigor must expend magic points equal to one-fifth of the lloigor's **SIZ** (thus, at **SIZ** 250 the cost is 50 magic points). Once the body is formed, it may be maintained indefinitely or dissolved at will. If the lloigor is slain in reptile form, it dies permanently. A lloigor in reptile form has all the powers of one in the immaterial mode, except that it cannot pass through walls and is not invisible. While in reptilian form, a lloigor has all the characteristics listed below. When immaterial and intangible, it lacks the parenthesized characteristics, skills, etc., possessing only **INT**, **POW**, and **DEX**.

(Armor): 8-point reptilian hide. In its immaterial state it cannot be harmed by any physical weapons, magical or not.

Spells: Implant fear, Wither Limb.

Sanity Loss: 0/1D8 as reptile; invisible—no Sanity loss; mind contact costs 1/1D4 Sanity points.

1 MOTEL



SERVANTS OF THE LAKE

By Glynn Owen Barrass

INTRODUCTION

This scenario takes place in Lovecraft Country, in the vicinity of a lake north of Kingsport and southwest of Arkham. It is suitable for 2 to 4 beginner investigators, but the challenges can be increased for more experienced players by raising the number of antagonists. It can be played in a single session, and the location can be easily moved to integrate it into an existing campaign. While set in the 1920s, the scenario could be moved to the modern era (the Keeper is advised to have no or very poor cell phone reception available at Squatters Lake).

KEEPER INFORMATION

This story begins at another lake, far away in the Severn River Valley of England. It is here that the Great Old One Gla'aki dwells, a monstrous entity that came to earth on a meteor many thousands of years earlier. An alien city was built upon the meteor, with Gla'aki living at the center of the city behind a huge trapdoor. The city's inhabitants died during the journey but Gla'aki guided the meteor to Earth and the city survived intact. The impact created the lake Gla'aki now resides in, and from here it spreads its inhuman influence and builds its cult.

Over sixty years before this scenario begins, a family living beside the lake, the Brophys, suffered the god's attentions by use of its "dream-pull," a power it utilizes to send hypnotic dreams to potential initiates. Suffering long periods of weakness, Gla'aki is often only able to send its dream-pull a limited distance, and unfortunately, the boarding house owned by the Brophys fell within its radius. First the father, Robert, succumbed, summoned one night in his bedclothes to the edge of the lake. There, Gla'aki rose from the stagnant black depths, a great, oval shaped creature covered in thin, pointed metallic spines. One of its spines stiffened and entered Robert's chest, killing him

instantly and injecting a fluid that transformed him into an undead Servant of Gla'aki. Brophy returned home, walking stiffly and obviously different, but under Gla'aki's control he succeeded in convincing his wife and daughter that he was merely unwell. A few days later Brophy brought his wife Elizabeth and his daughter Gemma to the lake, both to follow Robert's fate.

Five years later their son, William, arrived in the Severn River Valley after being away for many years. He too succumbed to Gla'aki's will and was transformed into another servant. Slowly but surely the lake began to receive a maligned name and through the years following the surrounding area became deserted by all but the Brophys and the other victims turned into servants. The next stage of Gla'aki's dark plan could now be realized.

With ugly rumors circulating around them, the Brophys emigrated to the United States while their daughter, Gemma, remained behind to maintain the cult in England. Elizabeth Brophy died during the journey when accidentally exposed to sunlight—a victim of the Green Decay, a condition that affects older servants of Gla'aki exposed to prolonged sunlight—she expired, leaving the father and son alone to continue their journey. After arriving at Kingsport, William took his father north. Sticking with what they knew, they bought a motel near the shore of Squatters Lake, an area between Kingsport and Clark's Corners. Along with the few belongings they had brought with them, they had also carried a quantity of jars containing the tips of Gla'aki's spines floating in its siphoned bodily fluid. Set up in their new motel, they started their dark work to not only create more servants but also an Avatar of Gla'aki.

Gla'aki And Its Avatars

It is said that Gla'aki is not bound to the Severn River Valley and that it exists in other lakes around the world. It is suggested here that all other forms of Gla'aki are avatars of the entity, created by its servants. For the past two years

Robert and William, now quite decrepit from their undead state, have been masquerading as brothers and, without trying to attract too much attention to themselves, have been nurturing an avatar while trying to create new servants. Unfortunately, the potency of Gla'aki's fluid was reduced as soon as it left its body. Apart from the still growing avatar and three guests, the Brophys have only succeeded, so far, in creating mindless zombies.

INVOLVING THE INVESTIGATORS

A banker, Gerald Frazer, has contacted the investigators in regards to his missing son James. He knows the investigators through a mutual acquaintance and wants this task performed quietly to avoid a scandal. As such he has contacted the investigators by phone, and provided the following information:

James Frazer, a bit of a young rebel, abandoned his studies at the Miskatonic University in Arkham because he missed his sweetheart in Kingsport. Nine days earlier he left Arkham and has not been seen since. The last Gerald heard from him was a phone call just after leaving Arkham where, during their argument, James informed his father he was dead tired and was going to spend the night at a motel before continuing the journey to Kingsport. As far as Gerald knows, James never arrived at Kingsport as his sweetheart Emily claims he never arrived.

The investigators are sent a two hundred dollar retainer and a photograph of James. The image shows a young, smiling, lantern-jawed man with light colored hair. On the rear of the photo Gerald has written: *James Frazer, 6'2", blonde hair, brown eyes. Drives a Black Chrysler Coupe, Number Plate AB 1652.*



What the investigators don't yet know is that James arrived at the Squatters Lake Motel and became a victim to the Brophys and the Avatar of Gla'aki. No longer human, he now acts as a Servant of Gla'aki, and is beyond help or redemption.

If the investigators consult a road map of Massachusetts they discover the only viable place he could stay on his trip to Kingsport was near to Squatters Lake, which holds the only motel within miles. This is assuming he took the direct route to Kingsport and did stop to stay somewhere. Thus, it's the only clue they have. If the investigators fail to notice this, Gerald could supply them with this information (perhaps James mentioned the name of the motel).

RESEARCH

While at Miskatonic University, James Frazer shared a room with another student, Travis Bryce, and this young man can be either visited at his dorms or contacted by telephone. A small, meek, dark haired man, Bryce is a consummate bookworm and won't have much to tell the investigators except that Frazer kept to himself and spent a lot of time on the phone to his girlfriend. As far as Bryce knows, Frazer was doing well with his studies, though lately he had been sleeping in and missing his morning classes. Still, it was a surprise to Bryce to discover Frazer had vacated their rooms, and he is most disappointed at the lack of notice. He can also supply an address and number for Frazer's girlfriend, Emily Livingstone.

Emily Livingstone can be visited or telephoned at her home in Kingsport where she lives with her parents. A red-haired 19-year-old wisp of a girl, she is utterly distraught at James's disappearance, and will be red-eyed from crying if visited and prone to bouts of tears. If called on the telephone she will immediately answer, "*James is that you?*" She has no idea what has become of him. The couple had been saving a little money to elope, and she prays nightly for his safe return.

Should any research be conducted concerning Squatters Lake, a successful **Library Use** roll in Kingsport or Arkham will reveal the information in **Handout: Servants 1**. Researching the little lake in towns further afield uncovers nothing.

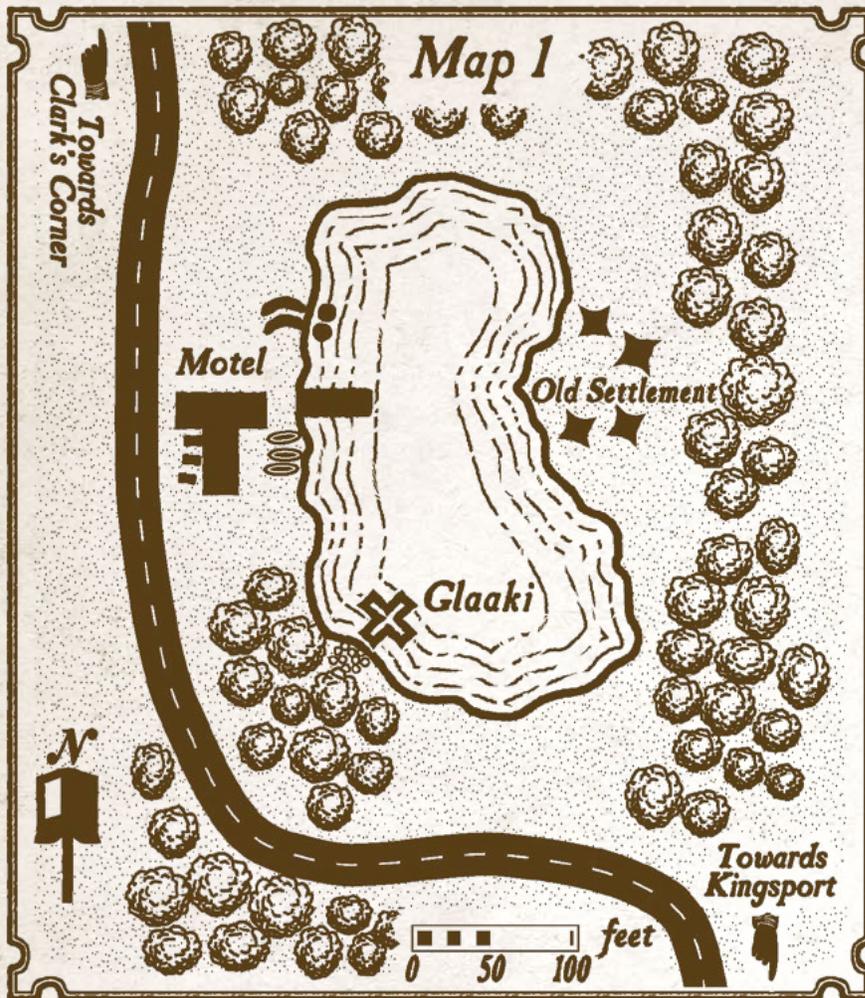
ARRIVING AT THE MOTEL

The kidney bean-shaped Squatters Lake is 950 feet in length and 325 feet in width. The Brophys' motel is located to the west of the lake, near the middle of the curved shore facing the indented side of the "bean." The eastern indent holds the remnants of the original settlers' homes in the form of fallen chimney stacks and overgrown vegetable patches. From the southeastern side to the northwest a dirt road circles the lake; the southeast leading to Kingsport, the northwest

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were a tribe called The Abenaki who lived in the Connecticut River valley in Vermont, New Hampshire and Massachusetts.

The Abenaki originally owned the land around Squatters Lake, though they were driven away by English settlers in 1722. Originally named "Ponki-mkazas" (the crow) by the Abenaki due to the abundance of crows scavenging around the lake, the settlers found that moving there was a bad idea due to the poor fishing and hunting in the area. Also, the surrounding Hemlock trees were worthless for burning, and the untreated wood of their houses quickly succumbed to rot. The settlers moved further north, leaving their settlement behind, and over the years the decrepit shacks became homes to vagrants, escaped slaves, and deserters from the army until they were finally swept into the lake in a flood in 1805. Locals living near the lake began calling it Squatters Lake, a name that survives to this day.



to Arkham and Clark's Corners. Beside the road are two wooden beams crossed in an upside-down "V" with a sign proclaiming, 'Squatters Lake Motel' in white paint on a black background. A second, smaller wooden panel is attached to the bottom with the word "Vacancies," in yellow writing on a red background. Hemlock trees surround the lake in abundance, almost touching the lake in the southwestern corner. The dirt road cuts through the woods here. The lake is host to bass, carp, and various species of frog, but the former two have never lived in the lake in abundance, and are dwindling now due to the lake's new inhabitant. The crows the lake was named after have completely abandoned the area, but some owls and woodchucks remain living in the Hemlock trees.

The motel is a "T" shaped building, the top left of the T facing the road and holding the reception. Eight rooms form the bottom of the T, four to each side. Wooden paneled, the building is raised on stilts, flat roofed, with porches and balconies along its sides. There are six staircases leading to the porches, four connecting to the rooms and two connecting to the front and rear of the Brophys' living areas. Wooden ramps stand beside the latter two (the purpose of which

will be discovered in due course). The doors and window frames are painted green, and oil lamps hang at intervals beside each door. As the motel is neither connected for gas or electricity, the lamps are illuminated at night, as are the ones inside the reception. There are spaces for cars marked on either side of the motel in chalk, and two cars parked in the spaces facing the lake.

The Reception

The door to the reception is glass paneled with a wide, shuttered window to its right. A white card bearing the word "Vacancy" hangs from the inside of the door, and if the investigators are visiting by night, the reception is filled with illumination.

A bell above the door rings as the investigators enter. A wide wooden desk fronts the far wall. The room is built from varnished wooden panels, with a door leading to the Brophys' living quarters in the northwest corner. On the wall behind the desk are two stuffed and mounted boar's heads, between which hangs a 20-gauge double-barreled shotgun. A rack of keys

hangs beneath the shotgun. The desk holds two oil lamps, a jar filled with pencils, and a brass bell shaped like a swan. The walls to the left and right of the desk are covered in number license plates collected from the early 1900's to the present. There are many dusty spaces on the wall to the right of the reception as if some of the number plates have been taken down.

Keeper Note: At one point, the Brophys continued the previous owners habit of collecting number plates. Though the former collected their number plates from scrap yards, the Brophys retained the plates of their victims' cars. William has started to grow wary of this, however, and has taken down the offending plates and placed them behind the desk. One of these plates belongs to James Frazer's car. The investigators may wish to examine the license plates after they have entered the reception, but those on the walls yield nothing. A minute or so after the investigators enter the reception the inner door opens.

The Brophy “Brothers”

The door creaks open slowly, followed by the words, “*Just a minute,*” in an English accent. A screech of wheels follows as a balding, white-haired, liver-spotted man is wheeled into the reception by another elderly man. From their features they appear to be related. The man in the wheelchair wears brown slacks and a white shirt, his frail hands gripping the armrests tightly as he enters. He squints at the investigators and nods politely. The man pushing him wears faded blue coveralls, has a lined, hollow-cheeked face, and a kindly expression beneath a full head of white hair.

“*Welcome to the Squatters Lake Motel,*” he says. “*I’m William and this here is my older brother Robert.*” He adds in a conspiratorial tone, “*Robert can’t speak much anymore, took a funny turn a few years back.*”

If it is daylight when the investigators arrive, Robert Brophy will not be present and William will mention his brother after introducing himself with, “*I run this place with my brother Robert, but he sleeps most days due to his age.*”

William then moves stiffly to the desk, smiles at each of the investigators in turn, and leans behind the desk to remove a guest book bound in red leather. After the guest book is signed William says:

“*We have eight rooms here, one and five holding two single beds, four and eight a double each, and the rest holding singles. You can take any rooms you want except for five, which my brother and me use, and six to eight, as there’re folks in those already. Each room is fifty cents a night, cash in advance. The rooms have hot water, but we only have oil lamps for illumination. You’ll have to bring your own food but there’s a grocery store past the woods to the south if you need anything. We get a delivery every Tuesday so if you want anything just let me know and they’ll bring it down the same day.*”

After the investigators have paid, William will remove the keys from the rack and hand them over.

Robert, if he is there, remains mute throughout the interaction, but should the investigators choose to question William about his background or the area surrounding the lake William will be as obliging as possible.

Here are some possible answers to investigator questions:

- **Where do we come from?** From merry old England as you can probably tell, a little place called Brichester, near the Severn River Valley. We had a hotel there, but upped and moved with some money we saved up and bought this place. America’s pretty far I know, but we used to travel all around the world in our younger days and this region stole our hearts a long time ago. What better place to spend our twilight years?
- **The history of these parts?** I don’t know when the motel was built. Used to be a settlement across the lake, back in frontier times, but it all got flooded out one Spring which is why this whole place stands on stilts. We had to hire a

carpenter from Clark’s Corners to fit the ramps (if Robert is present William nods towards his brother and smiles) he barely walks at all now.

- **Not many around these parts?** Yeah, it’s a bit quiet here now. Mostly we get folks stopping for a night or two, the odd fisherman as well. There are a couple of boats near the shore should you want to use them, and I can rent you fishing rods for ten cents a day. I have no bait, but there’s a shovel you can use if you want to dig up worms or something.

The investigators may want to produce James Frazer’s photo and show it to the Brophys, asking if they have seen the man. If so, Robert shows no reaction but William’s expression darkens somewhat and he stares at the photo in deep concentration. He blinks and offers a hearty smile afterward, saying,

“*Don’t rightly recall seeing the young man. He came by this way recently? No sorry, haven’t had him stay here.*”

A successful **Psychology** roll notices this moment of hesitation.

The investigators might also want to examine the guest book to see if there is evidence of James Frazer’s stay. They are in for disappointment as the last page of the guest book has been ripped out. If an investigator mentions this to William he claims, “*Oh I spilled tea on it yesterday, had to destroy the page before it ruined the whole book.*”

Actually, James Frazer isn’t located far from where this conversation takes place. His undead form currently lies inert, under the motel, in a wooden crate shallowly buried beneath the soil. Frazer had a large quantity of cash on his person when he was killed and, as such, the Brophys are concerned someone may come looking for him. Along with two other servants of Gla’aki, James awaits the Avatar’s orders to infect more servants. The Brophys, with their seniority, are the leaders of this insidious little “family.”

Note that statistics for the Brophys, as well as the other non-player characters can be found in **Appendix A: Characters and Monsters**.

THE ROOMS

The interior of each room is similar (all 15 x 15 feet in size), except for the number of beds (as described by William). There is a window to each side of the door, protected by wooden shutters. The walls, floor, and ceiling are made from wooden panels. The walls adjoining other rooms are paneled in plaster and decorated in a green and white diamond patterned wallpaper. A door connects each room to its eastern or western neighbor, bolted from both sides (STR roll break down). Each room has a bedside table holding an oil lamp and an alarm clock, a dresser, a wardrobe, a small dining table with two chairs, and a large oval mirror on the wall. A small bathroom is built inside each room, with a toilet, sink, and shower. The door has a weak bolt attached (STR 25). The shower has a

CHAPTER 4

boiler connected to propane tanks in the crawlspace beneath the rooms. The yellow bed linen is faded but clean. Each room has a handcrafted jewel patterned Navajo rug on the floor.

Keeper Note: A trapdoor (with bolt on the underside, STR 50) is concealed beneath each rug. The undead servants utilize these when attacking guests. Should the investigators lift up the rug, the trap door is revealed, fitting snugly into the floor.

Rooms 1, 3, and 4 contain small bookcases. They hold nothing of note: history books, books on wildlife, novels etc., (unless the Keeper deems otherwise), except for the bookcase in Room 1 (where James Frazer stayed). This holds a small spiral bound notebook with some enticing entries inside. If the investigators don't use Room 1, the Keeper should feel free to place the diary in another room. See **Handout: Servants 2**.

AN UGLY INCIDENT

Soon after the investigators have settled into their rooms a commotion is heard outside. Going to their doors or windows, they witness the following scene.

William is seen stood outside of the reception, arms folded, facing a bespectacled, pimply-faced young man with a shock of red hair. The young man stands gesticulating wildly and appears extremely agitated. The door or window will have to be opened to hear the following conversation:

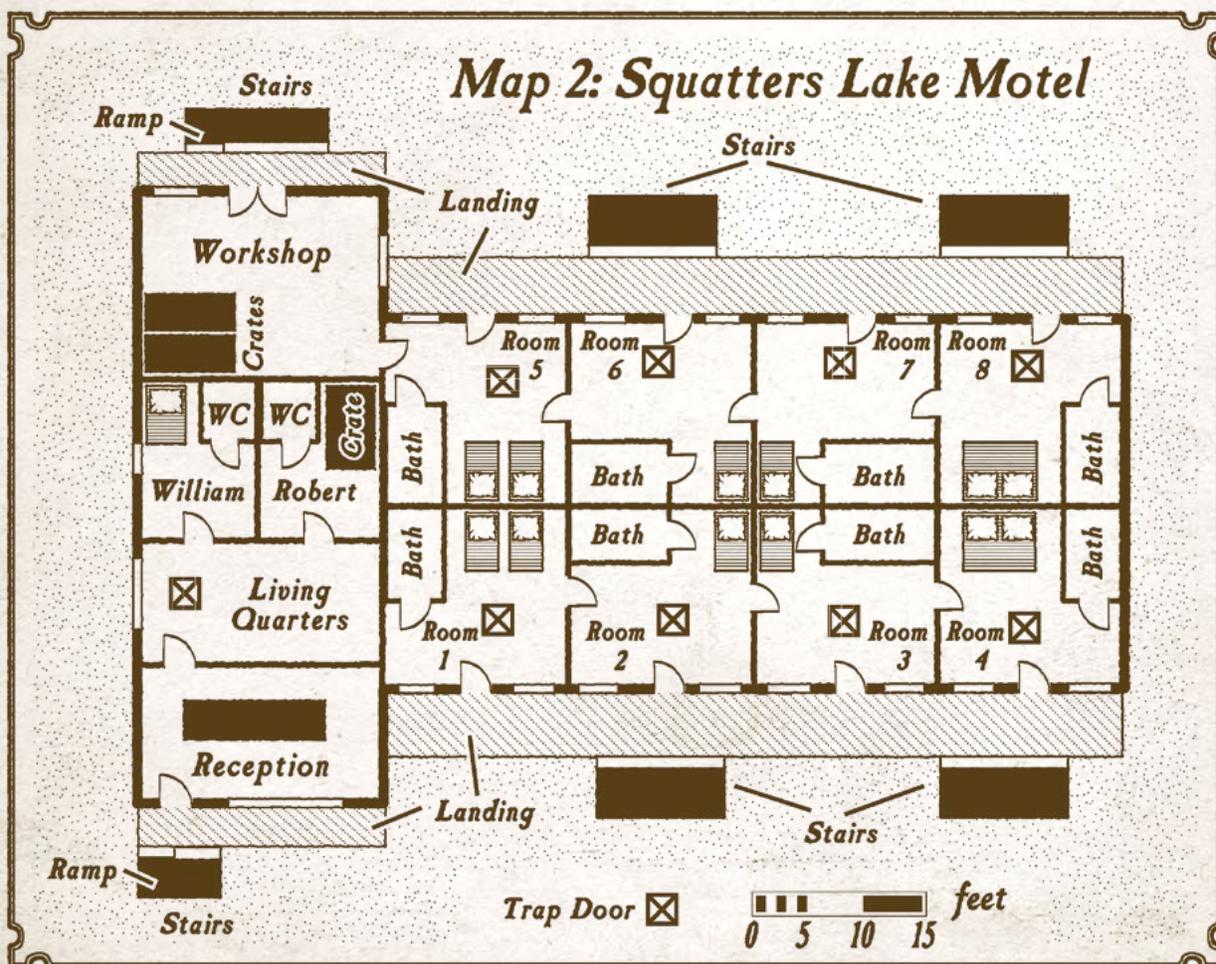
Young Man: *You said you don't know if he'd stayed here. I know he did as he told me so!*

William: *Now calm down young sir. There are people trying to rest here.*

Young Man: *Rest? Here? What with all the noises under the rooms at night? Good luck to them! Now what room did he stay in? Tell me that?*

William: (growing angry now) *I said I don't know and that's my final answer. Now stop bothering me or you can get the hell out of my motel!*

At this the young man slaps his thigh in agitation and storms off around the other side of the motel. If William sees the investigators watching (ask for Luck rolls), he smiles and shakes his head, waving his hands in apparent exasperation before heading back inside the reception.



Felt so tired after the row with dad and staying at this dump hasn't helped. Car still broke down - old man William says he can fix it but I don't know whether I can trust him. This place creeps me out and it's only been one night. Hate the noisy frogs around the lake, and I saw lights out there when I went for a stroll. Late night fishermen? The three boats were tied up and I can't imagine those decrepit old brothers going out there at night. The lake stinks anyway. Had the worst time last too. Sleepwalking! Not done that since I was a child. Dreamt I was underwater, floating through a weird city littered with corpses. I awoke after midnight, freezing cold outside my room. The lights in the reception were blazing. Those old fellas are strange, and I haven't seen much of them thankfully. They spend all their time in that workshop or whatever it is facing the lake.

Dammit, if the car isn't fixed today, I might just take my chances and hitch a lift to Kingsport.

I miss you so much Emily!

SEARCHING THE MOTEL

In their search for James Frazer, the investigators may want to examine the motel and the surrounding area for clues. Details of what they find and other characters they encounter are as follows.

The Brophys don't leave their living quarters very often but, on the night of the investigators stay, William wheels Robert to the rear of the motel and enters the workshop. They remain here for an hour and a half. When inside the workshop they go into trances to communicate with Gla'aki: informing it of the new guests and listening to its orders. The padlock on the workshop doors is a sturdy one (see **The Workshop**, page 66), and there are things in the workshop that might take offence at a break in.

The Investigators' Rooms

A successful **Spot Hidden** roll in Room 4 (or one of the other rooms, as the Keeper wishes) has investigators notice five faint scrapes on the wooden floor near the door. Examining that area reveals more marks on the lower doorframe, like little half-moon indentations. Close examination finds something small, clear, and hard sticking out of one of those indentations. Pulling it out, it appears to be a torn-off human fingernail. This belonged to poor Abe Hickie, abducted some time back.

THE OTHER TENANTS

As William mentioned earlier, there are three other tenants staying at the motel. One of them the investigators have already seen. They are all described here.

Jacob Trent

Jacob Trent rents Room 8, and was the young man the investigators spied arguing with William Brophy. Short, skinny, and looking younger than his 21 years, he wears tatty slacks and a shirt in need of a wash. He pretty much stays in his room and acts nervously if the investigators approach him. A successful **Charm** or **Persuade** roll is required to get him to open up about the incident with William, letting them into his room to tell them his story.

Jacob's tale is not a long one. An Arkhamite born and bred, he tells the investigators he is here to meet his friend from Boston, one Abraham Hickey. Abe was meant to meet him here a few weeks ago but still hasn't arrived. Abe told him he was coming here the night before his own arrival and he is very worried about what has happened to him, and although it is over two weeks later, he will remain here until the other man turns up. A successful **Psychology** roll reveals he is holding something back (see **Keeper Note** following).

As he has been here so long, if the investigators think to ask him about James Frazer he replies: "*Oh yeah, I saw that guy the night I pulled in here, but I didn't get the chance to say*

hello. In the morning, I noticed his car was gone, so I guess he left. If those old fools say he wasn't here they're either idiots or they're lying. The latter I reckon and I just may go bring the police in on this if my pal doesn't arrive soon."

Keeper Note: Jacob's friend Abe was actually his lover. Both were found out by their families and disowned for their lifestyle. Living in Arkham, Abe traveled to Boston to try and patch things up with his parents, while Jacob, after being thrown out of his home, came to the motel to meet up with his partner and plan what they should do next. Abe did arrive the day before Jacob and was promptly taken by the Brophys. The brother's attempt to turn him into a servant of Gla'aki failed and he now wanders the woods, a disheveled undead horror. A thorn in the Brophys' sides for too long now, today's incident means they plan to be rid of Jacob Trent very soon.

Bill Dunston

Currently renting Room 6, his 1930 yellow Buick Marquette is parked directly outside his room. Dunston is a tall, heavily built man in his forties, dressed in a black suit. His nose is badly bent and, as well as his quiet, taciturn behavior, he appears to be a shady character. He walks along the lake every morning at 10 a.m. and evenings at 5 p.m. If encountered, he will first refuse to be brought into conversation except for a curt "hello" and "goodbye." Persisting in trying to speak with him will require a successful **Persuade** or **Charm** roll but he won't have much to tell the investigators. He fancied doing some fishing here but reckons the fish are all dead because the water is polluted with oil up beyond the pier. If asked about James Frazer he tells them he hasn't seen anyone but the kid, the old men, and "*That Mulatto in the room next to mine.*"

Bill Dunston may appear suspicious, but is actually just a dockworker taking a break after a painful divorce, here to get some fishing done. He might even come to the investigators assistance should he see them being attacked by anything "unnatural."

Sarah Bonner

Sarah Bonner rents Room 7, her battered Ford Model T Runabout pickup truck parked outside her room. She is a petite, woman of mixed race with curly brown hair, blue eyes, and freckled skin. Her clothes are frayed but she does her best to maintain her appearance. Sarah is on her way to visit her grandparents in Salem and has stopped at the motel for a few days as she is tired from the long drive from her home in Newburyport. She will be friendly enough to the investigators, but knows nothing about James Frazer.

If questioned about other odd events, she tells the investigators that she doesn't like the lake at night and has seen odd lights out there. Furthermore, she has heard strange rustling and shuffling noises under the motel and thinks the place may have rats. Just last night she saw the brothers

heading towards the southwest area of the lake, Robert wheeling himself along with William walking up ahead. She plans on leaving for Salem the next morning.

The Reception

A search of the reception reveals something of interest if the investigators look in the cubbyholes at the back of the desk. Here amongst the dust, they discover a pile of number plates and one of them with the number *AB 1652*—a match for James Frazer's car.

Brophy Brothers' Quarters

Located behind the reception desk, this door is never locked. Decorated with the same green and white wallpaper as the rooms, the living quarters are slightly larger than the guest rooms (20 x 10 feet in size). The room contains a frayed, cream fabric sofa, a coffee table, and a shuttered window on the western wall. A cuckoo clock hangs from the eastern wall, beneath which stands a small kitchenette. The kitchen cupboards hold various unused plates and utensils, and a box of shells for the shotgun hung in reception. The south wall holds a shelf lined with carved wooden animals. Like the other furnishings, these are remnants of the previous motel owners. Oil lamps hang from the north and south walls. Beneath the window is an unlocked trapdoor leading to the crawlspace beneath the motel. Next to the coffee table is a straw wastepaper basket, containing trash and the page that was removed from the guestbook. It bears the names and signatures of the last six guests, including James Frazer's (see *Handout: Servants 3*).

William's Bedroom

William's bedroom is decorated the same as the living quarters. It contains a single bed, a wardrobe, a bedside table with a lamp, and a small cubicle with a toilet, sink, and shower. Beneath the bed is an iron lockbox, which can be picked with a successful *Locksmith* roll or broken into with a *STR* roll. Inside is \$1,232 in cash—the remains of the Brophys' savings and money taken from murdered guests. There is an unlocked shuttered window against the western wall.

Guests

<i>A. Hickey</i>	Abe Hickey	Room 4	December 30th
<i>J. Trent</i>	Jacob Trent <i>Mr. and</i>	Room 8	December 31st
<i>A. Smith J. Smith</i>	<i>Mrs. Smith</i>	Room 4	January 8th
<i>J. Frazer</i>	James Frazer	Room 1	January 8th
<i>S. Bonner</i>	Sarah Bonner	Room 7	January 13th
<i>BD</i>	Bill Dunston	Room 6	January 14th

Robert's Bedroom

This room is locked during the day. Both William and Robert keep keys on their persons. Should an investigator wish to enter this room he or she can either use the *Locksmith* skill or break down the door with a *STR* roll. It is a mirror of William's bedroom except that instead of a bed it holds the large battered crate that Robert sleeps in during the day. The room smells musty and is thick with dust. The crate contains a filthy blanket, pillow, and of course Robert, should it be daylight outside.

A bookcase stood against the east wall contains something of interest, a precious item Robert brought with him from England. Amongst random books on local history is a first edition of *Revelations of Gl'a'aki*, Volume Six. As this is merely one part of the nine-volume folio, statistics have been adjusted accordingly.



REVELATIONS OF GLA'AKI VOLUME VI

In English, various authors, 1859.

Nine folio volumes of Revelations of Gla'aki were published by subscription, the last volume published in 1865. It is rumored that three other volumes were written and circulated privately after that time. Each volume was written by a different cultist, discussing various aspects of Gla'aki, its cult, and associated entities.

Volume six discusses the Gla'aki cult's duty to spread Gla'aki's influence across the globe and contains instructions on how to create an avatar of Gla'aki at another location.

Sanity Loss 1D3; Cthulhu Mythos +1/+3 percentiles; Mythos Rating 12; 4 weeks to study. **Spells:** Contact Gla'aki.



The Workshop

The entrance to the workshop is located on the opposite side of the reception, facing Squatters Lake. There are two barrels of oil to the left of the workshop doors, each tapped. A watering can rests above the first barrel—William uses this to refill the oil lamps throughout the motel. The workshop's double doors are fitted with a sturdy padlock and chain (the key is kept on William's person). Unless the **Locksmith** skill is used, the padlock requires an Extreme **STR** roll to break it (lower the difficulty to Hard if the investigator uses a heavy metal lever to pry the lock apart). There is a window to the right of the doors and another to the west of the workshop. Both are shuttered from within. If the windows are broken, the shutters (bolted from the inside) require a **STR** roll to break through. This kind of action will most certainly alert the servants of Gla'aki both inside and outside the workshop. Luckily for the investigators, there will be another opportunity to sneak into the workshop later.

This workshop is where the Brophys brought their first victims in order to create an avatar of Gla'aki, and to make servants for the fledgling creature. This method of infection has not been used in some time, as the servants now take their victims to the avatar's lair at the lake's southwestern shore to be directly infected. The workshop is 20 x 15 feet in size and, if entered by night, will be extremely dark inside. It is walled in bare plaster while the floor and ceiling are paneled in wood. The workshop's right-hand side is concealed behind a large white sheet nailed to the ceiling. The visible side holds three

cardboard boxes to the left of the entrance, a door to Room 5 in the northwest corner and, far more sinisterly, a wooden table replete with leather restraints pressed against the far wall.

If the cardboard boxes are searched, the investigators find previous victims' suitcases and clothing. Jewelry, items of clothing for both men and women are found, and a thorough search reveals a jacket with the name "A Hickie" in ink on the washing label. There are two gold wedding rings, various women's earrings, and a silver bracelet with the words, "To my darling Paige," inscribed on it, as well as an expensive looking gold watch bearing the initials "JS" on the clasp.

Behind the sheet in the workshop's southeast corner stands a wooden table, its surface blackened and scratched. It holds a pair of thick green rubber gloves and a row of six jars. The first four jars are half-filled with a cloudy yellow fluid, while the final two contain dozens of metallic needles spotted with green mold. These items are the fluid and spines removed from Gla'aki. Should the investigators somehow find a way to conduct laboratory examination of these items, the fluid is revealed to be organic and alive, and the spines are a mixture of unknown organic and inorganic materials—baffling any scientist who examines them. In the workshop's northeast corner stand two large wooden crates holding the former Mr. and Mrs. Smith—now undead servants of Gla'aki.

Keeper Note: Should the investigators sneak into the workshop by picking the padlock or entering through Room 5, each investigator must make a successful **Stealth** roll for every major action taken (*i.e.* examine the cardboard boxes, or examine the sideboard, etc.). A failure means the Mr. and Mrs. Smith servants hear the noise and lift the lids from their boxes and attack the investigators. A **Stealth** roll won't work, of course, for any investigator deciding to lift the lids from the servants' boxes—in this situation, the horrors attack instantly!

EXPLORING THE AREA

If the investigators visit the lake at night, the sound of frog-song, low and cacophonous, is heard, and soon after dusk a thick layer of mist forms across the lake, remaining till dawn. Occasional splashes are heard from the lake's dirty, brackish water, and sometimes reeds poking from the mist twitch ominously.

Downhill from the workshop stands a wooden pier. It creaks when used but is quite sound. On the shore to the pier's right stands three rowing boats, attached to ropes nailed into the ground so they don't drift into the water when the lake floods in Spring.

If the investigators walk along the northwestern side of the lake, around 50-feet from the pier they encounter multiple tire treads leading into the lake. The water around this area is thick with a black oily film. This is where the servants of Gla'aki push their victims' cars into the lake. So far, there



KEEPER SUGGESTION: CONTACTING THE AUTHORITIES

Having evidence of James Frazer's stay, the investigators may decide to confront the Brophys or even contact the police. If the former, William will say, *"You should have left well alone. Too bad for you."* He gets his shotgun and attempts to capture the investigators. If they're captured, the scenario continues as described in **The Final Confrontation** (page 69), but during the day.

If the Brophys are captured, the investigators may still want to contact the police. They are in for a long drive, either to Arkham, Clark's Corners, or Kingsport, and when they return with the police they find the servants of Gla'aki have vacated the motel and the other guests dead from gunshot wounds. At this point, the scenario is effectively over for the investigators.

Going for the police might seem a logical response in some situations, however this tactic almost always means that the investigators are choosing to negate their responsibility in the hope that someone else can clean up the mess they have found themselves in. In practice, this also means that the players don't get to fully enjoy or see the scenario through to its conclusion. If the investigators seem about to "go off track" and seek police help then have something happen to turn their attention back to the case in hand. The half-seen sight of an undead servant, strange noises, or the appearance of one of the non-player characters can all get the investigators focused back on the action (and forgetting or having time to go for the police).

If all your tricks fail and the investigators manage to negate their responsibility to see the investigation through, then make sure they realize the consequences of their actions. By leaving the drama, they have allowed others to die and allowed the cultist's plans to reach fruition. Impose Sanity penalties rather than rewards for their lack of care—the investigators could have stopped all of this if only they had been there to do it.



are six cars there and counting. If questioned about the tire treads, William says, *"I've seen youngsters pull up there on a Friday night sometimes. Couples mostly. They're pretty quiet so I just leave them be."*

Heading southwest from the pier, the investigators encounter a copse of Hemlock trees almost touching the lake itself. Passing through the trees they encounter a clearing. A successful **Track** roll (Extreme difficulty if at night without a light source) reveals signs of recent disturbance here in the form of footprints from at least four different sources. There looks to have been a struggle.

This is yet more evidence of the servants' handiwork and is where victims are lured and infected into the cult. The avatar dwells underwater just beyond the shore here.

The remains of the old settlement are located on the opposite shore from the motel. When near this area the investigators could witness someone walking through the bare ruins towards the woods (**Spot Hidden** roll). If they explore the ruined settlement they find no trace of the mysterious figure but a successful **Track** roll reveals a pair of very odd tracks in the form of footprints with one missing shoe and no big toe. These tracks lead into the woods and, should the Keeper wish, entering the woods the investigators can encounter one of the undead horrors (see page 70). Be aware that such an encounter might spoil the surprise if early in the scenario, so Keepers should use this option with discretion. Otherwise, not much will be discovered here but vegetable patches gone wild and lichen covered stones. If the investigators choose to dig here, some rusted pots and pans are found. Also, have all investigators exploring the area make **Luck** rolls. The first to fail the roll will step onto the undergrowth covering the settlement's old well. The well is 20-foot deep and causes 2D6 points of damage to the investigator falling in and landing upon the hard, slimy rocks at its bottom (a successful **Jump** roll may halve this damage). Unless they're in a good enough condition to climb (requiring a **Hard Climb** roll due to the slime covering the walls of the well) a sturdy rope will be required to release them.

SEQUENCE OF EVENTS

At around 9 p.m. the door of one of the investigators' rooms receives a light knock. When they answer they find Jacob Trent at the door, looking as jittery as ever, having this to say:

"I just had another run-in with that old fool Brophy. A bit of a tussle actually, and I lifted his keys off him. I'm going to check out that workshop of theirs and see what's inside if you wanna help?"

If the investigators let Jacob go alone, that's the last they see of him, otherwise, they can enter the workshop (see page 66) and take it from there. Discovery of the investigators being up to no good will lead to their attempted capture by the Brophys, which in turn takes the investigators to the avatar at the lake's southeast corner. Otherwise, events continue as follows.

It has been a long time since the avatar of Gla'aki had so many victims to choose from and so many people in close proximity—this has awakened the creature's appetite for fresh servants. At around 2 a.m. it will attempt its dream-pull on the investigators, Jacob Trent, and Bill Dunston. The servants have other plans for Sarah Bonner this night.





KEEPER SUGGESTION: LET THE INVESTIGATORS DO THE WORK

Rather than let Jacob Trent provide the keys to the workshop, have the investigators steal the keys. Having the other characters make dramatic actions is fine if the investigators are taking things too slowly or at a loss at what to do next, but if it seems they are going to drive things along themselves just fine, then let them be the ones to take the risks.



THE DREAM-PULL

To perform the dream-pull, take the avatar's magic points minus the target's magic points and roll this number or less on 1D100. Rolling higher than this number (a failure) means the target still experiences the dream described (see *Dream Of A Sunken City*), but the target wakes before they start to walk out to the lake. Rolling equal to or lower than this number (a success) means the investigator succumbs to the dream-pull: they move slowly, with sluggish movements and, should they share a room with another investigator, the latter will certainly be woken as their friend blunders around. The affected investigator won't answer questions, but if stopped and slapped the apparent sleepwalker will awaken. The Keeper should give investigators in adjoining rooms a **Listen** roll to hear the noise. If that fails, allow them a **Luck** roll where success means that one of the other investigators happens to be up to go to the bathroom and sees them wandering the halls.

THE FINAL CONFRONTATION

After the dream-pull has been attempted, the Brophys and Smiths attack the rooms of investigators that didn't succumb, with William brandishing the 20-gauge shotgun. As previously mentioned, this amount of victims is quite an opportunity, especially if they have been snooping around after James Frazer. Robert, hobbling and seen without his wheelchair for the first time, accompanies William but has no weapon to speak of. The Brophys enter rooms by the front door while the Smith servants enter through the trapdoors in the floor. This is a sneak attack and sleeping investigators should be allowed a **Listen** roll to see if they hear people sneaking into their room; if the roll is failed, they are pinned to the bed as their attackers attempt bound and gag them. They can try to fight back, but if a servants' cold dead hand is firmly pressed against their mouth, they can make no cry for help (provoking a **Sanity** roll, with 0/1D3 Sanity points loss).



DREAM OF A SUNKEN CITY

Gla'aki's victims suffer a vivid, terrifying dream of floating under stagnant water surrounded by sluggishly moving weeds. Beneath the weeds is a city of leprous, black spiraling steeples and narrow twisting avenues. Dead creatures litter the streets, twisted angular things with shiny red shells covered in thick tubes and trumpet-like protrusions. Moving against their will, the investigator soon reaches the center of the city, an octagonal declivity covered in warped glass. A shadowy, pulsing object lies beyond the glass, with three yellow glowing eyes and the hint of a metallic surface.

At this point, an investigator who is safely in bed awakes—call for a **Sanity** roll (1/1D6 Sanity points loss). Whereas an investigator who has fully succumbed to the dream-pull will be already at the clearing near the lake, and probably doomed—unless already stopped by one of their companions.

The dream is a vision of the sunken city beneath the lake in the Severn River Valley in England—the home of Gla'aki. The corpses of its former inhabitants and the trap door beyond which Gla'aki dwells.



The attacking Smiths are a horrible sight to behold. Naked and emaciated, their hair is lank, as filthy as the grime coating their skin. Each of the Smiths has a gaping hole in the center of their chests, surrounded by a fine network of red lines.

If the investigators put up a fight the servants will attempt to subdue them and take them to the lake. If the investigators raise their arms and surrender, the same happens, their hands bound behind their backs before they are led outside. William will only use his shotgun as a last resort, or if the investigators start shooting at him. After all, corpses are useless to his god.

Keeper Note: Around ten minutes before the investigators are attacked another assault takes place within the motel, this one far stealthier and directed against Sarah Bonner. James Frazer, after pushing his way from the crate under the motel, sneaks into Sarah's room using the trap door. After quickly knocking her out he carries her to the clearing, to be sacrificed, along with anyone else brought there, to the avatar of Gla'aki.

Fighting Back

As with the dream-pull scene, the Keeper should give other investigators **Listen** rolls to hear the commotion as their companions are attacked in the night. Should the besieged investigators specifically say something like, "I scream for help," or firearms are used, then no **Listen** roll is required. If everyone

fails to make a Listen roll, a kindly Keeper may allow a Luck roll where success means that one of the investigators happens to be up at that time to go to the bathroom. If the Keeper wishes, have the rolls made for Bill Dunston, then have him help the investigators. Jacob Trent, if not captured by the dream-pull, just hides under his bed. Anyone checking on Sarah Bonner will find her door ajar, her room empty, and the trap door wide open.

If following captured companions, the investigators witness them being led towards the lake by a strange procession of four figures. Two of the figures are recognizable instantly as the Brophys, but the other two are strangers to the investigators. These are the Smiths, two of the Brophys three successfully infected servants of Gla'aki. Walking with stilted movements, the Smiths are naked and quite filthy. While William keeps his shotgun on the prisoners, Robert walks behind the group in a sluggish manner.

The investigators may wish to follow or save their friends right now. If the former is the case, the servants walk towards the clearing at the lake's southwest corner. As long as they stay a reasonable distance behind the group a Stealth roll is not necessary, as Robert's senses are quite numbed.

Sarah Bonner, the first victim to be taken this night, is already at the clearing with James Frazer, accompanied by one or more of the investigators and Bill and Jacob if they succumbed to the dream-pull. Should the investigators successfully deal with the servants of Gla'aki and rescue their companions as they are led away, they may wonder what has happened to Sarah and the others. To precipitate this it is suggested that Sarah "awakens" at the clearing and issues a loud scream, alerting the investigators to her location. In fact, if the players have reached a point in the scenario where everyone has been saved and there is no real reason to head to the clearing, have the investigators hear an inhuman wail from the clearing—setting things up so that the avatar is attacking one of the undead horrors that strayed near its den. This ensures the investigators get a chance to have a final confrontation with the avatar of Gla'aki.

By The Lake In Moonlight

The clearing is an eerie place by night. Strange bubbling can be seen in the lake, the water sloshes against the shore, and the mist carpets everything. Sarah Bonner can be found here, on her knees and in her bedclothes, her hands tied behind her back and whimpering. The infected James Frazer stands behind her, awaiting his master.

If followed, the servants take the victims straight to the water's edge, push them onto their knees and a few moments a loud buzzing fills the air as what appeared to be reeds at the water's edge shiver fitfully. Three yellow, globe-shaped eyes appear from the water. Then the avatar, a metallic oval shaped monstrosity, climbs from the lake, its mouth drooling black filth as it smacks its lips together. Moving on spongy white pyramid shaped limbs, its metallic form still bears the



KEEPER SUGGESTION: UNDEAD HORRORS

The Brophys previous attempts to infect other victims have met with limited success. If the Keeper wishes to make the climax more grisly, feel free to use the four zombies who were not turned into servants. Attracted to the scene by the commotion between the investigators and the servants, these are the Keeper's "ace in the hole," and would work well bursting from the woods or crawling up from the water just when the investigators think they are winning the fight. Alternatively, should things be going badly for the investigators, these mindless creatures could attack indiscriminately, creating a welcome diversion.

These four optional antagonists are former motel residents that were captured and experimented on in the Brophys' workshop. Each was impaled by one of Gla'aki's spines, died, but did not become a full servant. The Brophys, assuming the infection had failed, dumped the bodies in the lake. These pitiful undead things later rose up and now wander the woods unbeknownst to the Brophys. Bloated, rotten corpses with grayish skin spotted with mold, these horrors hunger for one thing—flesh.

Use the statistics in **Appendix A: Characters and Monsters** for the zombies.



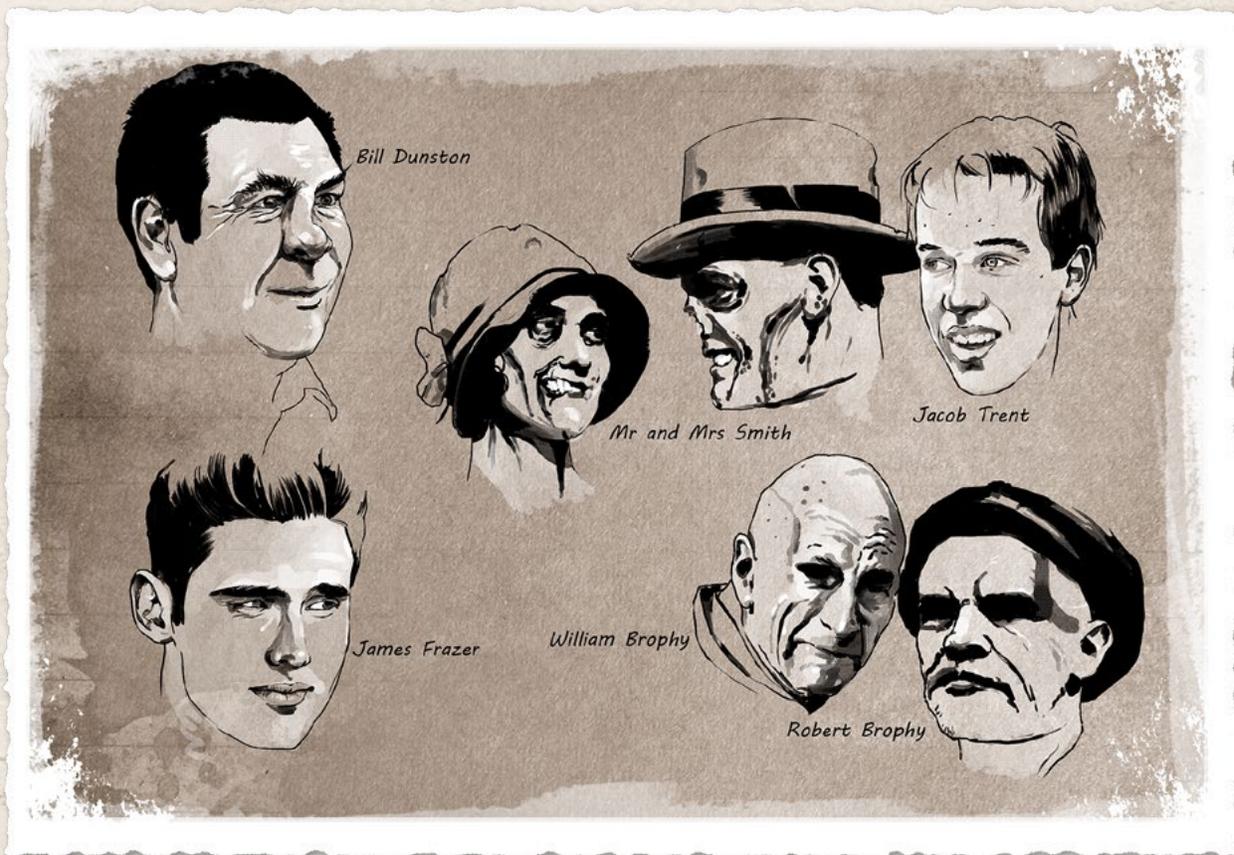
remnants of its former humanity in the form of shrunken arms and legs dangling from its sides. The servants' goal is to keep anyone they have brought to the lake subdued so the avatar can attack them with a spine and so infect them.

Watching investigators have a choice, either to let terrible things transpire or interrupt and save the innocents. In a fight, luckily the servants' low dexterity will be in the investigators favor. In presenting this scene, have the avatar attack Sarah first while William turns the shotgun on the attacking investigators. Robert won't be much use here but will attempt to keep anyone already subdued from escaping. James and the Smiths attack to subdue, as the avatar moves in with its spine attack (unless otherwise hindered). Should Jacob be present he will run away screaming if given the chance.

CONCLUSION

The scenario may end with the investigators victorious, having dispatched the undead servants and the avatar, or they may flee the horrors by the lake and decide to live another day. If the latter, then perhaps they will return in the days to come, prepared to put an end to the Brophys and the avatar once





and for all. Killing the avatar is no easy feat (given the damage it is able to inflict and its armor), and the Keeper may wish to explore an ongoing campaign where the investigators seek out ways to destroy or banish the avatar, as well as discover more information about the insidious evil that is Gla'aki. With this in mind, the Keeper may wish to link this scenario with "Amidst The Ancient Trees," one of the scenarios provided in the *Call of Cthulhu Rulebook* which also focuses on Gla'aki.

With no successful way of saving James Frazer, it is up to the investigators how they inform his father as to what has happened to him. Informing him that James is dead will certainly bring questions they would perhaps rather not answer, and a police investigation to boot. Throughout all this red tape and interviews, Gerald Frazer will conveniently avoid paying the investigators. Should they inform him his son was at the motel but they lost the trail (providing the notebook, car license plate, etc. as evidence perhaps), he pays each investigator two hundred dollars for their trouble.

Rewards

Depending on the outcome of the scenario and the investigators' actions, apply the following rewards to the surviving investigators:

- Rescuing Sarah Bonner or any other victim: +1D6 Sanity points per victim.
- Thwarting the Brophys' plans for future victims, +1D6 Sanity points.
- Destroying the avatar of Gla'aki, +1D10 Sanity points.
- Fleeing without saving anyone, -1D10+2 Sanity points.



Servant of Gla'aki by Loic Muzy

APPENDIX A: CHARACTERS AND MONSTERS

MOTEL GUESTS

JACOB TRENT, *jittery young man*

Small and feeble looking, Jacob is 21-years-old and works as a library assistant in Arkham. He wants nothing more than to run away with his lover. He knows very well his physical limitations and, rather than being cowardly, he has a strong sense of self-preservation.

STR 40 **CON** 65 **SIZ** 55 **DEX** 75 **INT** 60
APP 50 **POW** 60 **EDU** 70 **SAN** 60 **HP** 19
Damage Bonus: 0 **Build:** 0 **Move:** 8 **MP:** 12

Combat

Brawl 25% (12/5), damage 1D3 (or weapon)
Dodge 37% (18/7)

Skills

Credit Rating 15%, Fast Talk 30%, First Aid 40%, Library Use 50%, Listen 40%, Psychology 30%, Spot Hidden 30%, Stealth 30%, Throw 40%.

BILL DUNSTON, *taciturn tenant*

A quiet, sour-faced man, Bill Dunston is tall, heavily built and 46-years-old. A former boxer, as evidenced by his bent nose, he is a dockworker taking a break from a hard life and is far less sinister than he first appears. Dunston is a potential ally, as well as a potential replacement investigator.

STR 85 **CON** 70 **SIZ** 80 **DEX** 60 **INT** 75
APP 40 **POW** 40 **EDU** 70 **SAN** 40 **HP** 19
Damage Bonus: +1D6 **Build:** 2 **Move:** 7 **MP:** 8

Combat

Brawl 80% (40/16), damage 1D3+1D6 (or weapon)
Dodge 35% (17/7)

Skills

Credit Rating 20%, Intimidate 55%, Jump 40%, Listen 30%, Mechanical Repair 40%, Psychology 40%, Spot Hidden 35%, Stealth 40%, Throw 45%.

SARAH BONNER, *damsel in distress*

A petite and beautiful 21-year-old woman, Sarah is blue eyed, freckled, with light brown skin and frizzy hair, evidence of her African ancestry from her father's side. Sarah is unemployed,

poor but happy, and is on her way to Kingsport to live with her grandparents and search for a job.

STR 55 **CON** 70 **SIZ** 50 **DEX** 75 **INT** 90
APP 85 **POW** 80 **EDU** 75 **SAN** 80 **HP** 19
Damage Bonus: 0 **Build:** 0 **Move:** 9 **MP:** 16

Combat

Brawl 25% (12/5), damage 1D3 (or weapon)
Dodge 35% (17/7)

Skills

Credit Rating 8%, Jump 45%, Listen 30%, Natural World 40%, Psychology 30%, Spot Hidden 45%, Stealth 50%, Throw 35%.

MOTEL HORRORS

MR. & MRS. SMITH, *servants of Gla'aki*

Once a boss and his secretary on an illicit weekend trip from Kingsport, they suffered for their adultery in the worst possible way when they stayed at Squatters Lake Motel. Stripped naked and kept in boxes in the Brophys' workshop, these are the Brophys' muscle when it comes to subduing victims. Evidence of Gla'aki's touch can be seen in the form of the un-bleeding hole in the center of their chests surrounded by a network of red lines. They move stiffly, but in this early stage of their careers as monsters they could certainly masquerade as human if the avatar wished.

Mr. Smith

STR 80 **CON** 120 **SIZ** 60 **DEX** 20 **INT** 65
APP 45 **POW** 50 **EDU** — **SAN** — **HP** 18
Damage Bonus: +1D4 **Build:** 1 **Move:** 6 **MP:** 10

Mrs. Smith

STR 65 **CON** 140 **SIZ** 80 **DEX** 20 **INT** 70
APP 40 **POW** 40 **EDU** — **SAN** — **HP** 22
Damage Bonus: +1D4 **Build:** 1 **Move:** 6 **MP:** 8

Combat

Attacks per round: 1 (brawl or meat hook)
Fighting 40% (20/8), damage 1D3+1D4
Meat Hook 40% (20/8), damage 1D6+1D4
Dodge 10% (5/2)

Armor: None.

Sanity Loss: No Sanity point loss for a human-seeming servant of Gla'aki.

JAMES FRAZER, servant of Gla'aki

Tall, thin, and stolidly built, James Frazer was formerly a 25-year-old philosophy student studying at Miskatonic University. All this changed when he stayed at Squatters Lane Motel and was turned into an undead servant of Gla'aki. He remains in the crate hidden beneath the motel during the day. His clothes are in tatters, hollow eyed, with blonde hair matted to his scalp, this pale, walking corpse is a shadow of the formerly robust James Frazer.

STR 90 **CON** 150 **SIZ** 75 **DEX** 30 **INT** 70
APP 45 **POW** 45 **EDU** — **SAN** — **HP** 22
Damage Bonus: +1D6 **Build:** 2 **Move:** 7 **MP:** 9

Combat

Attacks per round: 1 (brawl or meat hook)
Fighting 40% (20/8), damage 1D3+1D4
Meat Hook 40% (20/8), damage 1D6+1D4
Dodge 10% (5/2)

Armor: None.

Sanity Loss: No Sanity point loss for a human-seeming servant of Gla'aki.

ROBERT BROPHY, servant of Gla'aki

Robert is 105-years-old and looks it. No longer human, he was killed and turned into an undead servant of Gla'aki some 63 years earlier, so is actually a corpse that died at the age of 42. He is feeble-looking, with a skeletal face and a few wispy white hairs across his liver spotted scalp. Wheelchair bound, he can walk if he has to, but at a very slow pace.

If Robert is exposed to daylight he will succumb to the Green Decay, a symptom all servants of Gla'aki suffer from if they have been undead for six decades or more. If exposed to direct sunlight for prolonged periods of time, he will begin to rot on the spot, destroyed completely a couple of hours later.

STR 40 **CON** 90 **SIZ** 70 **DEX** 10 **INT** 55
APP 20 **POW** 35 **EDU** — **SAN** — **HP** 16
Damage Bonus: 0 **Build:** 0 **Move:** 2 **MP:** 7

Combat

Attacks per round: 1 (brawl or with weapon)
Fighting 50% (25/10), damage 1D3
20-g shotgun (2B) 25% (12/5), damage 2D6/1D6/1D3
 (10/20/50 yards)
Dodge 05% (2/1)

Armor: None.

Spells: Contact Gla'aki.

Sanity Loss: No Sanity point loss for a human-seeming servant of Gla'aki, but if witnessed succumbing to the Green Decay, 1/1D10 Sanity points.

WILLIAM BROPHY, servant of Gla'aki

William resembles his father so it is easy for him to masquerade as Robert's younger brother. He appears frail, though not as much as Robert, with a lined face and a full head of white hair. William died at the age of 25, taken by Gla'aki 58 years earlier, so his body is now 83 years of age. He functions well as a human, and is completely under the avatar's control.

STR 35 **CON** 110 **SIZ** 80 **DEX** 25 **INT** 65
APP 45 **POW** 60 **EDU** — **SAN** — **HP** 19
Damage Bonus: 0 **Build:** 0 **Move:** 5 **MP:** 12

Combat

Attacks per round: 1 (brawl or with weapon)
Fighting 50% (25/10), damage 1D3
20-g shotgun (2B) 35% (17/7), damage 2D6/1D6/1D3*
Dodge 12% (6/2)
 *10/20/50 yards.

Armor: None.

Spells: Contact Gla'aki.

Sanity Loss: No Sanity point loss for a human-seeming servant of Gla'aki, but if witnessed succumbing to the Green Decay, 1/1D10 Sanity points.

ZOMBIES, four failed servants

The zombies have identical statistics.

STR 80 **CON** 80 **SIZ** 65 **DEX** 35 **INT** —
APP — **POW** 05 **EDU** — **SAN** — **HP** 19
Damage Bonus: +1D4 **Build:** 1 **Move:** 6 **MP:** 1

Combat

Attacks per round: 1 (claw, bite, tear)
Fighting 30% (15/6), damage 1D3+1D4
Dodge Lacking volition, this is not an option

Skills

Seek Human Flesh 99%.

Armor: None, but impaling weapons do 1 point of damage, and all others do half rolled damage. Major wounds delivered to the body will result in loss of a limb.

Sanity Loss: 0/1D8 Sanity points to see a zombie.

SERVANTS OF THE LAKE

AVATAR OF GLA'AKI

An oval shaped being covered in countless thin spines, its body is colored in different metallic hues. The front of the oval bears a spongy face with a fanged, thick-lipped mouth. Three yellow eyes protrude on thin stalks, rising over the mouth. Its body pulses and shakes as it moves, making a loud vibrational hum. Covering its underside is a layer of white, pyramidal shapes used for locomotion.

The avatar was created soon after the Brophys arrived at the lake. After capturing an unfortunate individual, Robert forced Gla'aki's fluid down the man's throat while William jabbed multiple spines into his chest. The shriveled arms and legs that dangle from its sides are the only hint of its once human origin.

The avatar is weaker than the entity it resembles but, given time and victims, its strength will equal Gla'aki's. The avatar controls the Brophys and its other undead servants.

SPECIAL POWERS

Dream-Pull: The avatar uses the dream-pull to draw potential victims to the lake for infection and transformation into an undead servant. The chance of the target being overwhelmed by the dream-pull is equal to the avatar's magic points minus the target's magic points on 1D100. For every half-mile distance between the target and the avatar's lair add 1 magic point to the victim's total. The avatar can attempt its dream-pull once per night for as many nights as required.

The victim is compelled to come to the lake and stand still while the avatar approaches and drives a spine into his or her chest. The spine should kill the victim instantly (sometimes this is not the case—see following). A round later the avatar injects its fluid into the victim's body. The spine then detaches from the avatar and takes root, growing protrusions through the victim's body. A night or two later the spine falls off, leaving a livid wound surrounded by a network of fine red lines. The victim is now an undead servant subject to the avatar's will.

If the spine fails to kill the victim before the fluid is injected, the victim is transformed into a zombie and is not subject to the avatar's will. If the spine is broken off and hasn't done enough damage to kill the victim (and before the fluid is injected), the victim remains a normal human being and can survive.

STR 100 **CON** 150 **SIZ** 225 **DEX** 50 **INT** 75
APP — **POW** 140 **EDU** — **SAN** — **HP** 37
Damage Bonus: +3D6 **Build:** 4 **Move:** 6 **MP:** 28

Combat

Attacks per round: 1 (ramming or shooting spines)
Fighting 70% (35/14), damage 1D6+3D6
Shooting a Spine 50% (25/10), damage 2D6

Armor: 10-point integument, each spine has 2 points of armor and 3 hit points.

Spells: None (the avatar will possess spells as it matures).

Sanity Loss: 1D3/1D10 Sanity points to see the avatar.



TIES THAT BIND

By Tom Lynch

INTRODUCTION

There is no beast fiercer than a mother protecting her young. This is especially true of creatures of the Cthulhu Mythos, as the investigators in this adventure will soon find.

This scenario, suitable for 2 to 6 beginner investigators, takes place in Lovecraft Country in the 1920s, in Ipswich, near Arkham. The events can easily be moved elsewhere in the Massachusetts area with a little work, and further afield as the Keeper wishes. Likewise, the date of the scenario can easily be moved to the modern era if desired. If a major move is considered, the Keeper is encouraged to remember that some resources unique to Miskatonic University may not be available elsewhere.

KEEPER INFORMATION

Thaddeus Waters, known to people in the area as the legendary Marsh Wizard, got careless in his old age of 342. For centuries, he had been summoning and binding byakhee to his will to transport him to places on earth and elsewhere. The last time he did so, however, he performed the summoning perfectly, but failed to perform the binding portion of the ritual. Thus, the creature appeared, but felt no compunction about driving her claws through Waters' chest and pulling his spine out through his abdomen.

The byakhee was especially disgruntled at the summoning as she was pregnant and due to birth her brood at any moment. The spell tore her from her home to Earth, and she lacked the strength to transport herself back until after giving birth. She was therefore compelled to give birth here and return without her children for the time being. Not far from Waters' marsh islet hideaway, the byakhee found a suitable place—a small pond—in which to lay her eggs. Unfortunately, this was actually a fountain in the middle of an active construction site for one of the areas more wealthy and influential families. Not comprehending such Earthly



KEEPER SUGGESTION: TIMING AND PACE

This scenario follows a schedule. Events will happen regardless of outside involvement. The challenge lies in how the investigators will involve themselves to help shape those events. The Keeper can certainly allow time for legwork, but the scenario's events should be kept to the schedule. Thus, no matter what the investigators do, the events will continue to unfold around them.



matters, the exhausted beast left her batch of eggs behind and set off to inter-dimensional space without the added weight of her children. The byakhee expects to return once she has regained her strength, and thereby bring her young home to her mate.

The construction workers on site, however, interfered with her plans. They found the odd-looking seashell/stone/banana-esque formations, as well as the now-damaged fountain, and contacted their client, Mrs. Enid Carrington, who directed that these items be moved carefully to the secure storage room until they could be identified.

INVOLVING THE INVESTIGATORS

The investigators can enter the scenario in a variety of ways, and as such, these could serve to introduce the investigators to one another and also create the “party” in a realistic or organic way.

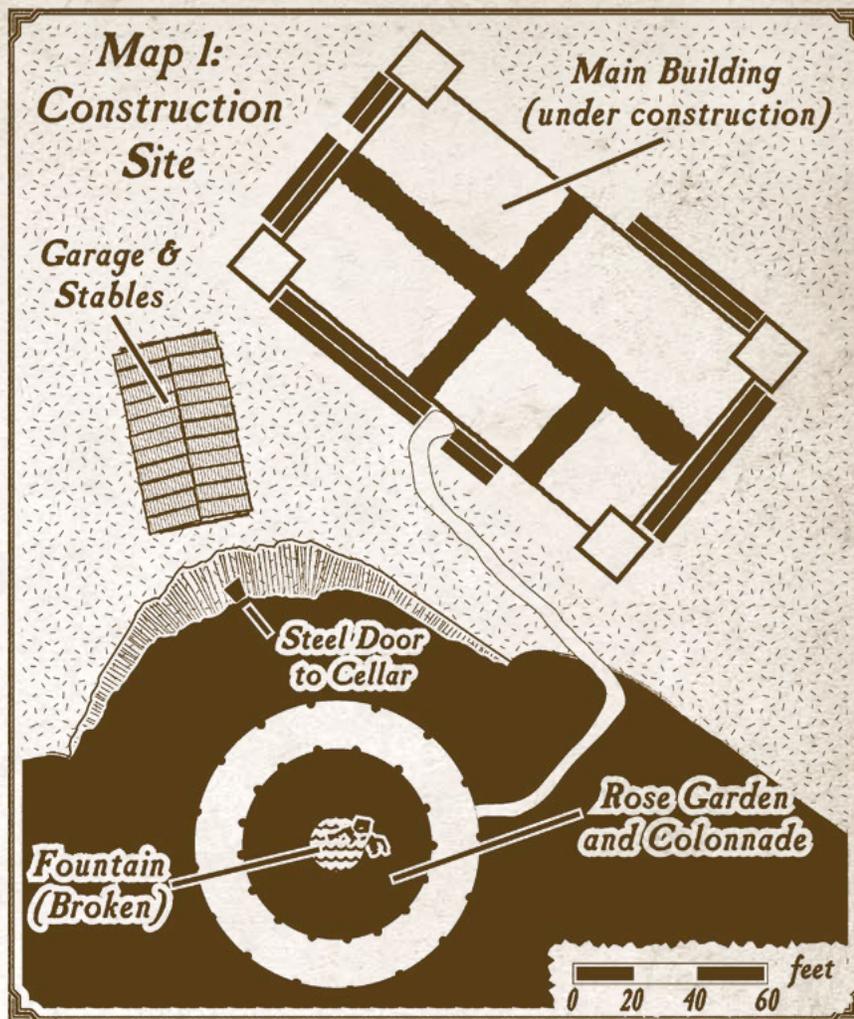
Potential entry points come from the recipients of Mrs. Carrington's calls. She calls the local police (Ipswich Police and the Essex County Sheriff), and the local university, Miskatonic. Given who she is, and her standing with the community, she has no trouble getting policemen sent to the scene of vandalism, and she gets right through to the head of the College of Natural Sciences at Miskatonic, demanding a geologist be sent immediately to view the "stones" her workmen have found. Therefore, the investigators could be with the town police or county sheriff's office, or they could be from the university (geology department, or perhaps a graduate student in a related field). Taking that reasoning one step further, they could also be a private investigator hired by Mrs. Carrington, or a journalist on the hunt for a story. Should the players wish, they could also play one or more of the construction workers on site, but that particular choice is left to the Keeper to consider.

In addition, as detailed later, characters can join the investigation when the Arkham Police are called in (later the same night or early the next morning) to the scene of a gruesome murder (see *The Aftermath*, page 84, and *Fragmented Testimony*, page 84). In this case, the investigators are most likely associated with the Arkham Police Department or Arkham Sanitarium, although journalists and photographers would also make sense at that particular point. As a tie-in, a potential colleague of Dr. Briden from Miskatonic University would work as well.

Finally, Mrs. Carrington could be put in contact with the investigators if they have already undertaken investigations in the Arkham area. Perhaps a mutual acquaintance suggests the investigators are just the sort of knowledgeable people to look into these unusual rocks.

THE SCENE OF THE VANDALISM

In the center of what is to be Enid Carrington's new rose garden is the wreckage of an imported Italian marble statue,



and a much-disturbed fountain area. The statue, which had been standing in the middle of the twenty-foot diameter circular pond, has been knocked over and lies in multiple pieces in the water and on the grass nearby. Any investigator seeing this may note (with an INT roll) that the statue would have to have been knocked sideways with considerable force for pieces of it to land over ten feet from its original position.

Mrs. Carrington can be found nearby, either stalking around, barking at everyone to keep working, or collapsed on a bench nearby.

"So you've finally arrived," Mrs. Carrington will say to whomever shows up, regardless of who they are. "Here's the centerpiece of my rose garden. Isn't it lovely?" The sarcasm in her voice is palpable. If she is addressing law enforcement, she expresses her wishes to bring the thugs to justice and that she plans to press charges and sue the perpetrators for damage. She scoffs in disgust, pointing to the ruined statue at the center of the fountain. "The cretins left this mess in the water of my fountain. I had the men remove it so they could get right to work on repairs. They're dragging their feet as it is, and I want no further delay in this project. I expect to host many a society ball here by the end of the year."

THE CARRINGTON FAMILY

While not all of the family members necessarily become involved in the scenario, there is a possibility that most of them will. To that end, further introduction are in order.

- **Enid Carrington:** Comes from old money; has her own wealth in addition to the millions her husband makes. She is the daughter of a railroad tycoon, growing up with nothing but the best. She is demanding and will not suffer fools gladly. She works hard to maintain her lifestyle and expects everyone else to the same, especially those in her employ.
- **Milburne Carrington:** Head of the family, is a millionaire banking magnate and spends most of his time at the office or making deals with various important people (like local government officials, foreign governments, and heads of other companies). He has handed over complete control of the building work to his wife as she has impeccable taste and is very good at holding the craftsmen to their task.
- **William Carrington:** Son and heir to the Carrington Empire. Despite his parents' objections, he is pursuing his own path in life. He is currently a senior at Miskatonic University, studying ancient religions and mysticism. His family is not pleased with his choice, but he intends to stay the course and further his studies overseas upon graduation.
- **Mary Carrington:** The youngest child, she was slated to go to Harvard, but instead chose to follow her brother William to Miskatonic. She is currently a sophomore and is still exploring, having failed thus far to decide exactly what it is she would like to study. She seems to be leaning toward medicine, having spent a great deal of time in the biology department.

The Fountain

The marble statue that had been standing at the center of the fountain is now shattered. It lies half-submerged in the calf-deep water. The fountain is not full, though, the workers will all say that it had been the day before they found this mess. The grassy area all around the fountain is still waterlogged such that is impossible to approach the area and not have one's shoes sink halfway into the sod. Mrs. Carrington delights in complaining about this as well.

The baroque statue depicted a young boy standing on giant shells holding a dolphin. It was carved from pure white marble and, given what is still visible of its workmanship, would likely have cost more than most of the investigators make in a year.

The fountain is also damaged. The rim is cracked and chipped in two places, about four feet apart, and there are numerous almost-parallel gouges in the cement floor, varying from one foot to almost three feet in length, located between the chipped rim and the center where the statue stood. Close examination of the cracks and gouges reveals that they were made with relatively blunt tools and that whatever made these marks left no residue in them.

The "rocks" were found next to where the gouges now lie.

THE ROCKS

The byakhee's eggs (the "rocks") have been taken by the workmen to the cellar of the construction site, where some of the other valuables are kept. Mrs. Carrington has insisted that no less than three workmen stand guard at the cellar entry 24 hours a day. A solid steel door (18 hit points) has been placed over the cellar opening to protect everything inside.

Within can be found: more marble statuary, wrought iron railings and fences, and various landscaping tools (picks, shovels, and wheelbarrows). The eggs are on a rough worktable (mostly) cleared of debris and placed by the door. There is a lamp on the table that can be used to examine the "rocks."

As soon as anyone with any scientific credentials sees and touches what was found in the fountain, they immediately know that they are not made of stone. They are close in texture and make-up to coral and shells. It looks like a bunch of swollen, petrified bananas. There are four layers of five to six "bananas" each. Some of them have been broken off, and the remains are off to the side. Each fruit-like thing looks like it is made of translucent mother of pearl, with the stems looking to be made of a blue granite-colored coral. Upon closer examination with a light source, one can see through the surface of each "fruit," noting that the inside is filled with a viscous fluid, with a solid blob floating in it.

Mrs. Carrington will mention that some of the "rocks" broke off and crumbled when she first ordered them moved from the fountain and into the cellar. She will stay close when the investigators first look over the find, as she is eager to know if they are worth anything, saying, *"Some of it is passably attractive, and I might as well get something out of this fiasco. I think maybe that iridescent part would make a nice necklace don't you think? And perhaps matching cufflinks for my husband."*

Given what they are, a geologist will not be able to help, other than state that they're nothing like anything yet identified. Close examination and a successful **Science (Biology, Chemistry, or Zoology)**, **Medicine**, or other appropriate roll confirms that they do appear to be eggs of some not yet identified species.

Obviously, further study will be required but if the investigators wish to remove the artifacts to study them off site, Mrs. Carrington will pose a problem. She will insist they remain in her keeping (she has decided they are worth something) and, regardless of **Charm**, **Fast Talk**, **Persuade**, or even **Intimidate**, she will not relent.

Further Study Of The Eggs

Close study of the eggs allows a sharp-eyed investigator (successful **Spot Hidden** roll) to realize that there are too few pieces present to make up all the missing larger eggs from the bunch. Indeed, once the fragments are pieced together, it is obvious that one egg is missing. If the investigators fail to notice this, Mrs. Carrington (hovering nearby and watching everyone like a hawk) will note that it looks like one of the



Dearest Mary,

I don't think you even know me, but I know you. You see, I work on your house. I'm not a gentleman like you deserve, but I'm a good man with strong hands and a good heart.

You may think this is sudden, but I have come to care for you. I have seen you and watched you when you came to the site, and I wanted to see you again. I have a gift for you that I would like to bring by your dormitory tomorrow. It's a jewel of some kind that we found where we are building your house, and it is really pretty, like a giant fancy pearl. As you are studying at Miskatonic University, I thought you would think it was interesting.

I will be at my room at the Borden Arms tonight and tomorrow, so you can reach me there.

With deepest affection,

Alfred Hackett

TIES THAT BIND

“banana eggs” is missing. Asking around on site will earn a series of shrugs in response. If they ask the foreman, he’ll say everything should be there. If the investigators ask if everyone is at work today, he’ll confess one of his workers, Alfred Hackett, is missing, and did not come to work this morning. Yes, he did help move what they found in the fountain yesterday. How did they know?

Those who take more time to study the eggs may discover, if they break open one of the eggs, that the contents inside quickly disintegrates, emitting a foul, sulfurous smell. The eggs are hard but brittle (applying force with a tool is liable to crack the egg open). If dropped, call for a Luck roll to see if the egg remains intact.

POLICE INVOLVEMENT

The police case at this point cannot go much further. There is certainly evidence of vandalism, but there is nothing to point them to who could have perpetrated the crime: there are no fingerprints, no fibers, no footprints, and no tire tracks in the area. *“It’s as if whoever did this just flew in, wrecked the fountain, and flew out.”*

Mrs. Carrington directs the investigators (whether they are officers of the law, or not) to locate the missing evidence (the missing egg), and the person who supposedly has it: Alfred Hackett. She demands that Hackett be found and the egg returned. Remember that Mrs. Carrington is well connected and she will go above the investigators’ heads to make sure their bosses direct the investigators to follow her wishes (should the investigators have other ideas).

WHERE HAST THOU GONE

Alfred Hackett has been working at the Carrington site, but has done something foolish. He saw these rocks left behind by the vandals and thought they were rather pretty, so he appropriated one. While he was helping to move them, he snapped one off and put it in his pocket. He thought it would make an impressive gift for the girl of his dreams.

The young lady whose attention Hackett is seeking is well out of his league—and he knows it—for she is none other than Mary Carrington, the young lady slated to move into the mansion he is building, and daughter of Mrs. Enid Carrington, the dragon-lady of the construction project.

Young Hackett made off with the egg with the plan of working it into some kind of gift to get Ms. Carrington’s attention. He has been smitten since he saw her visiting the construction site,

and feels this is one way of winning her affections. To that end, he hid the egg in his rented room in downtown Arkham and sent a note that same evening to Mary at her dormitory, Dorothy Upman Hall at Miskatonic University, saying that he had found a rare and wonderful jewel to give her (see **Handout: Ties 1**).

The next day, Hackett skipped work to present the gift to Mary. Nervous about the presentation, young Hackett had tried to clean the prize, using hot water. Just scrubbing it didn’t work, so he left it in a pot of just-boiled water overnight, where the heat brought about the creature’s rapid development.

The next morning, while preparing for the all-important presentation, he notices that something is different. When he lifts the thing out of the water, the “skin” seems to be milkier and less iridescent than it was. It also appears to be more translucent, allowing him to see what looks like something swimming around inside, knocking and pressing against the inner walls. With a sudden, horrible realization, Hackett scrawls a quick note to Mary and runs it over to the university (see **Handout: Ties 2**).

When Hackett returns to his room later that same morning, he finds that he was right about what the thing was, and it has hatched. Babies are always hungry and byakhee are no exception. Hackett feeds it everything he has, and the tiny “gnashing baby dragon-horse” takes anything and everything put into his little mouth. Including Hackett’s fingers.

DEVELOPING EVENTS

There are a few options for how to play the next few hours. Mary will arrive at Hackett’s room in the early afternoon, having just gotten out of class. She brings a professor of biology with her, Carl Briden, M.D., having gotten Hackett’s second note as well. The second note has put her on edge, and she wouldn’t have come based solely on the first, being

Handout: Ties 2

Mary,
I think it's an egg, but I don't know what kind. Come quick. I don't know what to do if it hatches.
Alfred

more interested in Dr. Briden than in Hackett (or biology for that matter).

If the investigators follow the Hackett lead first, they can likely get to his room around the same time that Hackett's visitors arrive and see the baby creature. If they wait until later in the day, they may find Hackett's room empty. The investigators can be given his address by the foreman, and can track him down to his cheap hotel room in Arkham where he is living for the duration of this job: the Borden Arms Hotel, 488 West High Lane, Northside Arkham.

The landlady, Miss Pansy Osborne, will let them into her tenant's room if any of them are with the police or can prove they are a private investigator. If there are no such characters present, they will have to rely on **Charm**, **Fast Talk**, or **Persuade** (allow a bonus die if the investigators' offer an appreciation for her help: a bribe).

Provided the investigators are willing to talk to her and listen to her bemoan the difficulties of running such an establishment, they will learn that Hackett left late that afternoon with a young lady and a middle-aged gentleman. There had been a bit of a ruckus earlier, because Hackett had brought an animal into his room, "*Which the young man was not supposed to do, and he knows better, he does.*" The animal had apparently attacked him. She saw that he had been bleeding, and the gentleman visitor was tending to his wounds from his medical bag. The three headed out and said they would return later that same evening.

If the investigators call on Alfred Hackett well into the evening, they will find his room crowded. Mary Carrington and Dr. Briden will have come back after eating and getting more medical tools from the Miskatonic campus. Dr. Briden is, at this point, very interested and has brought everything back to Hackett's room to keep the discovery of this new species quiet.

THE HATCHLING

Studying the creature more closely takes a delicate, but firm hand. Hackett proves he is not up to the task, but Dr. Briden is excited to have the opportunity. Not knowing of the origin of the egg, he believes this to be a heretofore unknown species of earthly creature.

Provided the investigators wish to work alongside Dr. Briden, all will be well. He gets territorial, however, if the investigators want to take over in any way, as he feels he should have the right of discovery. If the investigators play nice, he plays nice.

Dr. Briden will be happy to share his findings in the morning if the investigators wish to part company for the night. The Keeper should endeavor to have the investigators leave for the night (but avoid railroading them: if they want to stay, let them). One way to do this is to remind them (perhaps via Hackett) that the other eggs are in the cellar at the construction site and unattended: what if they are hatching too? If the investigators

HACKETT'S SCHEDULE

To make it easier for the Keeper, the following shows when Hackett is in his room and when he is not. This will hopefully make it easier to keep track of his movements for the purpose of the investigation.

Time	Location
8 a.m. to 9 a.m.	In his room at the Borden Arms Hotel
9 a.m. to 11 a.m.	Out delivering the second message to Mary Carrington.
11 a.m. to 1 p.m.	Back in his room feeding his new pet.
1 p.m. to 3 p.m.	In his room with Dr. Briden and Mary Carrington.
3 p.m. to 6 p.m.	Out at Miskatonic University and then dinner.
6 p.m. to 10 p.m.	In his room with Dr. Briden and Mary Carrington.
After 10 p.m.	Entertaining a visitor from beyond.

leave and go to the construction site, have them arrive after the mother byakhee has been there (see **Mama? Mama!**, nearby and **Crime Scene: The Carrington Estate**, page 92).

While he is there studying the creature, Dr. Briden takes copious notes, and makes a number of sketches. One of these pages of notes is available for examination later (see **Handout: Ties 3**) and the text can be used by the Keeper to give the players a description of the creature's appearance.

At around 10 p.m., the critter gets very agitated for no visible reason. It starts flapping its wings and squawking toward the window, sniffing the air. It starts to nip at Dr. Briden's fingers and refuses to settle down, even if offered food.

Mama? Mama!

Once night has fallen, the mother byakhee returns looking for her young. She is surprised to learn that they have been separated and her brood is now in two separate locations.

Her first stop is to where most of her babies still lie—safely in their eggs at the construction site. She drops out of space toward the fountain, only to find her eggs missing. She sniffs them out the short way to the locked cellar, but cannot scratch her way through the steel door or the dirt and rocks of the

surrounding hillside. She can and does scratch her way through those standing guard, however. She guts one workman right by the cellar door, but the other two she grabs and lifts up into the air. She drops them both, allowing them to plummet to their sudden and painful deaths.

She then heads into downtown Arkham to claim her preemie. Following her innate senses, the byakhee bursts through the window of Alfred Hackett's room and picks up her baby. Dr. Briden, likely caught holding the tiny creature, is immediately killed when the byakhee tears his head off. Hackett, no doubt in an insane fit of bravery, still trying to impress Mary Carrington, charges the beast, and has his heart pulled out through his chest for his trouble. Mary Carrington, cowering in the corner, is left unmolested, if covered in gore.

If the investigators have the great (mis)fortune to be present for this event, the Keeper is encouraged to play it out. The byakhee is only interested in the safety of her child, and considers any threat to it a deadly one. If the investigators back off, they will be left alone. If they attack (provided they have the Sanity to do so), they will be dealt with accordingly.

In addition to the Sanity loss of seeing the byakhee up close and personal, witnessing the carnage calls for another **Sanity** roll (2/1D6+1 Sanity points loss). One distinct difference about this creature, in comparison to others of its kind, is the presence of seven randomly placed teats on the byakhee's torso. These glands ooze a noxious substance, which presumably is the interstellar equivalent to breast milk. The presence of these mammary glands are a clue for the investigators, so the Keeper is urged to include them in the description when the investigators first encounter the creature.

The creature is about the size of a kitten, with a similar bone structure but for the fact that it often stands on its hind legs, allowing its forelegs or elongated arms to dangle forward. The claws on all four feet appear to be a cross between non-retracting cat claws and human hands. Growing from complex bone structure and musculature on its back are bat-like wings. Its head is reminiscent of that of a horse, but the vicious fangs in the mouth and barbed horns behind its eyes dispel and further similarity. Its skin rough and reptilian, but not scaly. In other words, the skin has the texture of scales but they are not scales.



KEEPER SUGGESTION: ADDING MENACE AND MYSTERY

While it is certainly possible to play this scenario such that the investigators catch up early and witness the byakhee attack and are attacked themselves, it is very probably more frightening to have them miss the attack, and so get all the information in the following sections. By handling the scenario in this manner, the investigators will not know who their adversary is until later on. Finding the aftermath of the attack can be more effective in helping to build suspense and mystery, as well as increasing tension—what was a simple investigation about some strange eggs has suddenly turned into a murder mystery!

The Keeper is advised to have the byakhee attack Dr. Briden and Hackett first, allowing the investigators time to decide whether to run or try and fight the creature. Wise investigators will note how easily it disposes of the doctor and construction worker and take measures to vacate the apartment (honorably ones might also take Mary with them). In this situation, the byakhee will snarl and claw at the investigators but not actually attack them if they appear to be leaving her infant alone (a successful **Psychology** roll confirms this). Thus, unmolested, the byakhee and infant disappear through the window into the night sky.

THE AFTERMATH

If the investigators are not present for the encounter with the mother byakhee, then they learn of the event first thing the following morning after the police have been called to the gruesome scene. At least two people are dead (possibly more if one of the investigators got in the way of Mother), and one is in the care of doctors for her shattered nerves.

If the investigators were there when the byakhee attacked, and stuck around for the police to question them, they are in for a long night. They will likely be arrested and under suspicion of murder, since any story about an otherworldly creature flying through the window and killing certain people in the room while leaving others alive, is going to be difficult to believe. Pointing out that the window was broken inward will only puzzle police detectives and not guarantee anyone's release.

Mary Carrington survived the encounter but is in a near catatonic state. Her brother William, a senior at Miskatonic University, is the first by her bedside at Arkham Sanitarium.

CRIME SCENE: HACKETT'S ROOM

Only Arkham Police Department personnel, Essex County Sheriff's Department personnel, and approved journalists may gain access. A successful **Fast Talk** or **Persuade** can gain the investigators access to this site, especially if they happen to drop the Carringtons' name. The family has been active and generous in the community for some time, and this has not gone unnoticed. If this fails, a call to Mrs. Carrington (who, in turn, calls the police chief) gets them inside.

If investigator's can gain access, there are clues and information to be had from the scene:

- **Item # 1:** Broken glass. This can be noted by a successful **Spot Hidden** roll or by any investigator saying they are examining the window. The way the glass is lying around the room, and the position of the remaining fragments in the window frame all lead to one conclusion. The window was broken inward.
- **Item #2:** Shard in the wall. This can be noted by an investigator looking at the window and then at the opposite wall. With a **Spot Hidden** roll, they will see that one piece of glass is stuck in the plaster across from the window, a good ten feet away. This implies that the window was broken with tremendous force.
- **Item #3:** Hackett's notes to Mary. The two letters that Hackett wrote to Mary (**Handout: Ties 1 and 2**) can be found on the floor by the bed where she fell.
- **Item #4:** Drawing and notes. A couple of pages of Dr. Briden's notes can be retrieved from the room. The rest of them were shredded in the commotion, or covered in gore such that they are unreadable. The remaining pages contains a brief description of the hatchling and a sketch (see **Handout: Ties 3**).

Conversations with Hackett's neighbors in the building reveal nothing helpful, only comments like, *"All I heard was a crash, screams, a lot of banging around, and something howling and wailing. I never heard anything make such a horrible noise in all my life!"*

Fragmented Testimony

Mary Carrington saw everything first hand and has lived to regret it. She followed her professor, Dr. Briden (whom she secretly admired very deeply), to investigate this newly hatched creature, only to see the professor and her own secret admirer torn to shreds. She now lies in bed at Arkham Sanitarium, slipping in and out of consciousness. Ms. Carrington has been heavily sedated, so getting a coherent account of what happened will not be possible until the morning following the event.



William Carrington, the middle child of the Carrington family, has always been close to his little sister and partially blames himself for her condition, as she followed him to Miskatonic University instead of going to Harvard (as their parents had planned for her). He is also desperate to know what happened since he's only heard snippets of information from investigating police, journalists, and others on the scene. Therefore, out of guilt and curiosity, William refuses to leave his sister during her stay in the sanitarium.

When she begins to come out of her semi-catatonic state, she can recount what she saw. Mary states they were sitting at Hackett's table in his room, with Dr. Briden performing his examination, and she and Hackett looking on. *"Sometime around 10 p.m. the creature got very excited, chirping and squawking, straining to get out of Briden's hands. When the doctor refused to let go, the creature got really agitated and started biting at his hands and fingers, and getting really loud. We got worried that someone might call the landlady or even the police. Now, I wish they had."*

She pauses at this point and starts to cry quietly. Her family starts to insist that the interview is over, but she recovers. *"It's okay,"* she says. *"So there we were when the window exploded inward. There's just no other word for it. I fell back onto the bed and covered my face since pieces of glass were falling everywhere. I pulled my hands away only to see this huge, black, winged demon put one claw on Carl... Dr. Briden's shoulder, wrap the other around his head, and pull it off! My God... my god... my god... MY GOD!"* She pulls her knees up to her chest and hugs them to herself, rocking backward and forward. She seems about to have another breakdown, but lifts her head, still rocking, and continues, *"Then Alfred...stupid, dear Alfred, ran at the thing. It didn't even pause. It reached its bloody claw forward and punched through his chest, and wrenched out his insides! Oh dear GOD! This can't be happening! Carl! Caaaar!"*

The doctors insist that everyone leaves at this point, but if anyone succeeds with a **Charm**, **Fast Talk**, or **Persuade** roll (especially if it is on behalf of law enforcement or the Carrington family), they can ask a few questions, but Mary doesn't know much more:

- *"Yes, this did appear to be a larger version of the tiny creature that had hatched."*
- *"What did it look like? Gee whiz, look at the picture Carl... Dr. Briden drew. Now make it seven feet tall."*
- *"Yes, it must have picked up the smaller one and left the same way it came, but I didn't notice... I must have fainted."*

Input From Will Carrington

William Carrington, Mary's older brother, approaches the investigators, and has some thoughts that he would like to share. After spending all night by his sister's side, he steps outside of the wardroom at the sanitarium to speak to the investigators.

His breathing is shallow, he is pale, and he's sweating, even though the temperature inside is quite comfortable. A successful **Psychology** roll confirms he is very nervous. He thinks he has some idea of what the creature is and how it might have gotten into the area.

He explains that he is studying the occult at Miskatonic University, and is particularly interested in local lore, having devoted his senior thesis to the topic. There is a story, he says, of a man called the Marsh Wizard, who is said to live in a secluded spot somewhere in the Ipswich salt marshes. Not even six miles from this very spot! William doesn't remember all the details but can help guide the investigators to the Orne Library at Miskatonic University should they wish to know more.

If the investigator somehow misses out on speaking to William, the information about the Marsh Wizard could also be replayed through other local residents, or the investigators could stumble upon it while conducting research, leading them to the Orne Library in the pursuit of further clues. Of course, if one of the investigators is a local resident of Arkham, ask for a **Know** roll to see if they remember the story about the Marsh Wizard, thus leading them to conduct research into the legend.

A successful **Library Use** roll find the following information (add a bonus die if William is assisting the investigators):

- The "Marsh Wizard" is the boogey man used by area parents going back as far as two hundred years. The disappearance of people and livestock over the years has been credited to the Marsh Wizard. Over the years, reports and newspaper stories say the police have searched the swamps, but never found anyone or anything. If the Marsh Wizard is real, his lair remains a mystery.
- *Superstitions and Folk Lore of Essex County* (see **Handout: Ties 4**). If William is with the investigators, he says, *"Ob, this illustration makes my blood run cold. Read the entry around the picture. I'd bet that's the creature Mary saw. What do you think?"*

Andrew Leman

With the mention of Andrew Leman being dated 1906, investigators may assume that the man is still alive and attempt to seek him out.

Then young, now a middle-aged shut-in, Andrew Leman can be found with persistence. A successful **Library Use** roll in either a local newspaper archive or the local authority records means his address can be found. Sweet talking investigators succeeding with a **Charm** roll might even be able to persuade one of the clerks or assistants to hunt the information out for them. Having had his fill of salt marshes, Leman apparently moved to the shore, and now lives nearby in Kingsport.

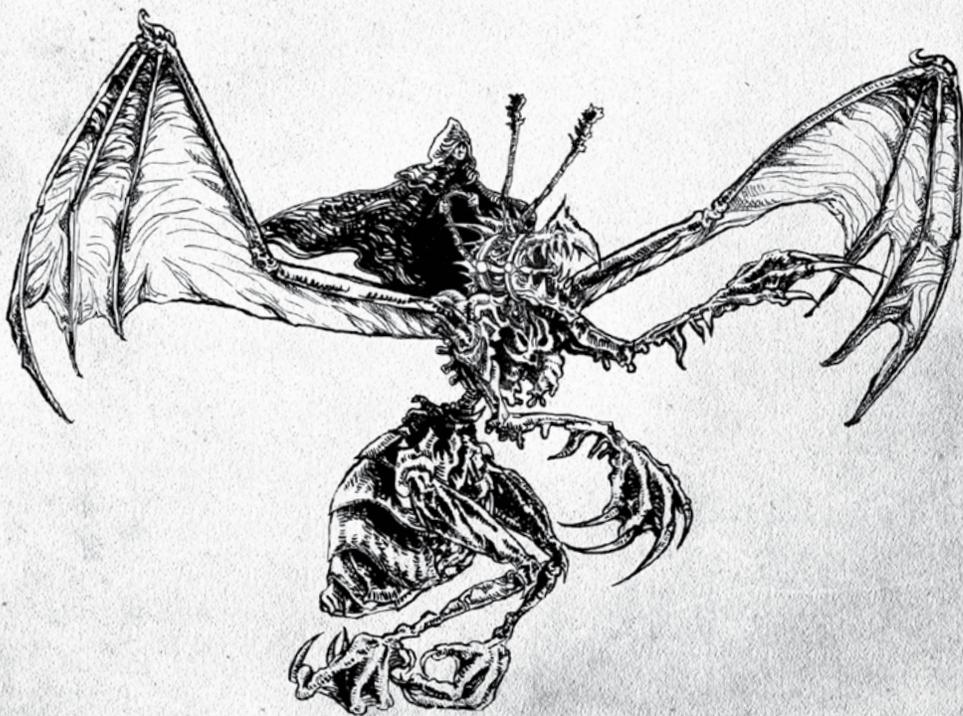
Leman is often home, but rarely answers the door to his apartment. He pays his rent by doing odd jobs for his landlord, Sam Malowski, who will tell the investigators as much. The apartment building is pretty run down and in a less salubrious

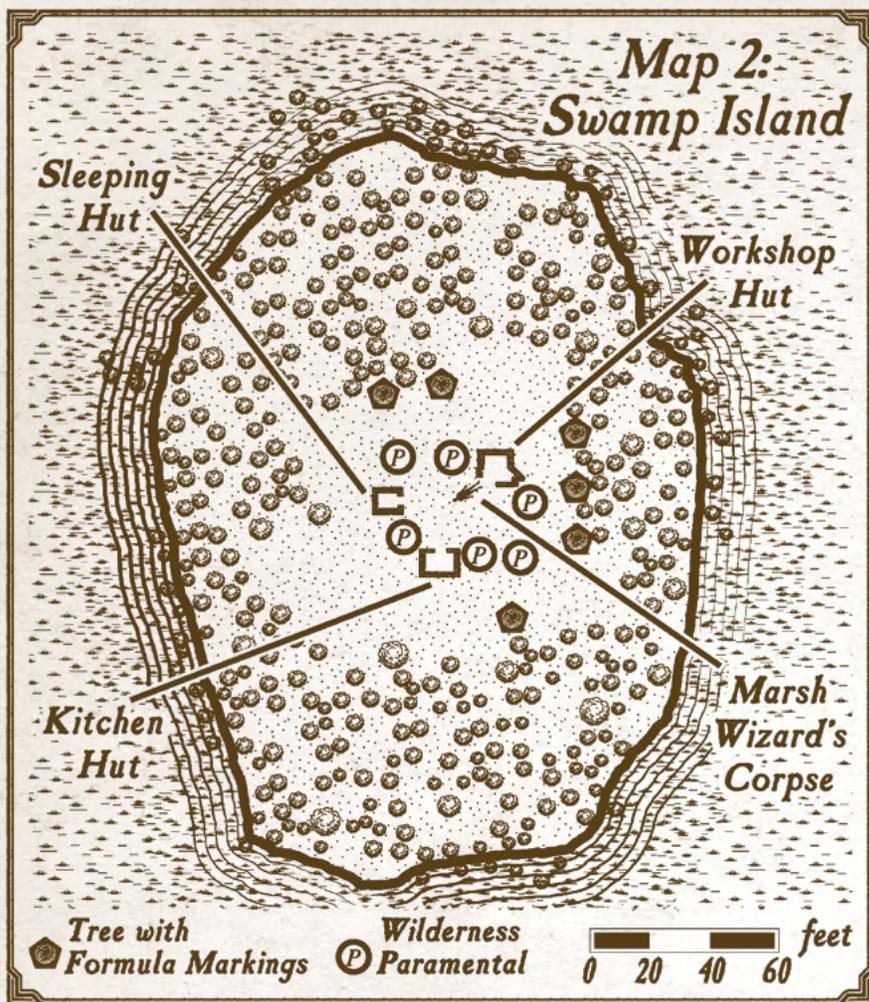
Superstitions and Folk Lore of Essex County ~ 76

The infamous Marsh Wizard of Ipswich has been haunting Essex County for centuries according to many local accounts. Evidence of his existence goes back to at least the 18th century where accounts of disappearing cattle and people were associated with the Marsh Wizard. Such accounts include the notion that the wizard had a demon familiar, as the flapping of giant wings was reported on more than one occasion.

The tales grow more outlandish over time, with some claiming that the Marsh Wizard had a dragon-like steed that he uses to ride the night skies and terrorize local residents.

The illustration below is an artist's interpretation of testimony given by a young man named Andrew Leman, who claims to have seen the wizard riding the beast over the salt marshes one night in 1906.





Leman still remembers the location where he saw the beast, and can take the investigators there—if he is compensated for his efforts. Leman leads the party to the spot where he saw the wizard and the creature so many years ago (see *A Visit To The Salt Marshes*, following).

A VISIT TO THE SALT MARSHES

A drive back towards Arkham and into the surrounding salt marshes takes the investigators to the swamp where Leman claims to have seen the wizard. The location is only a few miles away from Mrs. Carrington's construction site.

The road is a quiet and lonely one, and while the trees have grown some in the past two decades, the area is still recognizable to Leman. He points to where he saw the flying beast and where it was headed. With that, Leman points to where he

location—it's clear that Leman has hit hard times and isn't exactly flush with money.

Anyone offering Leman money to talk will get the man's attention. As soon as he hears what the investigators wish to discuss, however, he becomes belligerent and asks them to leave. A successful **Fast Talk**, **Persuade**, or **Intimidate** roll is needed, and more money will help. Leman must be convinced that the investigators are not there to mock him—ever since his name was mentioned in that book he's been the butt of ridicule for his fanciful story of a flying wizard on a dragon.

If convinced to talk, he describes it in detail, but it was twenty years earlier, so his memory isn't so good. The details he provides are sketchy. He'd stopped along side of the road because his horse had a stone in his shoe, so he was tending to his mare when the horse started whickering and shaking. Before he could finish calming the beast, he heard the beating of giant wings and saw the creature rise up through the trees and fly off toward the horizon. It had a horse-shaped head, clawed arms and legs, and was being ridden by an evil looking man. One second it was there, the next it was gone. Frightened more than he'd ever been in his life, he whipped his horse to a frenzy getting home.

thinks they came from.

Past searches for the Marsh Wizard's island have been unsuccessful due to wizard's magic. He did not wish to be found, and searchers simply went around his island, completely unaware that it was there at all, hidden by an obfuscation spells. That is, until now. With his death, the island is now easily found by any who are brave enough to look.

After allowing the investigators to ramble through the swamp, when the time is right, have them come upon a small island surrounded by trees. A **Spot Hidden** roll notices some old huts on the island. If the investigators miss these, allow them to wander around and ask for a **Navigate** roll (with a penalty die if it's nighttime) to see whether they become lost. With either outcome, the investigators spend a bit more time searching until eventually they come back to the island from another direction, and can see the huts through the trees. Call for a **Spot Hidden** roll from each of the investigators to see if they notice a strange esoteric symbol carved into one of the trees that surround the island.

All investigators who enter the central clearing on the island trigger and awaken the wizard's magical bodyguards.

KEEPER SUGGESTION: ADDING MOOD TO THE SEARCH

Thaddeus Waters, the Marsh Wizard, is dead—you, the Keeper, know this, but the players do not. Therefore, play-up the menace and foreboding of the salt marsh. Odd noises, bird calls, water lapping, frogs croaking, and other noises should all sound eerie and unsettling as the investigators tread deeper into the wilderness. What time of day is it? Describe the light (or lack of it), as well as the pervading damp, which soon begins to soak into boots and clothes.

Perhaps the investigators trip over a partially submerged human skeleton while looking for the island (calling for a **Sanity** roll: 0/1D2 loss); one of many sets of remains that can be found from the wizard's past sacrifices.

Investigators may make **Spot Hidden** or **Listen** rolls. With a **Listen** success they hear a bubbling and burping sound from different areas of the clearing. Those who succeed with **Spot Hidden** will see disturbances in the mud and muck surrounding them, as it starts to bubble and roil. Slowly rising up from the swamp are six small humanoid forms, provoking a **Sanity** roll (1/1D6 **Sanity** points loss). These are wilderness parentals (their statistics can be found in **Appendix A: Characters and Monsters**), and are similar to the parentals found in Chaosium's *Secrets of San Francisco*. The wilderness versions of these monsters are tied to the chaotic energy of the wild. They are roughly humanoid and small, formed from mud, stone, and moss. Wilderness parentals, similar to their urban counterparts, are summoned by complex formulae that are somehow attached to the location, be they carved into a tree or chipped into a rock. While the creatures can be harmed with physical force (mundane weaponry), the only way to fully defeat them is to find the formula tied to each creature and destroy it. If anything short of that is done, the wilderness parentals reform 10 minutes after their hit points were reduced to zero.

To defeat the dead wizard's bodyguards, the investigators must locate the multiple formulae carved into the trees around the island. Six different trees have esoteric symbols carved into their trunks, so all six formulae must be destroyed to banish all six bodyguards. As each formula is destroyed, the corresponding creature drops and dissolves into the mud. Each formulae can be found with successful **Spot Hidden** roll (after the first two or three have been found, kindly Keepers may award a bonus die to the attempts to find the rest, given that the investigators now know what they are looking for).



CHAPTER 5

If the investigators manage to defeat the wilderness parentals, further examination of the area reveals several human skeletons and those of various livestock (cows and sheep, mostly). These were used to fuel the wizard's summoning rituals performed over the centuries. If nothing else, identification of these remains could help close a number of unsolved missing persons cases. Locating records to identify old skeletons will be another matter entirely, however. Finding such skeletons may provoke a **Sanity** roll (0/1D2 Sanity points loss).

If the parentals are not defeated, they will reform in 10 minutes time, so the investigators will have to work fast to uncover the island's secrets.

Just outside of the workshop hut, the (recent) corpse of a very old man can be found. Seeing the body lying in his own gore, with an expression of surprise and pain, calls for a **Sanity** roll (0/1D2 Sanity points loss). This is what is left of Thaddeus Waters, the Marsh Wizard. He was careless in his spell casting and failed to bind the byakhee to his will, which attacked him and abandoned him here to die.

Clutched in the withering fist of the ancient wizard is a small tubular whistle, apparently carved from bone (examination of the bone at some point and a successful **Science (Biology)** or **Medicine** roll confirms it is human bone).

The whistle is covered in miniscule carvings that appear to be writing of some kind, but the language is unknown (*i.e.* not of human origin).

One of the small huts was once the wizard's bedroom, another was a kitchen and eating area, and the third was his workshop. A quick survey reveals that he did not live in luxury by any means: he lived in fetid squalor. The mud, stick, and leaf huts he lived in are primitive by Neolithic standards. It appears that he used nothing more than rotting old leaves for a mattress (the smell is foul). While a fire pit with a tripod over it, and a few rusting pots (some of which contain rotting food) marks out another hut as his kitchen. His workshop hut was clearly all that mattered to him. Here can be found a workbench with bottles, vials, and carafes, all filled with a variety of unnameable substances (living insects, dead insects, living small animals, innards of small animals, and so on). On the center of the bench is a sheet of ancient paper, written in script from days gone by, containing the spells to summon and bind a byakhee (see **Handout: Ties 5**).

With a successful **Spot Hidden** roll, while they are examining the workbench, the investigators will find a small notebook with most of its pages missing. One page, however, has something very useful on it. Written in a scrawling hand with faded ink are some words of advice (see **Handout: Ties 6**).



To Call and Master the Steed from the Stars

To be performed when Aldebaran is above the horizon.

This creature can be useful as a bodyguard, soldier, assassin, message carrier, and steed. Called and its will bound to yours such that it will not balk. Take care in the final steps lest it strike you down, for unbound, it is a most fearsome beast.

Spill the blood of a six-month-old unblemished calf or a gentle maiden of no more than fourteen summers, spreading the crimson over the stones of the altar of summoning as the chant is repeated,

Ick ctha, yaahn neh! Byakhee ctha meh, da nai, s'nommas nai'rb! Yaahn neh,
ick ctha.

Blow, at this time, into your whistle, and set out three blasts of sound after each recitation.

After some time, the sky will open and from the rent in the heavens will descend a star steed, still crusted with the frost of his journey from beyond. Having heard the call of the supplicant, it is impelled to answer, yet it challenge for the right to command its nature.

Fail in this and your light will surely be extinguished. Using the dagger still coated with the blood of the summons, first point to the creature and then point to the ground, signifying your mastery over it. Apply your will fully to this task for the beast will seek for man's weakness and flee back to the stars.

In full voice, utter, Ick ctha, byakhee! Ctha meh.

With success, the beast will prostrate itself and be yours to command.

Upon completion of your commands, custom dictates that the supplicant dismiss the creature. Take up the bone dagger and inscribe the X in the air afore the creature. This signifies its tasks are done. Then draw the dagger's keen edge along your forearm, from elbow to the wrist, and let fall three drops of blood to the ground and utter,

Yaahn neh, byakhee! Ctha meh.

Satisfied that it has been dismissed, the creature will depart.

KEEPER SUGGESTION: USING THE SPELL

Spells in *Call of Cthulhu* are truly dreadful—there is no waving a wand and your enemies drop. There is bloodshed of the innocent and a very real, very deadly risk of failure. Should the investigators wish to cast this spell, they do so at their own peril. If necessary, refresh your memory by reading Chapter 9 in the *Call of Cthulhu Rulebook* for advice and information about Mythos spells, spell casting, and the possible outcomes.

Handout: Ties 6

Creature does not always complete task. Sometimes not necessary.

Dismiss it with: lck ctha yaahn neh, byakhee! Ctha meh. Three times said.

After third, draw blade from under left eye straight down to left jaw line, and leave 13 drops of blood from the wound in the bowl. Take the blood into your mouth.

Spray it into the creature's face, while saying, Ctha meh!

It will then be forced back to the stars.

CRIME SCENE: THE CARRINGTON ESTATE

The byakhee also visited the Carrington estate and wreaked considerable havoc there—just before heading to Hackett's room (as detailed in *Mama? Mama!* and **Crime Scene: Hackett's Room**).

The police have the area cordoned-off in short order and, much to the chagrin of Mrs. Carrington, there will be no work done on the premises today. By this point, the investigators are likely already known to the police, so they can gain access to the site (if not, then Mrs. Carrington will make a phone call and thereby get permission for them to enter).

Hopefully, by this point in the scenario, the investigators realize that the creature will come back here to claim its un-hatched offspring. This is certainly an important place for the byakhee and if the investigators fail to realize this, kindly Keepers may grant each player an INT roll to think of the connection.

The construction workers who entered the site this morning were greeted by the site of their co-worker's bodies—the three who were assigned the task of watching over the construction site since the vandalism. One by the door of the cellar, one at the foot of the scaffolding, and one impaled on top of the scaffolding. The last body has been impaled so far down the pole that it appears it must have been either pushed down with considerable force or dropped from a great height onto the scaffolding. Investigators looking at the ruined bodies of the night watchmen should make a **Sanity** roll (1/1D3 **Sanity** points loss).

Beyond the horrific ruined bodies, there are only two other points of interest at this crime scene. Firstly, the door to the cellar: the byakhee was desperately trying to rescue her eggs but the steel door proved too resistant, where she has left several dents and scratches. Examination of these reveals the dents are in a pattern consistent that that of a very large fist.

The second point of interest is an odd set of tracks: walking around the site, an investigator will see the tracks. A successful **Track**, **Natural World**, or **Science (Biology or Zoology)** roll notes that the tracks do not match any animal on record (this realization calls for a **Sanity** roll, with 0/1 **Sanity** point loss).

CONCLUSION

As the saying goes, "Ain't Mama happy, ain't nobody happy." Well, Mama's not happy, and she is now ready to exact her revenge. She has rescued one of her children but most remain locked away in a strange place where she cannot reach them.

As twilight turns to true night, movement can be seen above the horizon. The creature has returned to claim her young. Hopefully, for the sake of the investigators' longevity, they have figured out what has happened, set the eggs out for

KEEPER SUGGESTION: MAMA'S BACKUP

What's that? The party hasn't lost much Sanity and no one has been wounded (beyond the stray shard of glass)? Well, then it's time to call for backup, if you are so inclined. Mama is, by no means, an island. She has kith and kin she can call upon, and if the Keeper wishes she may call on them for additional muscle. Who knows? Maybe she calls on her missing children's father, uncles, or siblings? Exactly how many byakhee are in this scenario is ultimately up to the Keeper—but avoid over-doing it!

the mother to reclaim them, and given the returning creature a wide berth. If not, the scenario may end in failure with a series of messy deaths. This ending can occur at any point at least twenty-four hours after the mother rescues her baby from Hackett's apartment, but preferably after the players have been allowed to explore the Marsh Wizard's island.

The Investigators' Triumph

The investigators have realized that the things left in the fountain were eggs and that all that the creature wanted was her young. If the investigators move the eggs back into the fountain and stand back outside the colonnade, then a peaceful end ensues. The byakhee lands, sees the eggs, and will (most likely) see the investigators standing on the periphery, but will fly off again cradling the eggs. Clinging to the mother byakhee's teat is the infant she rescued from Hackett's apartment.

If the investigators merely stand, do not advance or do anything foolhardy—like try to document the event with photography (as the noise and flash needed for night photography will startle and upset the beast)—all will be well. If they do anything the Keeper deems risky or downright foolish, then the situation takes a quick turn for the worse (see the following section). Of course, don't forget to call for Sanity rolls when the byakhee arrives (1/1D6 Sanity points loss)—an investigator going insane at this point is liable to send the whole scene crashing to disaster unless stopped by their comrades or left to fend for themselves while everyone else fees!

The Investigators' Fail

The byakhee will reclaim the eggs tonight, regardless of who or what stands in the way. Clinging to the mother byakhee's teat is the infant she rescued from Hackett's apartment. If there

KEEPER SUGGESTION: HOW DO WE WIN THIS?

If you want your investigators to “win” this scenario and live to investigate another day, then take a moment to recap and remind them of the events so far. What has the monster been trying to do? What has she been trying to reclaim? If you were holding the Mama Grizzly's cub, and she came back from hunting, would you fight her off or put the cub down and back away weeping? The choice is theirs.

are any humans there, investigators or not, she will attempt to kill any in the way.

If the investigators show up to this confrontation armed, there is a chance that the humans can triumph over this creature of the Mythos. Should the investigators choose this route, the resolution is still a failure as senseless slaughter could have been avoided by careful consideration and thought.

A violent victory over the mother and child byakhee, plus any resultant human deaths, costs the investigators Sanity points, as they inevitably realize the consequences they have allowed to take place.

Of course, as mentioned in the nearby **Keeper Suggestion**, gung-ho investigators can be countered by having more than one byakhee turn up. The result will be messy. Remember that the byakhee are human-like in intelligence, so they will use tactics and avoid direct confrontation if the investigators appear able to deal out significant damage.

Rewards

Depending on the outcome of the scenario and the investigators' actions, apply the following rewards to the surviving investigators:

- Figuring out that this is a case of children separated from their mother: +1D3 Sanity points.
- Leaving the eggs out for the mother to claim them: +1D8 Sanity points.
- Killing the byakhee and her young: -1D8 Sanity points.
- For each human death that the investigators could have prevented*: -1D4 Sanity points.

**Not counting Dr. Biden, Hawkins, or the three workmen killed by the byakhee on her second visit to the building site.*

APPENDIX A: CHARACTERS AND MONSTERS

ENID CARRINGTON, age 51, *iron-willed lady*

STR 40 CON 65 SIZ 55 DEX 60 INT 80
APP 70 POW 75 EDU 80 SAN 75 HP 12
Damage Bonus: 0 Build: 0 Move: 8 MP: 15

Combat

Brawl 25% (12/5), damage 1D3 (or weapon)
Dodge 30% (15/6)

Skills

Administer Tongue Lashing 85%, Intimidate 80%, Credit Rating 80%, Law 50%, Listen 45%, Psychology 50%, Spot Hidden 60%, Stare Witheringly 75%.

WILLIAM CARRINGTON, age 21, *student of the occult*

STR 45 CON 70 SIZ 65 DEX 60 INT 80
APP 70 POW 70 EDU 80 SAN 70 HP 13
Damage Bonus: 0 Build: 0 Move: 7 MP: 14

Combat

Brawl 40% (20/8), damage 1D3 (or weapon)
Dodge 32% (16/6)

Skills

Charm 40%, Credit Rating 60%, Cthulhu Mythos 03%, Library Use 50%, Listen 30%, Occult 45%, Share Chilling Local Legends 65%, Spot Hidden 60%, Stealth 40%.

ANDREW LEMAN, age 43, *ridiculed has-been*

STR 40 CON 45 SIZ 60 DEX 50 INT 65
APP 40 POW 55 EDU 65 SAN 52 HP 10
Damage Bonus: 0 Build: 0 Move: 7 MP: 11

Combat

Brawl 35% (17/7), damage 1D3 (or weapon)
Dodge 25% (12/5)

Skills

Credit Rating 08%, Fast Talk 30%, Listen 35%, Navigate 40%, Reminisce Wistfully 94%, Spot Hidden 40%, Stealth 45%, Track 30%.

TYPICAL CONSTRUCTION WORKER

STR 80 CON 70 SIZ 75 DEX 60 INT 60
APP 45 POW 45 EDU 45 SAN 45 HP 14
Damage Bonus: +1D4 Build: 1 Move: 8 MP: 9

Combat

Brawl 60% (30/12), damage 1D3+1D4 (or weapon)
Dodge 30% (15/6)

Skills

Charm 60%, Credit Rating 15%, First Aid 35%, Intimidate 45%, Listen 40%, Psychology 40%, Spot Hidden 35%, Throw 45%.



Byakhee by Pat Loboyko

TIES THAT BIND

WILDERNESS PARAMENTALS

STR 35 CON 35 SIZ 35 DEX 55 INT 50
APP — POW 35 EDU — SAN — HP 7
Damage Bonus: 0 Build: 0 Move: 8 MP: 7

Combat

Attacks per round: 1 (claw or bite)

Fighting 35% (17/7), damage 1D6

Dodge 27 (13/5)

Skills

Listen 50%, Spot Hidden 50%, Stealth 50%.

Armor: None.

Sanity Loss: 0/1D8 Sanity points to see a wilderness paramental.

FEMALE BYAKHEE, *the "woman" scorned*

STR 80 CON 50 SIZ 85 DEX 70 INT 65
APP — POW 55 EDU — SAN — HP 13
Damage Bonus: +1D6 Build: 2 Move: 5/16*MP: 11

**Flying.*

Combat

Attacks per round: 2 (claw, bite, or crash into victim)

Fighting 55% (27/11), damage 1D6

Bite and hold* (mnvr) damage 1D6 + 3D10 STR (blood)
drain (single victim)

Dodge 40 (20/8)

***Bite and hold (mnvr):** If the bite strikes home the byakhee remains attached to the victim and begins to drain his or her blood. Each round the byakhee remains attached, including the first, the blood drain subtracts 3D10 points of STR from the victim, until death occurs (at STR 0). The byakhee characteristically remains attached with this attack until the victim is drained of blood, unless the victim can make a successful opposed STR roll to escape free. Escaping death, the victim may rest and regain blood at up to 1D10+5 STR per day. A Byakhee may hold only one victim at a time.

Special Abilities

Fly: Byakhee can fly through space and carry a rider; though such riders need protection from the vacuum and cold by suitable spells or potions (*e.g.* Space-Mead).

Skills

Listen 50%, Spot Hidden 50%, Stealth 50%.

Armor: 2-point fur and tough hide.

Sanity Loss: 1/1D6 Sanity points to see a byakhee.

NONE MORE BLACK

By Brian M. Sammons

INTRODUCTION

This scenario, for two to six players, can be set in any town or city that has a college, and would be a great way to introduce players to ghost haunted Arkham and the Miskatonic University. Set during the 1920s, the scenario would work equally as well in a modern day setting with a little adjustment by the Keeper.

KEEPER INFORMATION

Jonathan Dover was a man obsessed with knowing what the future held. When his wife Margaret died in a sudden and brutal accident, it shattered his world and set him on his path to eventual ruin. He traveled the world, studying with the various tribes, witch cults, esoteric societies, even individual psychics and fortunetellers for any glimmer of the possibility that such things were real. For years, his search was in vain, but then he came across an ancient cult in West Africa that worshiped a being “from beyond dreams” who could see “all times and places.” Jonathan became obsessed with this entity, called Yibb-Tstll, and in time he learned how to contact it, summon its minions, and worst of all, conjure the being’s vile blood, known as “The Black.”

The Black is usually used as a weapon, but as it is the blood of Yibb-Tstll, Jonathan hypothesized that it might have some of the Outer God’s ability to see through time. So he summoned The Black and carefully ingested it. Indeed, the blood did allow Jonathan to see different times and places, but it also drove him mad and eventually killed him, leaving Jonathan’s grown son, Jacob, alone and bitter.

Jacob Dover hated that his childhood was spent following his father all over the world on his crazy crusade to divine the future. He hated his father’s secretive and increasingly insane ways after West Africa. But mostly he hated that his father wasted away all of his family’s once substantial fortune, not only leaving Jacob in poverty but saddled with

thousands of dollars of this father’s debts. Growing up an isolated, friendless, unloved, and neglected child, Jacob is now a black-hearted young man.

Then one day he read his late father’s journals and learned the reality of his mad ramblings about spells and monsters, and discovered that The Black all but consumed his father. Learning this, Jacob came up with cold blooded plan to rid himself of the poverty he so despised. He would summon The Black, but not for himself. Instead, he would introduce it to others as a recreational drug, and once they became addicted to the foul stuff, he would make them pay dearly for it.

His plan had only two flaws. The first was angering the local criminal underworld by not only drawing customers away from their own drug and booze peddling operations, but also bringing unwanted heat as more and more people started dying from Black abuse. The second flaw was selling The Black to a young man named Walter Resnick, who in turn, gets the investigators involved.

THE DEATH OF WALTER RESNICK

Walter Resnick was a second-year student at the local college. If the investigators knew him before his death, the Keeper might want to describe or roleplay their interactions with him before his untimely demise (perhaps playing out a small scene where the investigator(s) have previously met Resnick).

Resnick was a charming, kind-hearted, and attractive young man; a good student and well liked by all. However, over the span of a few weeks he completely changed. At first he was excessively giddy, sometimes even cocksure. But this manic side of him was all too brief. Soon he grew irritable and dismissive towards friends and family. He starting missing classes, became disheveled, and stopped even the most basic of grooming tasks. He lost almost twenty pounds in just over two weeks and became sunken-eyed and ashen-skinned. If the investigators knew Resnick, choose one of them at random

NONE MORE BLACK

and have them try a **Spot Hidden** roll. Success means that they noticed something strange the last time they saw Resnick alive: when the boy spoke, his tongue was completely black.

Investigators who did not know Resnick before his death can learn about his decline with a successful **Charm**, **Fast Talk**, or **Persuade** roll when interviewing his classmates, professors, and friends.

When no one saw Resnick for over four days, the police were called to check in on the man at his off-campus room at a local boardinghouse. The following information can be learned firsthand by any law enforcement or medical examiner investigators, or perhaps one or two of Resnick's friends—if the Keeper wants them to be the ones that alerted the police and therefore were on hand when they kicked down the locked door to Resnick's room. If the investigators want to take a more hands-on approach to finding their missing friend, perhaps they break into his room without alerting the police. If this is the case, they could break down the door by making a **STR** roll, use the **Locksmith** skill, or get the key from the landlord with a successful **Charm**, **Persuade**, or **Fast Talk** roll.

Inside Resnick's room, he was (or is) found sitting in a chair, dead, with his eyes rolled back in his head and his black tongue lolling out of his mouth. If any friends or family of Resnick see the young man like this then call for a **Sanity** roll (0/1D4 Sanity points loss). A few small glass bottles (found with a successful

Spot Hidden roll if investigators are looking) were scattered all over the apartment, and one was even in his dead hand. A drop or two of black liquid can be found in all of the vials.

Questioning Resnick's neighbors or landlord discovers that he became more and more reclusive, but that's all. However, the neighbor sharing the wall with Resnick is reluctant to speak. A successful **Psychology** roll notes that he is holding back. If the investigators' push the neighbor with a successful **Intimidate** or **Persuade** roll, the neighbor, a college student named Thomas Swanson, admits that he didn't want to speak ill of the dead, but that Resnick was having constant nightmares and would scream loudly when he was the only one in his room.

Later, a coroner will examine Resnick's body. If this is an investigator, have them make a **Medicine** or **Science (Forensics)** roll to uncover the following facts:

- Resnick had been dead for about two days before being discovered.
- His tongue was inexplicitly stained black.
- He was suffering from malnutrition and dehydration.
- The exact cause of death is unknown, for all of the organs appear fine, and there were no wounds. "Natural causes" is listed on the death certificate for lack of any further evidence or anything better.



Walter Resnick's Autopsy by Wanye N. Miller

If none of the investigators are the ones performing the autopsy, this information can be gathered by any law official, or by visiting the medical examiner's office (where the body was taken) and using **Charm**, **Persuade**, or **Fast Talk**. Another way for the investigators to obtain the information is for them to break-in and steal the official report from the medical examiner's office—if this option is taken, they apply suitable skill rolls, like **Stealth**, **Locksmith**, and so on.

INVOLVING THE INVESTIGATORS

The investigators could either be college students or faculty members who are friends with Walter Resnick, or they could be professional investigative types, like police officers or medical examiners, who get involved after Resnick's death. A third alternative is if the investigators are all mobsters and underworld types, looking to stop the trade in the drug known as "Black." Lastly, there is the option that the investigators are hired by a member of Walter Resnick's family to look into the young man's death.

AVENUES FOR INVESTIGATION

Now the investigation really begins. The many avenues of inquiry the investigators can take are described in the following sections.

Odd Behavior

Talking to some of Resnick's friends or classmates, the investigators may learn that he started hanging out with a "bad element," that being several students well known for illegal drinking, now suspected of moving on to "harder stuff" (and suffering at school for it). One name that keeps coming up is Paul Rodgers, a onetime student who got kicked out of the college a year ago, but who still comes back to the campus from time to time. See **Finding Paul Rodgers**, page 99.

Black Tongue

If one of the investigators is connected to law enforcement, a mobster, or perhaps a reporter always looking for a good story, they will already know that, over the last two weeks, two other bodies have also been found dead with black tongues. One was Mary Clawson and the other was Franklin Stewart. Both were college students and part of the perceived "bad element" (see **Odd Behavior**), and both can be connected to Paul Rodgers (if the investigators ask around about such things). Lastly, both were also listed as dying from natural causes; their bodies shipped back to their out-of-state families.

Investigators who do not fall into one of the three mentioned categories can find this information out by asking

around in campus, talking to the police or medical examiner, or uncovering their autopsy reports if they have broken into the medical examiner's files. Apply appropriate skill rolls as necessary, depending on the investigators' course of action.

With three college students dying so close together, the whole of the campus community has been thrown into a panic. College officials are doing everything they can to find out the cause of the trouble, and to calm the student and parent community, not only for their sake but to salvage the school's reputation. After all, no one wants to attend class at a "cursed" campus. The Keeper should play up this atmosphere of fear and unease, and when the investigators are on campus grounds they had better be on their best behavior and not draw unwanted attention to themselves, or else face some harsh questions, detainment, or be escorted off campus by edgy security officials.

Glass Bottles

Similar bottles to the ones found in Resnick's room were also found in the rooms of both Mary Clawson and Franklin Stewart.

If the members of the aforementioned "bad element" are asked about the black substance, they claim to know what it is, but will only tell if paid twenty dollars. A successful **Persuade** roll can get them down to ten bucks—they may also be **Fast Talked** or **Intimidated** into doing so for free, at the Keeper's discretion. These college students appear much like Resnick before this death: thin, jittery, and quick to anger, with ashen-complexion and dark bags under their eyes. Investigators making a **Spot Hidden** roll can see that each has a tongue in varying degrees of blackness (if they are already aware of the black tongue "effect," award a bonus die to the roll). If any of the investigators are used to being around addicts, such as doctors, police officers, mobsters, bohemians, or jazz musicians, then they can recognize the signs of addiction with a successful **Medicine**, **Pharmacy**, or **Psychology** roll (or failing that, a **Know** roll).

If paid or coerced, the addicts say that a wonderful new drug comes in those little bottles, called "The Black." They claim, *"It makes you see crazy things, but real things that happened long ago, or far away, or haven't even happened yet. Sometimes the things are scary, but it makes you feel like a god!"*

Asked about who supplies The Black, the addicts won't say for fear of getting the drug dealer mad and, consequently, cutting-off their supply of Black.

Asked about Paul Rodgers, everyone clams up and says they don't know anyone called that name, but a successful **Psychology** roll says they're lying. A **Persuade** roll promising that Rodgers won't find out about their involvement and that they will be safe, gets the following response, *"Paul went to school here but was kicked out for cheating. He still has some friends on campus so he comes back all the time on the sly, keeping his pals happy by selling them booze. But a few weeks ago he showed up*

with The Black and since then no one who's tried it cares about booze at all, just The Black. Now he comes back once or twice a week with more of it. Every time the price for it goes up." This information can also be obtained through **Intimidate** and also the threat of violence (if the investigator is an underworld type, or just plain happy to use brawn rather than debate).

After that, a physical description of Paul Rodgers is provided as, "about five-eight, one-hundred-sixty-pounds, red hair, with a crescent-shaped, reddish wine-stain birthmark next to his left eye."

The Black

If the investigators have managed to get some of the empty glass bottles (from Resnick's room, police evidence, the medical examiner, or perhaps from one of the "bad element") then they will have a few drops of The Black. If they wish to examine it under a microscope, a successful **Science (Biology, Chemistry or Pharmacy)** roll tells them that most of the substance is common alcohol, but the other component could either be dried skin or blood. It is unlike any biological matter they have ever seen, but it definitely has dead cells of some sort in it. If none of the investigators are science types, this information could also be obtained via the medical examiner.

While the substance appears dead, it is actually still alive. If the investigators study The Black, the Keeper could give them a good scare by having it suddenly, and only once, move on its own accord. This provokes a **Sanity roll** (0/1D2 Sanity points loss). The Black never moves again, maybe that little bit was more active than the rest, so let the investigators wonder if what they saw was real, or just a figment of their imagination.

FINDING PAUL RODGERS

Finding Rodgers through official sources is difficult, as he has never been arrested, he has no driver's license, and the college has no records of his residence after he left school. A thorough search through city records at the town hall requires a successful **Library Use** roll. Keep in mind that the records office is only open from nine to five, Monday through Friday. With success, some tax records listing Rodgers' current address can be found.

Another option would be for the investigators to stake out the college in the hopes of spotting Rodgers when he comes back to sell more Black. If they do this they will have to keep a low profile and try to blend in. Anyone around college age, early to mid-twenties, can do this just by dressing the part. The older the investigator gets, the harder this is to do unless they try to pull-off the professor look. If the investigator is clearly out of place or does anything to draw attention to himself, then campus security may come over and question their business at the school—if they are unable to think on their feet (**Fast Talk**) then they will be escorted off campus. So if the investigators want to go crazy and hide in bushes (**Stealth**), or perhaps use the **Disguise** skill, the Keeper should feel free to indulge them.

If the stakeout is successfully maintained, then on the second day Rodgers will be seen strolling through the college commons. One by one, sunken-eyed Black addicts approach him, exchange money for tiny bottles, and move on. Once spotted, investigators can either approach or follow their quarry and see where he leads them.

Approaching is not the best idea because Rodgers is rather clever; he only ever cheated in school because he's lazy. He knows that The Black he has on him can't be identified as a drug, or anything else, for that matter. If questioned about it, he'll say that it's homemade ink that he sells to students for a few pennies and defies the investigators to prove otherwise. In fact, Rodgers sneers and says that they "Ain't got nothing" on him. Sadly, he's right. While bottles of The Black have been found at some death scenes, such deaths have been classified as natural for lack of any other evidence. Even if some of the investigators are criminal types and threaten violence, Rodgers will be shaken, admitting that he's just a middleman, but won't give up "the boss." That's because he has seen firsthand the dark powers Jacob Dover can control, not to mention the two black, faceless demons that are at his beck and call. Anything the investigators can do to Rodgers, he's sure that Jacob can do worse.

Following Rodgers or using his tax records (mentioned above), leads the investigators to his apartment. If they follow Rodgers they will have to do so at a discreet distance in either an automobile or on a bicycle, as Rodgers uses his own bicycle to get around. Call for **Drive Auto** or **Stealth** rolls as appropriate to see how well the investigators tail their quarry. Failure means that Rodgers may notice them (a failed pushed roll almost certainly means they have been spotted).

Note that statistics for Paul Rodgers, as well as for other important characters, can be found in **Appendix A: Characters and Monsters**.

PAUL RODGERS' HOUSE

Paul Rodgers lives in a little corner house just a mile away from the college. If the investigators stake out the house, they see that Rodgers never has his (drug) customers come to his residence. He sometimes goes out at night to see a film or returns to the college to see friends and deliver drugs. He is also seeing a young girl, Leslie, who works as a waitress in town (she is unaware of his drug dealing).

While Rodgers is out, allow the investigators ample opportunity to break into his home, if they so desire. However, if they can maintain their surveillance for three days and follow him when he leaves on the third night, Rodgers will lead them directly to Jacob Dover's base of operations, when he goes to get more Black to sell and drop off the money he's made for the week.

Breaking into Rodgers' house requires either a successful **Locksmith** roll or busting down one of the doors—the front

KEEPER SUGGESTION: THE MOB

Keepers wanting to add an extra level of complexity, and possibly danger, to the scenario can add Seamus O'Shea to their game. O'Shea is a mid-level problem solver for the Irish mob. He's been tasked with looking into the situation concerning a new drug called Black, which his bosses want control of, or, if this isn't possible, they want it off the streets.

The investigators should see O'Shea from time to time; perhaps he is even spotted spying on them. The mobster can be an advisory and a threat if he thinks the investigators are getting in his way, or an ally if he thinks they will make his job of eliminating the Black trade easier. Further, O'Shea may be a personal friend or enemy of one of the investigators if they're playing either a mobster or a policeman. Lastly, he may be a suitable candidate for the upcoming *Death From Above* (page 101).

SEAMUS O'SHEA, age 33, mob enforcer

STR 70 CON 60 SIZ 75 DEX 50 INT 65
APP 45 POW 45 EDU 65 SAN 45 HP 13
Damage Bonus: +1D4 Build: 1 Move: 7 MP: 9

Combat

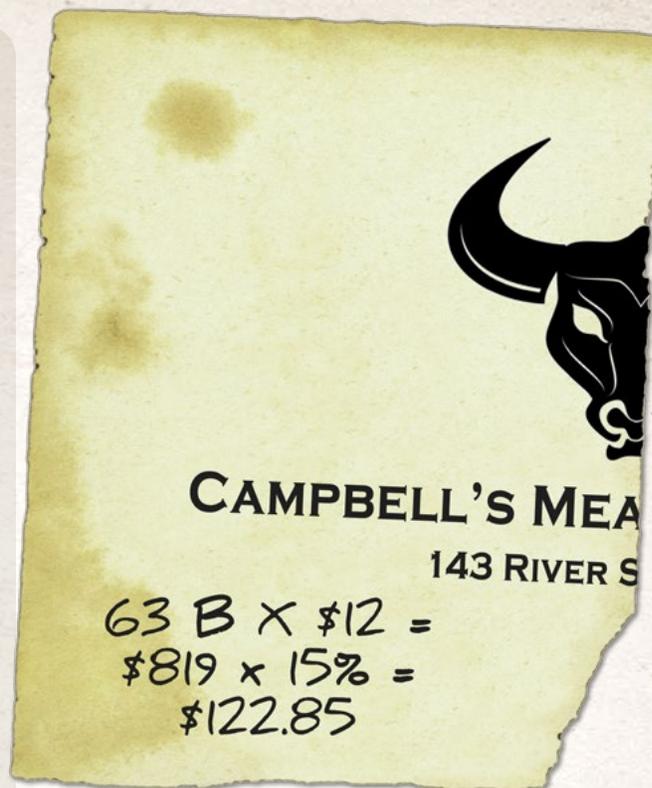
Brawl 70% (35/14), damage 1D3+1D4 (or weapon)
.45 Auto 60% (30/12), damage 1D10+2
12-g Pump Shotgun 50% (25/10), damage 4D6/2D6/1D6
(10/20/50 yards)
Dodge 45% (22/9)

Skills

Climb 50%, Drive Auto 55%, Fast Talk 50%, Intimidate 65%, Jump 35%, Listen 45%, Locksmith 40%, Psychology 45%, Spot Hidden 40%, Stealth 65%, Throw 60%.

door is STR 60 (a Hard STR roll), the backdoor STR 20 (a Regular STR roll). The house is small but well kept and quite orderly, and consists of a front room, kitchen, bathroom, and bedroom.

In the kitchen, next to the back door, are some newspapers on the floor on which stand a pair of rubber galoshes (overshoes), stained with foulness on their soles. It looks and smells like manure. A successful **Science (Biology or Chemistry)** or **Medicine** roll identifies the substance as animal fecal matter (possibly cow or pig) and blood. Rodgers wears the galoshes when he bikes out to meet Jacob Dover at his



old slaughterhouse headquarters. While the blood and other filth in the abattoir is old and dry, the roof leaks copiously when it rains and the water mixes with the old stains creating a horrible, reeking muck that Rodgers doesn't want on his nice shoes.

In a closet in the bedroom is a jacket that has a slip of paper inside one of its pockets. This scrap of paper (**Handout: Black 1**) was used by Rodgers to figure out his cut of the profits, and was torn from an old piece of paper taken from the slaughterhouse. It has half of the old business's letterhead on it. If the investigators do not find this clue in the closet, feel free to place it on top of Rodgers' desk where it will be easier to find.

In addition, a loose floorboard in the bedroom, underneath a rug, can be found when an investigator walks over it and hears a distinctive hollow sound. Under the floorboard are four full bottles of The Black, \$140 in cash, and a bank ledger showing that Rodgers has amassed a tidy sum of \$1145 in just a couple of weeks.

TRYING THE BLACK

Investigators should be smart enough not to do this, but just in case curiosity gets the better of them, or perhaps they are unwittingly exposed to The Black, the following happens. Upon dabbing the substance onto their tongue, the usual method to take this drug, very realistic hallucinations begin

NONE MORE BLACK

TABLE 1: EFFECT OF THE BLACK

CON Roll Result	First Time Used	Second Time (or more) Used
Critical Success	Not addicted.	Not addicted.
Extreme success	Not addicted.	Not addicted.
Hard success	Make another CON roll to see if addicted.	Make another CON roll (at Hard difficulty) to see if addicted.
Regular Success	Make another CON roll (at Hard difficulty) to see if addicted.	Addicted
Failure	Addicted	Addicted
Fumble	Addicted. Plus, make an Extreme CON roll: if failed, the person dies and their soul is ripped away to Yibb-Tstll to be tortured for all eternity.	Addicted. Plus, make an Extreme CON roll: if failed, the person dies and their soul is ripped away to Yibb-Tstll to be tortured for all eternity.

Addicted: The character is hooked on the drug and will actively seek out a “hit” at least once per day until the addiction is lifted.

Overcoming the addiction: The character must go “cold turkey” and avoid taking any more of the drug for 1D4+2 days. Each day during this period that the character abstains from ingestion of The Black, all skill rolls the character makes are increased in difficulty by one level (a Regular roll becomes Hard, a Hard roll becomes Extreme, and so on)—use a penalty die if the roll is opposed; the penalty die is cumulative with any other situational modifiers. If they can make it past this period, they are free of the addiction

that lasts for 1D3 hours. The visions can be of any time, any place, and may be of a mundane, normal nature, or deal with aspects of the Cthulhu Mythos at the Keeper’s discretion. Imbibers should make a **Sanity** roll (cost for a mundane vision is 0/1D2 Sanity points, while visions dealing with the Mythos cost 1/1D6 Sanity points). Visions containing elements of the Cthulhu Mythos also grant +1% to the Cthulhu Mythos skill.

In addition to the effects of the drug’s visions, those taking it must make a **CON** roll. Determine the effect based upon the result of the roll as described in **Table 1: Effects Of The Black**.

OPTIONAL: DEATH FROM ABOVE

This is an optional part of the scenario that the Keeper can use to heighten the fear and highlight the threat that the investigators face. The Keeper should choose a non-player character (NPC) that the investigators have met, who might have somehow angered Jacob Dover. It could be Paul Rodgers if he told the investigators anything, got greedy and started

skimming from Dover, or if Dover just wants to sever any links between himself and the middleman should the investigators start hassling him. It could be the mobster Seamus O’Shea if the Keeper has used him in the story so far. Or it could be any reporter, police detective, or medical examiner if they started their own investigations.

Whoever the victim is, one night when walking or driving someplace, investigators see the police and a crowd of people down a street. Getting closer, they see a body (that they might recognize) crumpled in a bloody, shattered heap in the middle of the street. If they can examine the corpse (**Sanity** roll: 0/1D6 loss for the gory sight) it appears that it fell from a great height, easily two hundred feet or more, but there is nothing around here anywhere close to that tall, let alone in the middle of the road.

An elderly man stands nearby, with blood splattered on his clothes and face, who is being questioned by the police. He shouts loudly, “*I tells ya, ‘e just fell outta the sky! ‘E was screaming all the way down!*” If the investigators question the man he tells them he was walking home and splat! A body hit the road

SPELL: CALL THE BLACK

- **Cost:** 8 magic points; 1 POW; 2D6 Sanity points
- **Casting time:** 3 hours

The spell summons the living blood of Yibb-Tstll, known as “The Black,” against a single target. The blood appears as soft, dark flakes that adhere to the body of the target, accumulating in a great mass, causing suffocation. When the victim dies, The Black vanishes, returning to Yibb-Tstll and dragging the soul of the target along with it.

The first round that the target is covered in The Black, he or she must make a CON roll: with success, the victim loses 1D2 hit points; whereas a

failure means a loss of 1D4 hit points. On the second round a Hard CON roll is required (1D4/1D6 hit point loss). On the third and subsequent rounds the target must succeed in an Extreme CON roll (1D6/1D8 hit point loss per round). This continues until the victim is dead or The Black is dispelled.

Other than the death of the spellcaster or persuading him or her to lift the spell, only large quantities of running water are said to dispel The Black, and possibly turn it back upon the one who summoned it.

Lastly, if the spell caster has time to prepare and inscribes a magical symbol, called the “Sixth Sathlatta,” on a flour wafer, and somehow gets the victim

to eat the wafer, then the spell attack automatically succeeds (no CON roll allowed; take the worst damage result).

Normally this spell is used as a weapon in the way described above, but Jonathan Dover, and then his son Jacob, found another use for the foul stuff. Summoned without a specific victim targeted, the floating, flaky black substance quickly disappears and returns to Yibb-Tstll (who dwells in the Dreamlands). But always a few flakes remain behind, which Dover then mixes with alcohol to lessen the lethality, and so creates a few ounces of The Black drug suitable for ingestion.

next to him. He didn't see any balloon, airplane, or anything else in the night sky that the body could have fallen from.

So what happened here? Dover sent his nightgaunts out to do this killing. What are nightgaunts? Just keep reading...

THE SLAUGHTERHOUSE

Jacob Dover used some of the money that he made from The Black to buy an abandoned, rundown slaughterhouse on the outskirts of town for his base of operations. He did this so that he could perform the ritual needed to summon The Black away from his meager one room apartment and from possible witnesses. Also, he has taught the spell to some of his best customers (whom he callously calls “Blackheads”) and rewards them for their service with more of the drug that enslaves them. By using these Blackheads, he can produce a large amount of The Black, as he can only summon the blood of Yibb-Tstll twice a day before being drained of magic points (each summoning only produces a few ounces of the drug). The demand he has created for the drug has far outpaced his supply, so between himself and his Blackheads, he now has a constant stream of The Black, and any amount that doesn't immediately go out for sale goes into a large vat to be used later.

Investigators can be led to the slaughterhouse by following Paul Rogers to it, or finding his calculations on the piece of scrap found in his closet and doing a bit of investigation. If the

investigators miss both of these clues, then perhaps have them break Rodger's will in integration, or as a variant of the **Death From Above** scene, perhaps Dover sent his nightgaunts after Rodgers, but he got away and now he believes the investigators are his only hope, so he's willing to tell them everything he knows.

The abattoir is on River Street, next to a small stream that the locals used to call “Blood Creek” for all the waste runoff it would often contain. If the Keeper sets this scenario in Arkham, the stream eventually flows into the Miskatonic River. Investigating the history of the slaughterhouse finds that it was once called Campbell's Meat Processing and was closed down around 30 years ago when the local supply of meat dried up and moved away. Checking with the town hall and making a successful **Library Use** roll finds a freshly filed transfer of the deed from the city, who owned the property by default, to one Jacob Dover.

The slaughterhouse sits on a sizable parcel of cleared land, with empty holding pens surrounding the large, warehouse-like building. If the investigators choose to stake the place out they should do something to hide their automobile and themselves. At night, they see dim lamplights in some of the windows. They may see Paul Rodgers, if he's still alive and working for Dover, or one of the other Black peddlers coming to the slaughterhouse to pick up more drugs. They might even see Dover coming and going in his new car, driven by one of his Blackheads (although they might not know who he is

at the time). The Keeper will have to decide if any of these people should get a chance to see the investigators and/or their car(s)—if the investigators fail their **Stealth** or **Disguise** skill, and so on. If the investigators haven't taken precautions to conceal themselves, then they certainly should.

Lastly, if the Keeper desires, the investigators might get terrifying glimpses of Dover's two "pet" nightgaunts as they fly by night. Such far off, tantalizing glimpses of otherworldly horrors call for a **Sanity** roll (0/1D3 Sanity points loss).

THE SLAUGHTERHOUSE OR DOVER?

The investigators will have to decide if they want to go into the slaughterhouse straightaway, or conduct further research into Jacob Dover. If they choose the slaughterhouse, go to the section called **The Showdown** (page 105). If they choose to look into Dover, it is suggested that they only encounter him at the slaughterhouse (rather than at his home or elsewhere). While you should not railroad the investigators into doing this, you can tilt things in this direction by having Dover always in very public locations, and that includes his apartment building with its very thin walls. So just attacking the man outright may not be a good idea, and will certainly bring others (such as the police) to see what all fuss and noise is about. Furthermore, Dover has Willis Carter, his Blackhead bodyguard, always at his side; he even resides in the apartment next door.

Approaching Dover and hurling accusations at him means he will deny everything—plus, he will now know the investigators and start looking into them. He may even send some of his more violent Blackheads, or perhaps his nightgaunts after them. If the investigators are law officers who accuse him of peddling drugs, he says that he's not and that The Black only has slight traces of alcohol in it, nothing else that can be identified as bad or harmful. Before they can throw "prohibition" at him, he says that obviously his homemade "ink" isn't made for drinking. Even during Prohibition, things could still contain alcohol as long as they weren't made or sold for human consumption.

If the investigators make careful plans to confront Dover in a secluded spot, perhaps on the road to or from his slaughterhouse, then by all means let them. If Dover can get away, he will flee to his slaughterhouse, as he knows he has reinforcements there. If the investigators trap the man and "deal with him," then that's fine too, but it does mean his nightgaunts will now have no one to control them and they may get up to murderous mischief. Perhaps one of the Blackheads (who knows the *Call the Black* spell) takes Dover's place as a would-be drug lord. Then there is always Raw Head and Black Bones, but more on that horror later.



KEEPER SUGGESTION: USING THE NIGHTGAUNTS

Black, faceless, and demonic looking creatures—yet some Keepers see the nightgaunts as not all that threatening, for they prefer to grab their victims and immobilize them by "tickling" with their barbed tails, as opposed to shredding them with claw and fang. If all you do is look at them according to their statistics in the *Call of Cthulhu Rulebook*, then that might appear to be true, as they are not the unstoppable juggernauts that many Mythos creatures are. However, they should not be taken lightly.

The Keeper may wish to use these masters of stealth as spies for Jacob Dover, keeping tabs on the investigators and giving them fearful glimpses of the nightgaunts to keep them guessing and paranoid. Sudden glimpses of dark, flying things, or tall stick-like men skulking in the shadows both provide the Keeper with a way to increase the tension and dread. Garner the investigators into thinking something, perhaps something inhuman, is watching and stalking them.

If encountered in Dover's lair, the nightgaunts could keep two investigators immobilized with their tickling while Dover and some of his Blackheads take care of the others.

One option that the Keeper should use with care, if at all, is that when nightgaunts really get mad, or are sent out as assassins rather than spies, they do have one very deadly tactic. They grab foes and fly high up in the air, tickling them as they go so the victim can't fight back, and then dropping their victims from a great height to their certain death. At 1D6 damage per ten feet fallen, even a relatively short fall can prove fatal to an investigator.

If the Keeper is running a larger than average group of investigators, who are particularly well armed, the Keeper should feel free to increasing the number of nightgaunts under the control of Dover as they see fit.

Note that statistics for the nightgaunts can be found in **Appendix A: Characters and Monsters**.



RESEARCHING JACOB DOVER

If an investigator resides in the local area, ask them to make a **Credit Rating** roll to see if they are aware, through their social circle, of the once well-to-do Dovers, or at least they are aware of the family. Failing that, a successful **Library Use** roll at a local newspaper or library uncovers stories in the socialite or gossip sections that relate the same information.

This information is summarized as:

Twenty years ago, Margret Dover died in a boating accident and her husband, Jonathan, went a little crazy. He started globetrotting around the world, dragging his poor son, Jacob, along with him. He used his family fortune to fund these excursions until the money ran out. Two years back, Jonathan and Jacob returned from their travels completely broke. They lived a low-key life together, away from the public eye, until Jonathan died last year. No one knows what happened to Jacob after that.

Looking into the death of Jonathan Dover and succeeding with a **Library Use** roll at the county medical building, or a **Charm, Fast Talk, or Persuade** roll to have someone there look it up for them, the investigators find Jonathan Dover's death certificate, which states "natural causes" as the reason for death. The records do include a mention of the deceased "black tongue," but the cause for this is unknown.

Researching into the old Dover home is fruitless. It was foreclosed on by a local bank five years ago and now sits empty, awaiting a new buyer. Going to this house, breaking in, and searching it uncovers no clues, and staking it out is likewise pointless. Jacob Dover has ambitions to purchase his ancestral home, but until he has amassed enough money to do so, he has yet to return to there as he finds it too painful an experience.

Jacob Dover's Apartment

The location of Dover's apartment can be found by following Paul Rodgers, Jacob Dover, or by using the documents on the sale of the slaughterhouse.

It is an old, run-down, three-story brick building in the seediest side of the town. Dover's room is found on the second floor, locked behind a cheap door (**Locksmith**, or a **STR** roll to break it down) and it is the definition of squalid. Only big enough for a single bed and not much else, the walls are paper thin so investigators will have to be quiet or else alert everyone on the floor of their shenanigans. This includes Dover's bodyguard, Willis Carter, in the apartment next door. If Carter is home when the investigators break into Dover's apartment and they don't specifically say that they're being quiet (**Stealth** rolls), then call for a group **Luck** roll to see if Carter hears them.

If they manage to search the place, none of The Black is discovered here, but a book underneath the bed, wrapped in an old cloth, does contain useful information. If the investigators state they are searching under the bed, they find the book. Otherwise, a **Spot Hidden** roll is required. It is Jonathan Dover's journal (see **Jonathan Dover's Journal**). Other than that, there are no clues to be found here.

INVOLVING THE POLICE

Sadly, in the eyes of the law, Jacob Dover has done nothing wrong. The Black defies science and can't be identified as a

JONATHAN DOVER'S JOURNAL

This thick, leather bound book is almost completely filled with cramped handwriting, in various colors of ink and pencil. The book spans a number of years and relates to Jonathan's quest to discover how to divine the future, which included traveling around the globe. His impetus seems to be the sudden, accidental death of his wife, which Jonathan blames himself for. In his grief, the father all but ignored his son, Jacob, and what was best for him. He mentions Jacob frequently complaining about never staying in one place long enough for him to make any friends, but Jonathan continuously falls back on the excuse that "The ends justify the means."

There are a lot of accounts of Jonathan's meetings with various mystics, Roma, witchdoctors, occultists, and others in his quest, with too little to show for it. But then somewhere in West Africa (the journal is not more specific than that) Jonathan met and eventually made friends with the Gwari'kuyu tribe who worshiped a being called Yibb-Tstll and described as, "He who sits in the jungles of Kled, beyond the borders of dreams, and sees all time and place." The journal then discusses Yibb-Tstll, including outlining several rituals relating to the deity.

Jonathan Dover's Journal, English

- **Sanity loss:** 1D6
- **Cthulhu Mythos:** +1/+2 percentiles
- **Other:** + 4 percentiles to Anthropology and Occult
- **Mythos Rating:** 9%
- **Study:** 2 weeks
- **Spells:** Call the Black, Speak With Yibb-Tstll (Contact Deity—Yibb-Tstll), Call Down The Faceless Ones (Summon/Bind Nightgaunt).

Concerning Yibb-Tstll

Yibb-Tstll is an Outer God who lives in a clearing in the Jungle of Kled in the Dreamlands. It can see all time and space, and sorcerers often make contact with this deity for three reasons: first, to summon and utilize its servitors, the faceless nightgaunts; second, to beg Yibb-Tstll for its touch, which can drastically alter a person, both physically and mentally; third, to summon Yibb-Tstll's blood, called The Black, and use it as a powerful weapon. Yibb-Tstll's full description can be found in the *Call of Cthulhu Rulebook*, but its statistics don't really matter, as this Outer God never interacts directly with this scenario and always remains an evil from afar.

NONE MORE BLACK

drug (or any other harmful substance), and he makes sure to insulate himself from any violence or criminal activity by using middlemen (the Blackheads who won't snitch on their boss out of fear, and the nightgaunts who can only be stopped by death and then melt away into pools of black sludge). The police can't even get him on tax evasion as he has hidden his illegal money very well. Something might be drummed up about the alcohol he uses in his "ink," but even that he purchases legally from an out of town medical supply house—but such inconvenience would only be minor.

If the investigators want to stop Jacob, they will have to do it themselves.

THE SHOWDOWN

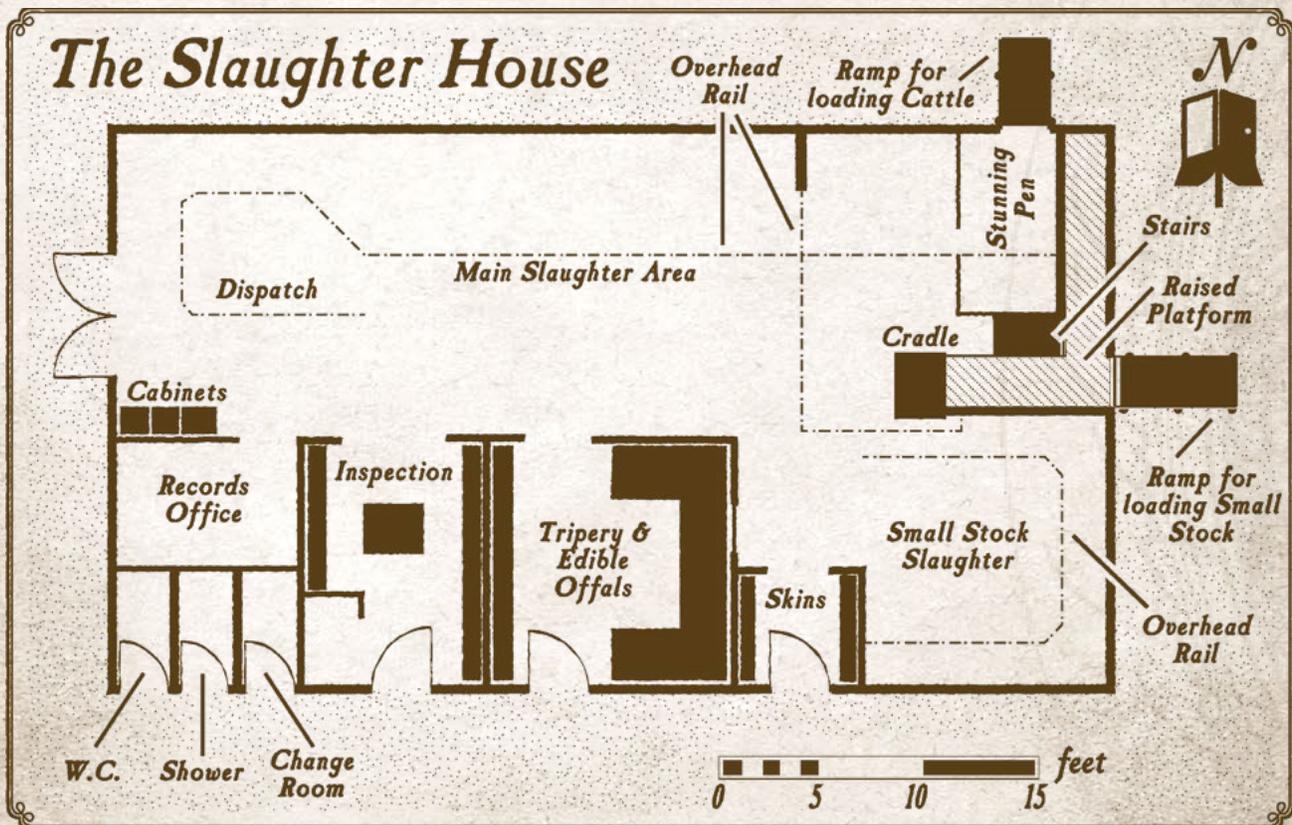
When the investigators are ready to end this deadly drug epidemic they will most likely have to do it at Dover's lair in the old Campbell's Meat Processing plant. Dover not only spends most of his time there, creating and distributing product to his various pushers, he sometimes sleeps there when he's exhausted from casting his Call The Black spell. He'll also run there at the first sign of trouble.

The slaughterhouse should be described as terrifyingly as possible. The very real stench of death still lingers heavy here, not to mention the blood, manure, mold, and rust.

KEEPER SUGGESTION: CALL THE BLACK

Anyone who takes the time to learn this spell learns The Black's weakness of running water, which might just save their life should the spell be cast at them. The Keeper may want to draw attention to this invocation by telling anyone reading Jonathan Dover's journal that the part of the book dealing with The Black has been underlined (by Jacob), and obviously from the dog-eared pages, has been thumbed repeatedly.

If an investigator focuses, for a day, only on the underlined passages concerning The Black, they lose 1D6 Sanity points, gain +1 Cthulhu Mythos, and may be able to learn the Call The Black spell if they succeed in a Hard INT roll (see page 176, *Call of Cthulhu Rulebook*). To successfully cast the spell, once it has been learned, requires a Hard POW roll the first time it is cast (see pages 177–178, *Call of Cthulhu Rulebook*). Thereafter, the investigator may study the journal completely (taking around two weeks) and thereby gain the full rewards as described in *Jonathan Dover's Journal*.





MWM

The large facility has no lights and plenty of dark shadows. There are wooden and metal pens, once used for the livestock awaiting the killing hammer, congealed blood troughs running alongside the aisles, rusting and gore-covered tools of death, and the bones of countless cattle, pigs, and sheep everywhere. Overhead is a conveyor system of chains and hooks once used to move the animals along, assembly line style, to the different stages of the slaughter process.

Dover, his crew, and his drug vats are located in the rear of this building, in the small stock slaughter area; however, his nightgaunts have free run of the place. The ebony beasts stay to the rafters of the building, swooping, clinging, and creeping stealthily. They might attack a single investigator, flying them up to the top of the twenty-foot high ceiling and dropping them for 2D6 damage if the Keeper so desires.

Investigators should approach this confrontation with care. First, there is Dover's imposing bodyguard, Willis Carter, then there are always 1D6+3 Blackheads here. Some of these poor, drug-addled souls will have been performing the Calling The Black spell, and so are too exhausted to fight, while others are cowards and will run if it appears the investigators have the upper hand. A small number will stick around to defend Jacob out of fear of the man, fear of the monsters he calls allies, and fear that they won't get any more Black without him. Exactly how many Blackheads stay to fight the investigators is left up to the Keeper to decide.

If the Keeper has been holding the nightgaunts back until now, their arrival can come as a nasty surprise. They both like to hide up in rafters of the large building and, with their high Stealth skill (90%), it is unlikely the investigators will spot them before they pounce. The pair of otherworldly predators prefer to swoop down on isolated individuals, and the smaller and weaker the target, the better. If the investigators split up, this will surely be the creatures' tactic. If the investigators stay in a group, then the nightgaunts will wait until the fighting starts and then swoop down and attack the investigators at the rear of the action.

Lastly, there is Jacob Dover himself. In his years of traveling with his father, one of his favorite pastimes was to practice with his grandfather's old Colt Peacemaker revolver, and in doing so he has become a good shot. He can also Call The Back twice a day without needing a rest. Having cast the spell too many times, he is now quite insane. Dover thinks the world owes him something and he will damn sure make it pay. Anyone that gets in his way must be destroyed, and that includes the investigators. Only death or forcible incarceration will stop his sociopathic schemes.



KEEPER SUGGESTION: RAW HEAD AND BLACK BONES

This option is left for the Keeper who wants more hideous monsters to throw at his or her players, but it should be used with care, as this beast is quite powerful. Since The Black that Jacob has been summoning is alive, even once it's mixed with alcohol to become the drug the sorcerer peddles, it still has the malicious will of its progenitor, Yibb-Tstll. As such, what if the tank used to store the excess Black had a small leak? What would that foul, magical substance do if given freedom and access to the many bones and other grisly bits that litter the slaughterhouse? It would make a conglomerate monster comprised out of countless bones, hooves, horns, and skulls of the animals left behind in the abandoned abattoir, all held together and motivated by The Black.

This monster can be implemented in the game in one of two ways. First, it can be a secret threat that even Dover doesn't know about. In this fashion, some of the Black has seeped out of the tank, slithered away, and formed the patchwork creature in an unused room of the abattoir, away from prying eyes. The resultant monster, named Raw Head and Black Bones, left the ruined slaughterhouse and started wandering the land, killing when it pleased and hiding in woods, overgrown fields, old barns, wells, and other dark places. If the Keeper uses the monster like this, the investigators should hear stories about this monster from newspapers and from a few witnesses who lived to tell the tale—not to mention a lot more dead bodies to investigate.

Another far more surprising and deadly use for Raw Head and Black Bones would be if Dover had known about the creature beforehand. Formed in the vat of Black, along with the animal remains that were left in there, Dover has been able to gain a measure of control over the beast. If this is the case, the horror could come bursting out of the vat when the investigators are in the slaughterhouse, perhaps in the final confrontation. A nasty surprise such as this could easily kill off the entire party, so the Keeper should consider using this option with great care.

Statistics for Raw Head And Black Bones can be found in Appendix A: Characters and Monsters.

Opposite: Raw Head and Black Bones by Wanye M. Miller

CONCLUSION

The scenario most likely ends with some form of confrontation at the old slaughterhouse, with the investigators chasing off the Blackheads and killing or capturing the insane Jacob Dover. If Dover is killed, his binding of the nightgaunts is broken, allowing the creatures to flee back to the realm of night from whence they came. Otherwise, the investigators will have to deal with them too. A captured Dover could be turned over to the care of an asylum—an examination will quickly ascertain his incurable insanity.

As noted in Jonathan Dover's journal, The Black is dissolved by water, so any Black remaining could be dispersed with enough water. Of course, having The Black disperse through the community's water supply provides a potential for further horror if the Keeper wishes to expand upon the consequences of the investigators' actions.

If the investigators are having a hard time with the combat in this scenario, or if the Keeper has a sense of poetic justice, they could have Yibb-Tstll grow annoyed at Jacob Dover's constant draining of its blood. The mighty Outer God could turn the nightgaunts or Raw Head and Black Bones loose on Dover at a critical moment as a way to swat the mosquito that has been sucking its blood for far too long. The investigators witnessing Dover being dragged away by the nightgaunts, or torn limb from limb by Raw Head and Black Bones could provide a fitting close.

If the Keeper is interested in utilizing *H.P. Lovecraft's Dreamlands* in future games, this scenario could act as an introduction to the idea, with Jonathan Dover's journal mentioning both the land of dreams and potential ways for the investigators to enter that realm. For further information and adventures concerning the Dreamlands, Keepers are advised to seek out Chaosium's *H. P. Lovecraft's Dreamlands* book.

Rewards

Depending on the outcome of the scenario and the investigators' actions, apply the following rewards to the surviving investigators:

- Stopping The Black trade: +1D4 Sanity points.
- Dealing with Jacob Dover: +1D4 Sanity points.
- Dealing with the Nightgaunts: +1D6 Sanity points.

If the Keeper used Raw Head and Black Bones and the investigators destroyed it, they gain an additional +1D10 Sanity points.

APPENDIX A: CHARACTERS AND MONSTERS

BLACKHEADS, *drug addicted thugs*

Use these statistics for all of the Blackheads, each carrying different weapons (increase the attack skill if tougher opponents are desired).

STR 55 CON 50 SIZ 55 DEX 50 INT 50
APP 45 POW 45 EDU 60 SAN 40 HP: 10
Damage Bonus: 0 Build: 0 Move: 8 MP: 9

Combat

Brawl 40% (20/8), damage 1D3
 Knife 40% (20/8), damage 1D4+2
 Baseball Bat 40% (20/8), damage 1D8
 Crowbar 40% (20/8), damage 1D8
 .38 Revolver 30% (15/6), damage 1D10
 Dodge 25% (12/5)

Skills

Credit Rating 8%, Intimidate 30%, Listen 30%, Spot Hidden 25%, Stealth 30%, Throw 30%.

PAUL RODGERS, *age 20, drug pusher*

Rodgers was one of the first to get "hip" to the new hot drug hitting the street. Luckily for him he was smart enough not to try it. Instead, he knew it was a good way to turn a buck, and he knew the perfect place to push it, the very college that expelled him for cheating just a year before. This untapped market soon made him Jacob Dover's most profitable pusher. This red head of average size has a quick mind about him, and is difficult to pin down or catch in a lie. He can read others well, and often knows just what to say to get what he wants. He is handy with a knife, but will avoid violence if outnumbered. While he only cares about himself, he is very reluctant to snitch on Jacob Dover for he has seen the "Crazy, black magic things" he can do, and so is deathly afraid of the man.

STR 50 CON 65 SIZ 60 DEX 65 INT 80
APP 45 POW 65 EDU 65 SAN 59 HP 12
Damage Bonus: 0 Build: 0 Move: 8 MP: 13

Combat

Brawl 35% (17/7), damage 1D3
 Switchblade 35% (17/7), damage 1D4
 Dodge 32% (16/6)

NONE MORE BLACK

Skills

Accounting 40%, Charm 60%, Credit Rating 20%, Fast Talk 65%, Listen 30%, Psychology 40%, Ride (Bicycle) 50%, Spot Hidden 45%, Stealth 45%, Throw 30%.

WILLIS CARTER, age 20, bodyguard and drug addict

Carter has a tragic tale indeed. A onetime football star at college with imposing size and strength, he had the misfortune of being friends with Paul Rodgers and when Paul started selling The Black, he was one of the first addicts. Consequently, he was kicked out of the collage and disowned by his well-to-do family. But Dover saw the potential intimidation value of having a big brute by his side, so he offered Carter the job of being his personal protector, paying him in Black. Carter's one good bit of fortune is that he has been remarkably resistant to the poisonous effects of the drug so far.

STR 85 CON 90 SIZ 85 DEX 70 INT 55
APP 50 POW 40 EDU 65 SAN 35 HP 17
Damage Bonus: +1D6 Build: 2 Move: 8 MP: 8

Combat

Brawl 70% (35/14), damage 1D3+1D6 (or weapon)
.38 Revolver 30% (15/6), damage 1D10
Dodge 35% (17/7)

Skills

Charm 40%, Climb 50%, Credit Rating 14%, Cthulhu Mythos 3%, Drive Auto 65%, Fast Talk 40%, Jump 55%, Listen 50%, Persuade 55%, Spot Hidden 55%, Stealth 40%, Throw 75%.

JACOB DOVER, age 27, sorcerous drug dealer

Dover is a bitter, greedy, and selfish man, who felt he should be better off than he is and blames his poverty on his father's obsession that wasted all of his family's wealth. He cares for no one other than himself and will use and discard others as it suits him. Tall, healthy, good looking and intelligent, with a dominating willpower, the real tragedy is that Dover could have been anything that he wanted to be. Too bad that he chose to become a pitiless parasite meddling with forces that he barely understands.

STR 60 CON 75 SIZ 70 DEX 65 INT 80
APP 60 POW 85 EDU 75 SAN 00* HP 13
Damage Bonus: +1D4 Build: 1 Move: 7 MP: 8

**Permanently insane.*

Combat

Brawl 35% (17/7), damage 1D3+1D4 (or weapon)
.45 Revolver 45% (22/9), damage 1D10+2
Dodge 40% (20/8)

Skills

Accounting 35%, Credit Rating 20%, Cthulhu Mythos 10%, Fast Talk 60%, History 45%, Listen 50%, Occult 35%, Persuade 55%, Science (Pharmacy) 30%, Spot Hidden 60%, Stealth 40%.

Spells: Call The Black, Contact Deity (Yibb-Tstll), Summon/Bind Nightgaunt.

NIGHTGAUNT MINIONS (2)

STR 50 CON 60 SIZ 70 DEX 70 INT 20
APP — POW 50 EDU — SAN — HP 13
Damage Bonus: 0 Build: 0 Move: 6/12*MP: 10

**Flying.*

Combat

Attacks per round: 1

Fighting 45% (22/9), damage 1D4
Seize (mnvr) victim is held for Tickle or other attacks
Tickle 40% (20/8), target is immobilized for 1D6+1 rounds
Dodge 35% (17/7)

Special Abilities

Seize (mnvr): Two nightgaunts may combine their attacks to get hold of a strong victim (potentially granting a bonus die as they outnumber their victim).

Tickle: May only tickle foes who have already been seized. A successful tickling attack is extremely unnerving, for the barb of their tail is razor-sharp and perilous even while its light application does no damage—the target becomes bewildered, humiliated, and disoriented, suffering a penalty die on all rolls for 1D4 rounds or until the tickling stops. Nightgaunt tails can snake through holes and openings, slice through thick clothes, and find even the interstices of metal armor.

Skills

Stealth 90%.

Armor: 2-point skin.

Sanity Loss: 0/1D6 Sanity points to see a nightgaunt.

RAW HEAD AND BLACK BONES

This horror appears as a large pile of bones, skulls, horns, and hooves, all covered in a black, tar-like substance. It moves by slowly dragging itself across the ground. Despite its size, it is quite stealthy and it rarely makes a sound. As an un-living, magical thing, Raw Head doesn't need to eat or sleep, and only kills because it is compelled to do so. It is also very hard to destroy, being made up of just bones and Black. Running water is fatal to the creature as it quickly dissolves The Black holding it together.

STR 95 **CON** 90 **SIZ** 120 **DEX** 35 **INT** 05
APP — **POW** 70 **EDU** — **SAN** — **HP** 21
Damage Bonus: +2D6 **Build:** 3 **Move:** 4 **MP:** 14

Combat

Attacks per round: 1D4 malformed appendages (lashing out with ropy tentacles, kicking with hooves, or goring with bull horns)

Fighting 40% (20/8), damage 1D6+2D6

Dodge 17% (8/3)

Armor: None, but all physical attacks cause only 1 point of damage. Explosives do minimum damage. It is immune to gas, fire, electricity, and acid. Running water (such as rain, a fast flowing river, or a fire hose causes) 2D6 points of damage per round. Still water such as a swimming pool or stagnant pond, has no effect. A vial of The Black drug poured onto Raw Head heals 1 hit point, a bucketful heals 2D3+2. Should the Call The Black spell be cast at it, it heals 3D6+3 hit points.

Sanity Loss: 1/1D10 Sanity points to see Raw Head and Black Bones.

Skills

Stealth 75%.

HANDOUTS

Providence, January 5th, 1811

Dear Phillip,

It is with immeasurable sadness that I tell you that Elijah Winscott has part from this World and is now in the loving Arms of our Lord. We had all known that he was not in good health for some years, in both his Body and his Spirit. He had made it most hard to know his troubles, for he had quit the Company of his Fellows. I did visit him in the Country House where he had lived for some Years now. As he lay in his Sick Bed, he broke his Silence and told me a Tale that I cannot properly reckon. I do not rightly know if I should tell it now to you, but I know you worry'd greatly for our friend.

He recalled me that 15 Years past he had pondered how we might continue our Trade which had served us so well. The hateful Laws against our Livelihood, and the Troubles that beset good John Brown caused him no end of spirit. Well I remember, as you must, Elijah's character and speaking in the Tavern during this time. We thought it idle fancy and too much Drink. We all of us laughed to hear him speak of how we should dig Tunnels 'neath the Town. We did not know then that 'twas not idle fancy altogether. We did not know that he had been making plans in secret. For when the Cellar 'neath Elijah Winscott's Home was laid, a Tunnel was found. This Tunnel did go close to the River, and it was no matter to dig it yet closer. He would use this Passage to shepherd Slaves to and from the Town.

All had been set, and Elijah did wait happy in his Home for his Men to bring him his Slaves. But they did not come.

When he began to wonder what had kept them, he and the Men he had to hand went down to see what they might find. They found death. In straining Voice, he told me of parts of Men strewn like Rags across the Tunnel, White Man and Slave alike. He could not be sure, for he did not linger, but he did think that not all Men were accounted for, nor did he note anything of the Slave Women. But where could the others have gone, and what had come for them? The shadows of the Caverns did seem to leer at him, keeping the mystery from him. Quickly he returned, and quickly he made Walls of strong Brick underneath his Home and near the River to keep out whatever may be below.

He knew no rest from that Day forward, certainly not while he remained in that House. All we knew then was that he fell ill and spoke no more of schemes to thwart the Laws. From his Sick Bed at the end of his life, he said that Chasms plange deep beneath the Town he had quit. He peered out his Window at the swaying red Maple Trees and seemed to calm. I can only think that this Country House was some peace to him as he breathed his last. May his heirs have better fortune in that House in Providence than he.

With Sincere Esteem,

Jacob Bishop

MAYHAP SOMEONE WILL READ THESE WORDS
SOMEDAY, GOD WILLING. I, JOHN HARPER, WRITE
THEM HERE TO TELL MY SORRY TALE, AND THAT OF
MY FELLOWS. WINSCOTT SENT US TO OUR DOOM
WITH HIS CLEVER PLANS. HE THOUGHT TO ESCAPE
THE NOTICE OF THE STATE OF RHODE ISLAND WITH
THE TUNNEL HE HAD FOUND. HE SHOULD HAVE
THOUGHT FOR WHAT PURPOSE THIS TUNNEL WAS
MADE AT THE FIRST. HE CALLED HIMSELF LUCKY AND
SO DAMNED US. AS WE SHEPHERDED HIS CARGO
THROUGH THE TUNNEL, WHERE WE WERE SET UPON
BY HIDEOUS THINGS, AND THE FORTUNATE FELL TO
THEIR CLAWS AND FANGS. THE REST WERE DRAGGED
HERE. THE GOOD BOOK AND THE PREACHERS TELL US
THAT GOD CURSED THE SERPENT SO THAT IT MIGHT
CRAWL ON ITS BELLY FOREVERMORE. WHY THEN
DOES OUR NEW MASTER STILL WALK? HOW DID HE
AND HIS KIND ESCAPE GOD'S JUSTICE? DID THEY
SLEEP HERE BEFORE THE FALL AND SO PASS
BENEATH NOTICE? NOW WE SERVE THIS HATEFUL
SERPENT. HE SETS US TO WORK FOR HIM, ALL MEN
ALIKE. HE FORCES US TO MATE TOGETHER AS IF WE
WERE NO MORE THAN ANIMALS. I HAVE SEEN MY
FELLOWS DIE, WASTING AWAY OR AT THE PLEASURE
OF THE SERPENT. WE ARE HIDDEN FAR FROM THE
LOVING EYES OF GOD.

COLLECTED HANDOUTS

DEAR _____,

AS YOU KNOW, I HAVE RECENTLY COMMITTED MYSELF TO THE STATE HOSPITAL AT DANVERS FOR A LITTLE MENTAL RECUPERATION AFTER MY MOST RECENT FORAY INTO THE SUPERNATURAL. I HAVE MADE A TERRIBLE ERROR IN SELECTING DANVERS. I AM IN GREAT PHYSICAL, MENTAL, AND SPIRITUAL PERIL HERE. THERE IS A "WRONGNESS" ABOUT THIS PLACE. THEY WILL NOT LET ME LEAVE. I MUST SNEAK THIS LETTER OUT TO YOU AS THEY READ THE MAIL HERE.

PLEASE COME AND RECOVER ME FROM THIS DREADFUL PLACE. IT WOULD BE WISE FOR YOU TO BRING COMPANIONS, AS COMING HERE ALONE IS A MISTAKE.

YOUR FRIEND,

LARRY CROSWELL

Danvers State Hospital

450 Maple St • Danvers, MA

Dear _____,

Please disregard my earlier letter to you.

I was having an anxiety attack.

Everything here is fine. Do not come here.

I need more rest and counseling.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

Lawrence Crosswell

Handout: Genius 3

DANVERS ASYLUM SUPERINTENDENT BUILDS AMPHITHEATRE FOR PATIENTS

Workmen at Danvers State Lunatic Asylum broke ground today for the establishment of a small amphitheater to be enjoyed by the patients. Residents will enjoy quiet conversation space, poetry readings, and musical performances in an idyllic outdoor setting next to the asylum's reservoir. "A beautiful place where water and earth meet," says superintendent Dr. James Berger.

Asylum resident and chief laborer, Andrew MacBride, added that his team had some difficulty breaking up and removing a large granite disk bearing an artistic design, set into the hillside where the amphitheater is to be built. The Asylum's prior superintendent, Dr. William Shine, had the disk placed on the side of Hathorne Hill. Dr. Shine, a world traveler, is said to have believed that the granite disk was a symbol of good luck for the asylum.

Local residents question the expense of building an amphitheater for mentally ill patients. However, Dr. Berger defends the creation of the amphitheater, explaining, "It is important to remember that we must look to the betterment of all our citizens, especially those deemed too delicate or damaged to be a part of the ebb and flow of the greater world."

Handout: Genius 4

SHINE RETIRES FROM DANVERS ASYLUM

Salem native Dr. William Shine, veteran superintendent at the State Lunatic Asylum at Danvers, is to retire after twenty-five years of service. Known for his great erudition, kindly demeanor, and progressive treatments, Dr. Shine is credited with a renewal of the facility for the betterment of its patients. Prior to his 1890 arrival, the asylum had suffered from a poor reputation and staff morale was low. Patient accident and mortality rates were among the highest in the country.

Superintendent Shine could occasionally appear as idiosyncratic as the institution he so successfully stewarded. Longtime readers may recall the complaints when Dr. Shine, then less than a year into his tenure, had a sculpted granite disk placed at the edge of the property's reservoir at taxpayer expense. Dr. Shine was then, as he is now, adamant that the decorative disk remain unmolested, even as the superintendent takes leave of the institution. Regardless of his idiosyncrasies, Dr. Shine's ability to transform the asylum into a success story over his long stewardship will be his enduring legacy.

A world traveler to exotic locales during his early years, Dr. Shine declares that he now looks forward to a quiet retirement in his native city of Salem. The doctor has stated his intention to bequeath his personal and professional papers to Salem Hospital.

Regarding his successor, Dr. James Berger, Dr. Shine has high praise: "Doctor Berger will no doubt be a sincere protector of the afflicted and a good master of the institution." Shine adds, "I sincerely hope that Doctor Berger will leave a few old stones unturned and instead focus his attention on the asylum's bright future." We at the newspaper wish Doctor Shine a long and happy retirement.

June 2nd, 1890

The troubles afflicting the asylum run deep, and are of a kind my esteemed colleagues would never accept as part of a rational, orderly universe. Indeed, if I were to communicate my convictions to my peers, I would find myself consigned to these very walls as patient, not administrator. However, I have seen these problems before in my travels and must act swiftly. The thing, aware of my suspicions, has moved against me. But I have spoken the words of protection that I learned so long ago in that queer ancient city and so far have been safe. I must find Hathorne's disk, and soon, so as to lay down that thing which torments all here, twisting already damaged and vulnerable minds. Hathorne had the disk removed, thinking it a Pagan symbol of heathen spirit worship. What a terrible mistake by a zealous preacher. Heaven grant that I find the disk, and if found, that it will restrain the thing which moves against us all on Hathorne Hill.

November 12th, 1890

I have found Hathorne's disk. It is, as I suspected, an ancient sign from elder times, a ward against that which lairs in the very earth and air of the hill. Mercifully the disk has weathered the years and neglect remarkably well. The sigil etched upon its surface is as clear as the day it was placed there, but by whose hands? Best not to dwell on such Aeolian mysteries. My task now is to install it once more upon the hill, restraining that which, like others of its kin, is inimical to we who have inherited its world.

COLLECTED HANDOUTS

December 3rd, 1890

It is done. The sigil has been placed upon the earth, forcing down that which lairs upon the hill into an uneasy torpor. The taxpayers question the expense of having such a "useless decorative piece" installed at the asylum, but they pose no serious threat to its removal and are mercifully unaware of its true purpose. But to those who know, the sign shall serve as a ward for now and the future. Already I see signs of recovery in the patients and staff, as if they are surfacing from a long, waking nightmare.

May 7th, 1915

I have met with my successor. Dr. James Berger seems a cheerful and capable young fellow. Noting his active character, I have admonished the young doctor to never to remove the disk that lies at the edge of the reservoir upon the hill. Will he heed my words? It was impossible to impart to him my true reason for planting the disk all those long years ago. I had to fabricate reasons of sentimentality to impress upon him the importance of leaving the disk unmolested. I pray that he will remember his promise to leave the disk undisturbed.

Handout: Genius 6

DEATH AT DANVERS LUNATIC ASYLUM

Danvers State Hospital reports the death of patient Andrew MacBride, age unknown. MacBride was found unresponsive in his cell early this morning. Cause of death is declared a suicide, reports Superintendent James Berger. "It is a tragedy when these things happen," says Dr. Berger, "yet we cannot reach every soul that comes into our care. He is in a better place now." MacBride leaves no known relatives.

Guests

<i>A. Hickey</i>	<i>Abe Hickey</i>	<i>Room 4</i>	<i>December 3</i>
<i>J. Trent</i>	<i>Jacob Trent</i>	<i>Room 3</i>	<i>December</i>
<i>A. Smith</i>	<i>Mrs. and Mrs. Smith</i>	<i>Room 4</i>	<i>January 8th</i>
<i>J. Frazer</i>	<i>James Frazer</i>	<i>Room 1</i>	<i>January</i>
<i>S. Bonner</i>	<i>Sarah Bonner</i>	<i>Room 7</i>	<i>January 13</i>
<i>BD</i>	<i>Bill Dunston</i>	<i>Room 6</i>	<i>January</i>

Handout: Servants 3

were a tribe called The Abenaki who lived in the Connecticut River valley in Vermont, New Hampshire and Massachusetts.

The Abenaki originally owned the land around Squatters Lake, though they were driven away by English settlers in 1722. Originally named "Ponki-mkazas" (the crow) by the Abenaki due to the abundance of crows scavenging around the lake, the settlers found that moving there was a bad idea due to the poor fishing and hunting in the area. Also, the surrounding Hemlock trees were worthless for burning, and the untreated wood of their houses quickly succumbed to rot. The settlers moved further north, leaving their settlement behind, and over the years the decrepit shacks became homes to vagrants, escaped slaves, and deserters from the army until they were finally swept into the lake in a flood in 1805. Locals living near the lake began calling it Squatters Lake, a name that survives to this day.

Felt so tired after the row with dad and staying at this dump hasn't helped. Car still broke down - old man William says he can fix it but I don't know whether I can trust him. This place creeps me out and it's only been one night. Hate the noisy frogs around the lake, and I saw lights out there when I went for a stroll. Late night fishermen? The three boats were tied up and I can't imagine those decrepit old brothers going out there at night. The lake stinks anyway. Had the worst time last too. Sleepwalking! Not done that since I was a child. Dreamt I was underwater, floating through a weird city littered with corpses. I awoke after midnight, freezing cold outside my room. The lights in the reception were blazing. Those old fellas are strange, and I haven't seen much of them thankfully. They spend all their time in that workshop or whatever it is facing the lake.

Dammit, if the car isn't fixed today, I might just take my chances and hitch a lift to Kingsport.

I miss you so much Emily!

Dearest Mary,

I don't think you even know me, but I know you. You see, I work on your house. I'm not a gentleman like you deserve, but I'm a good man with strong hands and a good heart.

You may think this is sudden, but I have come to care for you. I have seen you and watched you when you came to the site, and I wanted to see you again. I have a gift for you that I would like to bring by your dormitory tomorrow. It's a jewel of some kind that we found where we are building your house, and it is really pretty, like a giant fancy pearl. As you are studying at Miskatonic University, I thought you would think it was interesting.

I will be at my room at the Borden Arms tonight and tomorrow, so you can reach me there.

With deepest affection,

Alfred Hackett

COLLECTED HANDOUTS

Handout: Ties 2

Mary,

I think it's an egg, but I don't know what kind. Come quick. I don't know what to do if it hatches.

Alfred

Handout: Ties 3

The creature is about the size of a kitten, with a similar bone structure but for the fact that it often stands on its hind legs, allowing its forelegs or elongated arms to dangle forward. The claws on all four feet appear to be a cross between non-retracting cat claws and human hands. Growing from complex bone structure and musculature on its back are bat-like wings. Its head is reminiscent of that of a horse, but the vicious fangs in the mouth and barbed horns behind its eyes dispel and further similarity. Its skin rough and reptilian, but not scaly. In other words, the skin has the texture of scales but they are not scales.

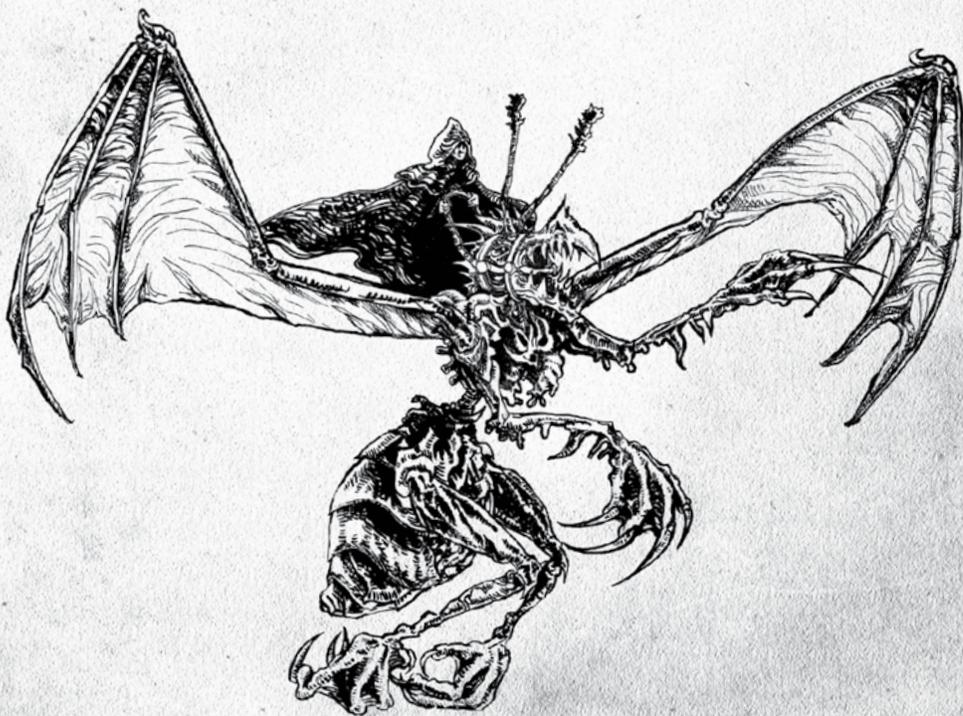


Superstitions and Folk Lore of Essex County ~ 76

The infamous Marsh Wizard of Ipswich has been haunting Essex County for centuries according to many local accounts. Evidence of his existence goes back to at least the 18th century where accounts of disappearing cattle and people were associated with the Marsh Wizard. Such accounts include the notion that the wizard had a demon familiar, as the flapping of giant wings was reported on more than one occasion.

The tales grow more outlandish over time, with some claiming that the Marsh Wizard had a dragon-like steed that he uses to ride the night skies and terrorize local residents.

The illustration below is an artist's interpretation of testimony given by a young man named Andrew Leman, who claims to have seen the wizard riding the beast over the salt marshes one night in 1906.



To Call and Master the Steed from the Stars

To be performed when Aldebaran is above the horizon.

This creature can be useful as a bodyguard, soldier, assassin, message carrier, and steed. Called and its will bound to yours such that it will not balk. Take care in the final steps lest it strike you down, for unbound, it is a most fearsome beast.

Spill the blood of a six-month-old unblemished calf or a gentle maiden of no more than fourteen summers, spreading the crimson over the stones of the altar of summoning as the chant is repeated,

Ick ctha, yaahn neh! Byakhee ctha meh, da nai, s'nommas nai'rb! Yaahn neh,
ick ctha.

Blow, at this time, into your whistle, and set out three blasts of sound after each recitation.

After some time, the sky will open and from the rent in the heavens will descend a star steed, still crusted with the frost of his journey from beyond. Having heard the call of the supplicant, it is impelled to answer, yet it challenge for the right to command its nature.

Fail in this and your light will surely be extinguished. Using the dagger still coated with the blood of the summons, first point to the creature and then point to the ground, signifying your mastery over it. Apply your will fully to this task for the beast will seek for man's weakness and flee back to the stars.

In full voice, utter, Ick ctha, byakhee! Ctha meh.

With success, the beast will prostrate itself and be yours to command.

Upon completion of your commands, custom dictates that the supplicant dismiss the creature. Take up the bone dagger and inscribe the X in the air afore the creature. This signifies its tasks are done. Then draw the dagger's keen edge along your forearm, from elbow to the wrist, and let fall three drops of blood to the ground and utter,

Yaahn neh, byakhee! Ctha meh.

Satisfied that it has been dismissed, the creature will depart.

Handout: Ties 6

Creature does not always complete task. Sometimes not necessary.

Dismiss it with: lek etha yaahn neh, byakheel Ctha meh. Three times said.

After third, draw blade from under left eye straight down to left jaw line, and leave 13 drops of blood from the wound in the bowl. Take the blood into your mouth.

Spray it into the creature's face, while saying, Ctha meh!

It will then be forced back to the stars.

Handout: Black 1

CAMPBELL'S MEAT

143 RIVERS

63 B X \$12 =

\$819 x 15% =

\$122.85



PRE-GENERATED CHARACTERS

STANLEY ACE, *Boxer, age 25*

STR 90 CON 85 SIZ 75 DEX 65 INT 45
 APP 45 POW 50 EDU 80 SAN 50 HP 16
 Damage Bonus: +1D6 Build: 2 Move: 8 Luck: 50 MP: 10

Combat

Brawl 80% (40/16), damage 1D3+1D6
 Dodge 50% (25/10)

Skills

Archaeology 55% (27/11), Art/Craft (Photography) 50% (25/10), Climb 30% (15/6),
 Credit Rating 35% (17/7), Drive Auto 50% (25/10), History 45% (22/9), Intimidate 48%
 (24/9), Jump 30% (15/6), Library Use 35% (17/7), Psychology 35% (17/7)
 Stealth 30% (15/6), Swim 50% (25/10), Throw 30% (15/6).



Backstory

(some entries are left blank, allowing you to personalize your investigator as desired):

- **Description:** Stanley is large and muscular, but his boyish looks soften him a bit. He has wavy brown hair and a high forehead.
- **Traits:** Friendly and confident, with a great deal of energy. While he's an educated man, he craves action.
- **Ideology/Beliefs:**
- **Significant People:**
- **Meaningful Locations:**
- **Treasured Possessions:** Lucky St. Christopher medallion.

Stanley has recently entered the world of professional boxing after showing great promise in college. He studied archaeology while in school, going on a few digs of local tribal sites, but his love of the gentleman's sport eventually took over, much to the consternation of his family. Through his college and social contacts, he occasionally is called upon when a little muscle is required.

Equipment

Boxing gloves and gym kit, camera, \$10 on hand.

Player Notes:

PRE-GENERATED CHARACTERS

JESSICA BROOKS, *Author, age 52*

STR 60 CON 70 SIZ 70 DEX 55 INT 75
APP 55 POW 65 EDU 87 SAN 65 HP 14
Damage Bonus: +1D4 Build: 1 Move: 5 Luck: 60 MP: 13



Combat

Brawl 30% (15/6), damage 1D3+1D6
Dodge 30% (15/6)

Skills

Accounting 16% (8/3), Art (Literature) 65% (32/13), Art/Craft (Sketching) 55% (27/11),
Credit Rating 35% (17/7), Fast Talk 55% (27/11), History 45% (22/9)
Language (Latin) 40% (20/8), Library Use 40% (20/8), Listen 40% (20/8), Occult 20%
(10/4), Persuade 60% (30/12), Psychology 35% (17/7), Science (Biology) 36% (18/7),
Science (Chemistry) 31% (15/6), Stealth 30% (15/6).

Backstory

(some entries are left blank, allowing you to personalize your investigator as desired):

- **Description:** Sturdily built, with shoulder length brown hair (usually tied up) and green eyes. A fondness for good food is married with a great sense of humor.
- **Traits:** Great sense of bonhomie and seemingly endless curiosity regarding all things.
- **Ideology/Beliefs:**
- **Significant People:**
- **Meaningful Locations:**
- **Treasured Possessions:** Miniature magnifying glass handed down to her from her grandfather.

Jessica writes mystery and crime fiction, and has established contacts with several local police departments. Ever eager for a mystery, Jessica loves to involve herself in amateur sleuth work, as well as occasionally joining academic and private research groups who specialize in studying strange phenomena.

Equipment

Chevrolet Superior automobile, binoculars, carbide hand torch, assortment of fountain pens and pencils, Remington typewriter, \$10 on hand.

Player Notes:

PRE-GENERATED CHARACTERS

MELISSA DEVRIES, *Scientist, age 31*

STR 55 CON 65 SIZ 60 DEX 50 INT 80
APP 70 POW 70 EDU 80 SAN 70 HP 12
Damage Bonus: 0 Build: 0 Move: 7 Luck: 45 MP: 14

Combat

Brawl 25% (12/5), damage 1D3
.22 Short 40% (20/8), damage 1D6
Dodge 30% (15/6)

Skills

Credit Rating 45% (22/9), Intimidate 45% (22/9), Language (French) 40% (20/8), Law 25% (12/5), Library Use 55% (27/11), Listen 30% (15/6), Medicine 30% (15/6), Natural World 40% (20/8), Persuade 20% (10/4), Psychology 35% (17/7), Science (Biology) 50% (25/10), Science (Chemistry) 40% (20/8), Science (Forensics) 60% (30/12), Spot Hidden 50% (25/10), Stealth 30% (15/6).

Backstory

(some entries are left blank, allowing you to personalize your investigator as desired):

- **Description:** It is often remarked that she has “impish” features. Long dark brown hair is normally tied in a loose bun, bright eyes and usually an inquisitive grin.
- **Traits:** Very matter-of-fact, can be a little overbearing and stern.
- **Ideology/Beliefs:** A materialist; considers belief in the supernatural to be naïve at best.
- **Significant People:**
- **Meaningful Locations:**
- **Treasured Possessions:**

Melissa is a passionate rationalist, believing only in a scientific reality. Growing up in New York, she’s seen any number of bogus spiritualists prey on the vulnerability of the credulous. She has made it her mission to expose such frauds through the methodical application of reason. After finding herself in some tight situations, she’s taken to carrying a small handgun in her purse for protection.

Equipment

.22 short automatic, small case containing various scientific equipment, notebook and pencil, \$10 on hand.

Player Notes:



PRE-GENERATED CHARACTERS

JACOB GIBSON, *Custodian*, age 36

STR 70 CON 65 SIZ 65 DEX 45 INT 50
APP 55 POW 70 EDU 70 SAN 70 HP 13
Damage Bonus: +1D4 Build: 1 Move: 8 Luck: 60 MP: 14

Combat

Brawl 60% (30/12), damage 1D3+1D4
Wrench 60% (30/12), damage 1D8+1D4
Dodge 45% (22/9)

Skills

Charm 40% (20/8), Climb 40% (20/8), Credit Rating 15% (7/3), Drive Auto 40% (20/8), Electrical Repair 50% (25/10), Listen 35% (17/7), Locksmith 40% (20/8), Mechanical Repair 70% (35/14), Operate Heavy Machinery 39% (19/7), Spot Hidden 45% (22/9), Stealth 50% (25/10).

Backstory

(some entries are left blank, allowing you to personalize your investigator as desired):

- **Description:** Of Chinese descent, he is just above average height, lean, with dark hair. From years of manual labor he is very fit and healthy, although not necessarily athletic. His hands are rough, calloused, and covered with tiny nicks and cuts.
- **Traits:** Naturally quiet, with an unassuming demeanor. He despises pompous people who think they are his betters.
- **Ideology/Beliefs:** Live and let live.
- **Significant People:**
- **Meaningful Locations:**
- **Treasured Possessions:**

Jacob is a janitor and handyman at a university. Knowledgeable about matters concerning repair and maintenance, with some technical experience, Jacob tends to remain calm under pressure. He is often called upon by friends and associates to assist with any number of "off-the-books" jobs, up to and including safecracking and breaking and entering. Many a professor and student have Jacob to thank for getting them out of a tricky situation.

Equipment

Toolbox, coveralls, pack of cigarettes, lighter, \$10 on hand.

Player Notes:



PRE-GENERATED CHARACTERS

DR. JOHN LUCAS, *Physician, age 37*

STR 45 CON 65 SIZ 75 DEX 70 INT 85
APP 60 POW 60 EDU 85 SAN 60 HP 14
Damage Bonus: 0 Build: 0 Move: 6 Luck: 45 MP: 12



Combat

Brawl 30% (15/6), damage 1D3
Scalpel 30% (15/6), damage 1D4
Dodge 35% (17/7)

Skills

Credit Rating 45% (22/9), First Aid 70% (35/14), Language (Latin) 55% (27/11), Law 11% (5/2), Medicine 70% (35/14), Persuade 35% (17/7), Psychoanalysis 35% (17/7), Psychology 55% (27/11), Science (Biology) 70% (35/14), Science (Chemistry) 65% (32/13), Science (Pharmacy) 55% (27/11).

Backstory

(some entries are left blank, allowing you to personalize your investigator as desired):

- **Description:** Tall and lean, the very image of the competent doctor. He dresses in a conservative style and is seldom seen without his medical bag at his side.
- **Traits:** Precise and pragmatic, with a nimble, skeptical mind. Not afraid to roll up his sleeves.
- **Ideology/Beliefs:** Compassionate care is what sets man apart from beasts.
- **Significant People:**
- **Meaningful Locations:**
- **Treasured Possessions:**

Dr. Lucas has a solid reputation as a skilled healer, working in a number of hospitals in the New York area. He has occasionally served as medical consultant to several writer-friends who specialize in detective fiction, as well as assisting several legal firms as a medical expert in injury cases.

Equipment

Buick 121 automobile, medical bag, fountain pen, prescription pad, wristwatch, \$10 on hand.

Player Notes:

PRE-GENERATED CHARACTERS

DAVID “THE AMAZING KRAYGEN” WILCOX,

Stage Magician, age 36

STR 70 CON 60 SIZ 45 DEX 80 INT 60
APP 80 POW 55 EDU 79 SAN 55 HP 10
Damage Bonus: 0 Build: 0 Move: 9 Luck: 50 MP: 11

Combat

Brawl 40% (20/8), damage 1D3
.38 Revolver 30% (15/6), damage 1D10
Dodge 40% (20/8)

Skills

Art/Craft (Magician*) 70% (35/14), Art/Craft (Woodwork) 30% (15/6), Charm 55% (27/11), Credit Rating 30% (15/6), Fast Talk 50% (25/10), Listen 27 (13/5), Locksmith 50% (25/10), Natural World 25% (12/5), Occult 35% (17/7), Psychology 35% (17/7), Sleight of Hand 65% (32/13), Spot Hidden 40% (20/8), Stealth 30% (15/6).

Backstory

(some entries are left blank, allowing you to personalize your investigator as desired):

- **Description:** Slightly shorter than average, he is slim, limber, and agile. Dark hair, bright blue eyes, and charisma honed from countless live performances.
- **Traits:** Bit of a show-off (always ready to perform a card trick). Friendly and outgoing.
- **Ideology/Beliefs:** Don't be taken for a ride, question everything.
- **Significant People:**
- **Meaningful Locations:**
- **Treasured Possessions:** A lucky dime given to him by his mentor, the Great Falstini.

Most stage magicians are a cynical lot—some of the biggest skeptics in the world have been illusionists. David is an exception to that rule. He got into “magic” because he felt deep down inside that there was more to life than what most people think of as reality. Despite years in the pursuit of “real” magic, David has yet to encounter anything remotely “magical” but he carries on, seeking out weird occurrences, strange mysteries, and people claiming magical gifts in the hope to one day see beyond the mundane.

Equipment

.38 revolver (no permit), case full of tricks (deck of marked cards, lock picks, pair of handcuffs, universal handcuff key (80% chance to open any pair of standard handcuffs), flash powder (three pinches), stage outfit), one multicolored endless handkerchief (20 feet long), \$10 on hand.

Player Notes



PRE-GENERATED CHARACTERS

CHRIS PARKER, *Professor of Geology, age 39*

STR 60 CON 60 SIZ 45 DEX 75 INT 70
APP 55 POW 55 EDU 90 SAN 55 HP 10
Damage Bonus: 0 Build: 0 Move: 8 Luck: 60 MP: 11

Combat

Brawl 40% (20/8), damage 1D3
Dodge 37% (18/7)

Skills

Charm 40% (20/8), Climb 60% (30/12), Credit Rating 41% (20/8), Demolitions 30% (15/6), First Aid 40% (20/8), Jump 60% (30/12), Language (Spanish) 30% (15/6), Library Use 30% (15/6), Mechanical Repair 45% (22/9), Navigate 40% (20/8), Psychology 20% (10/4), Science (Geology) 80% (40/16), Science (Chemistry) 40% (20/8), Spot Hidden 35% (17/7), Swim 53% (26/10), Track 35% (17/7).

Backstory

(some entries are left blank, allowing you to personalize your investigator as desired):

- **Description:** Ruddy-brown hair, green eyes, and slender physique. Normally seen wearing practical yet smart clothing, although she is more comfortable when wearing her caving clothes and boots.
- **Traits:** Affable and cheerful, and something of a risk taker.
- **Ideology/Beliefs:**
- **Significant People:**
- **Meaningful Locations:** Under the ground, charting a newly discovered cave system.
- **Treasured Possessions:**

Chris works at a university where she is a professor of geology. In her spare time, she is an enthusiastic explorer of natural caves. She first became fascinated by the world beneath the surface as a girl, when she'd spend hours in the small cave on her family's property in Massachusetts. She's begun pursuing this passion in the New England area, but her wanderlust has previously taken her across the United States.

Equipment

Large knife in belt sheath, ropes, helmet lamp, flashlight, two sets of caving apparel (one for warm and dry conditions and one for cool and moist conditions), \$10 on hand.

Player Notes



PRE-GENERATED CHARACTERS

FATHER STEPHEN SCHEPOLOWSKI,

Catholic Priest, age 25

STR 70 CON 75 SIZ 70 DEX 55 INT 70
APP 50 POW 70 EDU 70 SAN 70 HP 14
Damage Bonus: +1D4 Build: 1 Move: 8 Luck: 50 MP: 14

Combat

Brawl 50% (25/10), damage 1D3+1D4
Dodge 40% (20/8)

Skills

Accounting 35% (17/7), Charm 30% (15/6), Credit Rating 20% (10/4), History 45% (22/9), First Aid 40% (20/8), Language (Italian) 30% (15/6), Language (Latin) 70% (35/14), Library Use 40% (20/8), Listen 40% (20/8), Occult 30% (15/6), Persuade 50% (25/10), Psychology 40% (20/8), Spot Hidden 34% (17/6), Throw 45% (22/9).

Backstory

(some entries are left blank, allowing you to personalize your investigator as desired):

- **Description:** Thin and above average height, with a youthful yet careworn face. Wears his black suit and Roman collar when on Church business. Wispy, brown hair matches his large, dark brown eyes.
- **Traits:** Mild temperament that conceals a sharp mind and strong sense of purpose. Quiet and observant, at ease letting others take center stage, beyond the initial reserve dwells a warm personality that cares deeply for others.
- **Ideology/Beliefs:** Firm Catholic.
- **Significant People:**
- **Meaningful Locations:** The boxing gym, where he helps out.
- **Treasured Possessions:**

A junior pastor, young Father Schepolowski has a calling to aid troubled souls. This compassionate nature has sometimes drawn the young priest in over his head, yet so far the good Lord has always provided opportunities to remedy the situation. Schepolowski is encouraged by the senior priest of the parish, who approves of his willingness to take action on behalf of the less fortunate, which sometimes leads him into strange places. Accordingly, Father Schepolowski is afforded ample freedom from many day-to-day parish affairs to pursue his own mission of outreach to those in need.

Equipment

Small golden crucifix on gold chain, well-thumbed pocket size Holy Bible, small pocket knife, fountain pen, playing cards, cigarettes, \$10 on hand.

Player Notes



PRE-GENERATED CHARACTERS

GERALDINE “GERRY” THORNHILL, *Journalist, age 32*

STR 55 CON 60 SIZ 70 DEX 45 INT 75
APP 70 POW 65 EDU 80 SAN 65 HP 13
Damage Bonus: +1D4 Build: 1 Move: 7 Luck: 55 MP: 13

Combat

Brawl 40% (20/8), damage 1D3+1D4
Switchblade 40% (20/8), damage 1D4+1D4
Dodge 30% (15/6)

Skills

Accounting 25% (12/5), Art/Craft (Writing) 70% (35/14), Art/Craft (Photography) 45% (22/9), Charm 30% (15/6), Credit Rating 24% (12/4), Fast Talk 55% (27/11), History 30% (15/6), Library Use 50% (12/10), Natural World 18% (9/3), Occult 45% (22/9), Persuade 55% (27/11), Psychology 60% (30/12), Spot Hidden 45% (22/9), Stealth 35% (17/7).

Backstory

(some entries are left blank, allowing you to personalize your investigator as desired):

- **Description:** Dark brunette hair, deep brown eyes, tall and slender, she tends to wear practical yet smart clothing.
- **Traits:** A gambler and thrill seeker. Loves scary stories.
- **Ideology/Beliefs:** Believes in the spirit realm and wants to prove it exists.
- **Significant People:**
- **Meaningful Locations:**
- **Treasured Possessions:**

Gerry's talent has enabled her to work her way up the newspaper business to become a writer for a citywide newspaper. She's always had a particular interest in the kind of stories that other “respectable” journalists wouldn't touch—something that has often got her in trouble with her editors. Gerry is intrigued by stories of ghosts, mysterious events, and other darker matters. Sometimes this pays off; sometimes it has led her on a merry dance. It probably all stems from her childhood when she claims she lived in a haunted house.

Equipment

Note pad and pencil, camera and film, switchblade, hip flask of good Canadian whisky, \$10 on hand.

Player Notes



PRE-GENERATED CHARACTERS

MAXIMILIAN HIRST, *Parapsychologist, age 26*

STR 45 CON 75 SIZ 80 DEX 50 INT 75
APP 60 POW 70 EDU 70 SAN 68 HP 15
Damage Bonus: +1D4 Build: 1 Move: 7 Luck: 50 MP: 14



Combat

Brawl 50% (25/10), damage 1D3+1D4
Dodge 40% (20/8)

Skills

Anthropology 25% (12/5), Art/Craft (Photography) 45 (22/9), Credit Rating 16% (8/3), Fast Talk 55% (27/11), History 30% (15/6), Language (French) 20% (10/4), Library Use 40% (20/8), Natural World 40% (20/8), Occult 65% (32/13), Persuade 30% (15/6), Psychology 57% (28/11), Science (Physics) 20% (10/4), Spot Hidden 45% (22/9).

Backstory

(some entries are left blank, allowing you to personalize your investigator as desired):

- **Description:** Short brown hair, with waxed moustache and goatee. Green eyes and pale skin. Above average height and a few extra pounds.
- **Traits:** Highly curious nature, given to periods of introspection.
- **Ideology/Beliefs:** Wishes he could capture a ghost or another unexplained event on camera.
- **Significant People:**
- **Meaningful Locations:**
- **Treasured Possessions:**

Max, as his friends call him, has been hunting the unexplained ever since he returned from the Great War. It was while he was in France that his interest in strange phenomena took root. As well as the horrors of war, Max encountered something strange and unexplainable during a sortie through an abandoned churchyard. Since returning home, despite the meager income it brings, he has devoted his life to seeking out the unusual and inexplicable.

Equipment

Camera and film, "ghost hunting kit" (talcum powder, thermometer, string, screw driver, *Holy Bible*), notepad and ink pen, \$10 on hand.

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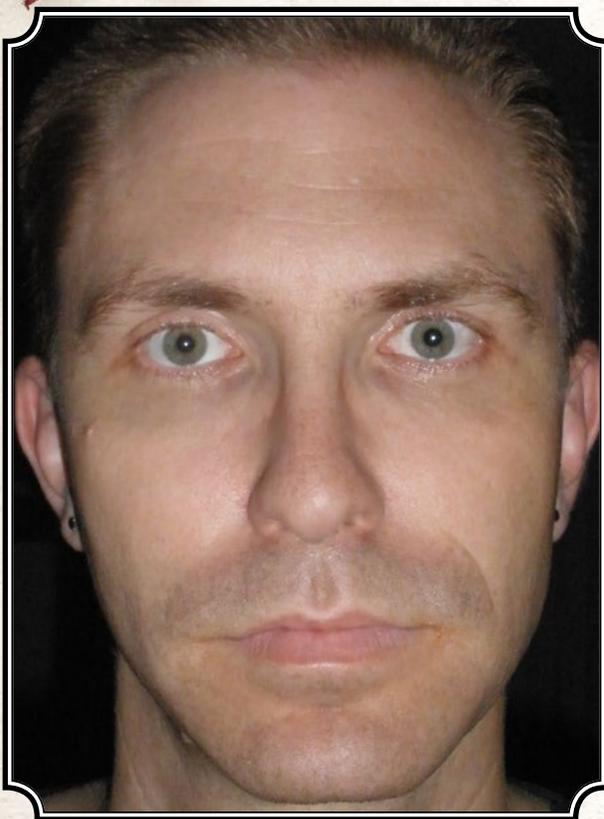
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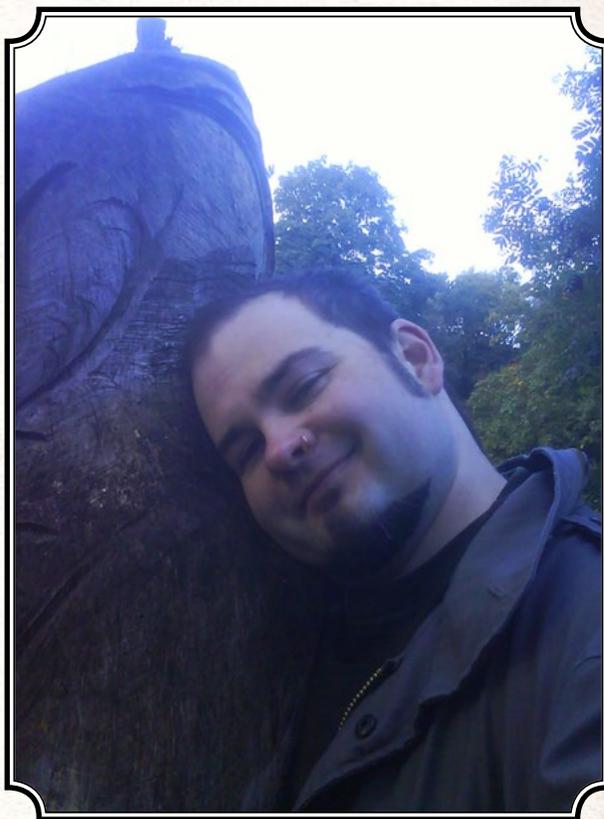
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AUTHOR BIOGRAPHIES



CHRISTOPHER SMITH ADAIR

Christopher Smith Adair has been playing roleplaying games almost from the moment he became aware of them. A few years later, Lovecraft collections began appearing at his high school library at the same time as advertisements for *Call of Cthulhu's* third edition ran in *Dragon* magazine. This confluence proved irresistible. He has since worked on a number of projects for *Call of Cthulhu*, as well as other games, some of which brazenly have nothing to do with cosmic horror. His website exists at csmithadair.com.



GLYNN OWEN BARRASS

Glynn Owen Barrass lives in the North East of England, where the weather is exclusively bad. He has been playing *Call of Cthulhu* for over thirty years and including this fine tome, he has co-written the campaign book *A Time to Harvest* and contributed scenarios to *Blood Brothers III* and a *Gaslight Cthulhu* book (all forthcoming from Chaosium). He also wrote technical information and a scenario for the upcoming *Punktown* sourcebook from Miskatonic River Press. He also writes fiction, edits anthologies, and collects vintage roleplaying games for fun and recreation.

AUTHOR BIOGRAPHIES



BRIAN COURTEMANCHE

A lifelong New Englander, Brian Courtemanche has grown up in Lovecraft Country and been enthralled with the imaginative fiction of the Cthulhu Mythos since his early teens. Discovering tabletop roleplaying games about that same time, Courtemanche has been an avid enthusiast of the *Call of Cthulhu* RPG for decades. He has been fortunate to have several *Call of Cthulhu* scenarios published by Chaosium and Miskatonic River Press. A professional academic librarian by occupation, Courtemanche lives and works in Massachusetts. He has yet to discover the *Necronomicon* in his library, but nonetheless routinely fails sanity checks.



TOM LYNCH

Tom Lynch is a devoted acolyte to Cthulhu, having started with the game in the early 90s. He has scenarios in *New Tales of the Miskatonic Valley*, *More Adventures in Arkham Country*, *Tales of the Sleepless City*, *Lux in Tenebras*, and *Atomic Age Cthulhu*. He has also dabbled in fiction, and has short stories in *The Lovecraft eZine*, *Dark Rites of Cthulhu*, *Eldritch Chrome*, *Undead and Unbound*, *Horror for the Holidays*, and more! By day, Tom is an elementary school teacher, looking to expand young minds and spends the rest of his spare time hunched over his keyboard thinking up ways to give you nightmares.



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