

The Thing from Jakarta

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Foreword

Because I am not a great creative writer there will probably be many entries that are vague in content and description causing the adventure to appear disjointed. While some provision has been made for the places the characters are likely to visit, it is up to the keeper to improvise, and flesh out all other areas - including NPC personalities and reaction.

Although the scenario can be played as a stand alone, it is probably best if it is added to an ongoing campaign as a side-track event. It's essentially a no-brainer, so specialised characters are not required. Although a loose time frame is used, it can be modified or ignored by the keeper to make for a more enjoyable half hour of play. For full effect it should ideally be played by one player, but no more than three. It's suited for the modern age, though it can be modified for the 1920s or 1890s. The setting is Newark, New Jersey although this can be changed to suit the individual keeper.

Keeper Information

First and foremost the adventure is a bug hunt. You've played a hundred of 'em before so you know what to expect, and yes it does live in the sewers. Anyway, Professor Stannard has recently come back from an archaeological dig in Indonesia. Something occurred there which is outlined later, but essentially he got infected with a parasite which grew in his body, and today, as the scenario begins, it bursts out his chest (like we haven't seen that one before) right in front of our player/s. Herein the scenario is simple. Become proactive and try to find the thing and kill it, otherwise the scenario will be over inside of four minutes.

Timeline

The following is an account of what is supposed to happen, with the actual specifics being deliberately left vague. The keeper should expand or change it should the need arise.

The thing bursts out Stannard's chest and escapes into the sewers as witnessed by the players. Weak and unfamiliar with its surroundings, it holes up and eats what garbage it can. It grows quickly and as it matures it soon begins to hunt rats and other vermin. Sewer workers first begin to notice signs of the thing, but pay it no mind. As these occurrences grow, they soon begin joking about "something on the loose." Plentiful as they may be, rats and garbage cannot sustain the thing's energy requirements. By now it has grown to the size of a large cat. It leaves the sewers to forage for new food sources. Utilising the night it begins to prey on cats and dogs often leaving carcasses which are found the morning after. Concern grows over the presence of a rabid animal. The joke of "something down here" begins to grow thin as some sewer workers are genuinely spooked by something. They hear things; see things; find fragments of sloughed off skin or large patches of blood. As pet slayings continue public concern grows. Animal control begins to search for the creature, but it remains elusive. The odd partial animal print is recovered, but it cannot be identified with any degree of certainty. Officials deny that there has been an escape from the zoo. A woman is later interviewed on the news about having narrowly colliding with the suspected rabid animal as she drove home in the wee small hours. As she hit the brakes it jumped up and clattered over the roof of her car, scraping the paint work extensively. She gives a mistaken description of it as being like a large muscular dog, dark in colour.

Within a few days of this, the thing has grown to the size of a small bear. Too large for drains, it uses an old storm drain close to East Newark Bridge. One or two people report they saw something swimming in the

river. Shaky camcorder footage shot at night is shown on the news. Analysis of the footage is inconclusive. The thing is now mature and seeks a place in which to spawn.

A sewer worker is attacked by the thing. Colleagues who were there say something rose from the water and pulled Henry, who was at the back, in. They tried to rescue him but he was nowhere to be found and neither was the thing, of which no satisfactory description is given. It was all too quick. One is stated as saying "It wasn't no flushed alligator". Police investigate the incident and find no evidence. They conclude Henry must've lost his footing, fell, and was dragged under by an undercurrent. A search of the local sewers was made but he wasn't found. The reported monster was most likely a shadow, an optical illusion possibly brought on by a gas leak. The sewer workers protest this. The thing, by now has spawned and seeks to procure nourishment for its brood.

The badly mutilated corpse of a homeless person is found, prompting fears that the rabid animal now has the taste of human blood. Just why he wasn't taken by the thing is open for discussion. Over the next few nights several more people are slain by the thing. No trace of them is found save for their blood at the crime scene and the occasional dropped item. A two man sewer worker team enter the sewers and are never heard of again. Sewer workers threaten to strike if something isn't done about whatever's down there. The city council, although concerned with the recent slayings, procrastinate over any definitive plans of action.

Public concern grows, as does hysteria. People harass the police with calls at night after "seeing" something, be this true or not. Armed neighbourhood watch groups are organised, their patrols being conducted through mobile phones, text messages and radios. They fail, and often end up chasing shadows or each other. A man is accidentally gunned down in a case of mistaken identity. "I thought it was the beast" was the shooter's excuse. Police issue a statement warning these patrols to immediately cease and desist. Anyone found on the street with a firearm will be arrested. The calls are largely ignored by those who think they are acting in the public's best interest due to the failings of the authorities.

This is all that pretty much happens. If the players fail (how could they) in tracking the beast, then the authorities make the break through and eventually conclude the scenario.

Player Insertion

Players can be inserted in whatever manner the keeper chooses. Be they friends of Prof. Stannard who is holding an evening meal, or be they total strangers to Stannard who happens to be passing by as the player is out cutting the grass, changing the oil in their car, or whatever. This scenario assumes the latter.

So, there the character is; doing whatever he/she's doing, when Professor Stannard comes strolling by. He seems to be labouring slightly, as though out of breath. He stops and leans against a fence, looks at the character, before coughing up a wad of phlegm, which he spits out. A **half SPOT HIDDEN** check allows observant characters to notice that there is blood being coughed up too. The fit seems to get worse and then Stannard clutches his chest, then collapses in spasms, as if from a severe epileptic seizure. Our player can either rush over and try to restrain Stannard from doing injury to himself or stand by and watch. Struggling to control Stannard requires a **STR (versus 16) resistance roll**. Fumbling the roll results in a sock to the jaw for 1d8 damage (strong guy), which may result in a bloody nose, fat lip or knockout. Stannard is predominantly spluttering blood by now, unable to make coherent speech. His body is rigid as he flops about. He appears to be intent on pulling up his clothes to expose his abdomen. The sound of cracking ribs is heard, and moments later his belly begins to bulge and stretch to breaking point and beyond. In a spray of blood the flesh tears apart and a large blood soaked reddish-pink crab/lobster crawls out. Those who see this lose **1d3/1d6** Sanity. To ensure it gets away, characters require a **POWx2** check to act otherwise they stand and stare on unbelievably. Those who can act, attack at half chance. We assume the characters won't be totting guns when mowing the lawn - but players will be players.

The crab makes a rasping hiss of a vocalisation before snapping at any character who is too loose for comfort. Only if the character fails a **LUCK** or **DEXx5** check he/she is hit for 1d4 damage as the thing bites through the flesh and into the bone. Stoke player paranoia here with a **CON** roll. Will he/she be infected with Hepatitis, AIDS, Rabies, or something far, far worse. After removing a chunk of flesh, or maybe a finger,

the thing nimbly scuttles away and falls down a nearby drain to safety. Play the bite up for a while. Player feels faint for a while, his/her face ashen, later on he/she might feel sick for a period, gets a twinge in the stomach, blurred vision, or whatever.

By this time 1d6 passers by, and neighbours have converged to see what's going on in amongst gasps of : "Oh my God" and "Phone 911". A woman faints at the sight. Stannard, by some grace of God is still alive, unconscious, but alive. Despite the valiant attempts to save his life he dies moments before the ambulance arrives.

An **IDEA** (or **KNOW**) check allows characters to identify the man before going through his pockets. However, after dutifully giving him the once over – the character finds a wallet containing fifteen dollars, an American Express card, his ID (Professor Philip Stannard of 1426 Preston Court). Other stuff includes house keys, a further 45 cents, a Swiss army knife, a watch, and a letter addressed to Paula Wilcox, Nebraska (unstamped). No driving licence is found though. The letter itself is unimportant and is nothing more than a letter to an old friend.

Police Involvement

The police and ambulance soon arrive to take charge. They'll naturally want to talk to everyone involved. **PSYCHOLOGY** checks may be had should the player rant about something bursting out his chest. Detectives are pretty smart, and will know if something is amiss and will know if a player isn't telling the whole truth. For now they assume he's been brutally stabbed. This is a good opportunity to introduce Detective Weaver, though for now he should occupy a lesser roll. He appears to be uninterested in the body, and more interested in the nearby drain where Stannard's blood is naturally flowing to.

Players can be detained for further questioning should the NJPD suspect them of foul play. Stannard's body will be carted off for a post-mortem, where the pathologist makes some surprising discoveries. He discovers that it appears that something did burst out from inside from the way the bones are broken, and the internal organs appear to have been rubbed with an abrasive. For now this is glossed over and attributed to the seizure.

The investigating detectives will surely follow the same line of investigation as the players and their paths may even cross here and there to great annoyance. Use your judgement in what the police know at any time, and how they react to our players.

Stannard's home

Professor Philip Stannard lives in a modest house at 1426 Preston Court, a nice well-to-do area of town. The house is large and spacious with well tended lawns in front and out back. Colourful plants please the eye, and insects buzz about plying their trade. A cool breeze whips up as the characters pass by the garage as they approach the front door. Nobody answers the door if chapped. Nobody's home. Providing the characters have Stannard's keys entry to the building is easy otherwise a window or door needs to be forced, which may attract the attention of a passer by or neighbour.

Looking about we find a nicely decorated interior. Light and airy, with all the modern conveniences. A couple of potted plants add a splash of greenery. Carved wooden sculptures, masks, war clubs and other miscellaneous objects are on show in display cases or hang on the walls around the house. Souvenirs of past digs. A large fish tank is home to half a dozen grouper fish (**NATURAL HISTORY**). A drinks cabinet is well stocked and has a few bottles of Ogwen Siberry's Cherry Brandy - obviously Stannards favourite tippie.

His study contains a wealth of anthropological books, an extensive collection of the National Geographic magazine and other periodicals and literature. Assorted work-related papers can be found on his desk as can a PC (he's the curator of a small local museum). A few excavation photos adorn the walls.

A rather nifty-looking paperweight (carved from a single piece of green jade) rests on a stack of paper. It stands 3" high, 4½ long and 3" wide, resembling a crouching winged hound, sphinx-like but with definite canine features. Around the base of the weight are etchings, inked in gold paint. The decorative half symbols appear may be some kind of written language not readily identifiable by the players. Those with mythos knowledge may recognise it as the writing of the Tcho-Tchos, a degenerate race of cannibalistic pygmies said to have been created by interbreeding between men and monsters, who worship a pantheon of evil gods.

Spending time to go through everything the players find that Stannard liked to keep detailed journals of all his expeditions - the high points and the low. The last expedition, apparently, was in Sumatra a year and a half ago where he stayed with a local tribe for a while. Despite being home six months, Stannard has failed to account for his Javan expedition in its entirety. You might say it is conspicuous by its absence, but players won't know thins until they find...

- A collection of travel tickets and boarding passes. the latest one being dated eight months ago. It's destination Jakarta on the island of Java, Indonesia. An **IDEA** check might suggest that Stannard has a journal somewhere.
- Stannard liked to collect newspapers from wherever he travelled. The only one of interest to the players is the Jakartan Post dated six months ago. There's an account in the paper detailing the dig, and how it was hampered by local tribal opposition, and that several members of the dig were killed shortly after a network of caves were discovered which were being used by rebel forces or drug smugglers. The dig was immediately cancelled and a raid by Jakartan Commandos was successful which ended with the deaths of 36 terrorists and 6 commandos. The site was later demolished by the commandos and sealed as a no go area by the government who were continuing with search and destroy manoeuvres until further notice. The players can make of this what they want. They might even think that the thing they saw earlier might have something to do with it.

Other than this there is nothing else of interest that the house has to offer unless players want to steal stuff. The attic and garage both serve as storage space. Stannard does not own a car.

If the players spend too much time here they may be interrupted by the police who naturally have to secure the scene to look for any possible evidence. If the players are careless they're going to leave their prints every where. It might cause problems if characters are brought in for tampering with evidence.

Who is Professor Phillip Stannard

Talking to neighbours, work colleagues, or checking other avenues of research uncovers: Stannard was born in Atlantic City, New Jersey on August 14 1960 to Katherine and George Stannard. He was one of three siblings and attended Rutgers State University of New Jersey, studying Anthropology, later moving to Indonesia to continue his studies, where he gained his doctorates from the University of Indonesia, (in Jakarta). He married one Sarah-Anne Gooding in 1982 and had two children in '83/'85, two girls - Amanda and Claire. Sarah and Claire died in a car accident in 1990 while Stannard was in Peru attending a seminar. The loss devastated him. Today Amanda is an up and coming Anthropologist like her old man. She studies at the University of California, Los Angeles. Stannard himself is respected in his field and has written a few books, and has been published in assorted scientific periodicals. He has no police record, and has not served in the military. When not out in the field getting dirty and rummaging about (his main passion) he is to be found in his museum on Goose Street. Generally, Stannard was a happy sort of chap, with no known enemies. He didn't have any great credit problems. He wasn't seeing anybody in particular. The last dig he was on was in Java and came back about six months ago badly shaken up about something. He didn't want to talk about it at all, saying that it was bad and that several deaths had occurred. Out of politeness nobody pressed the issue. At first he was withdrawn, keeping to himself and spoke only when he had to, immersing himself in work. It took him a while to come round and revert back to his old self, but not quite fully. Whatever happened on the dig really got to him, and he still refused to talk about it.

The Jakartan Expedition

Research on the subject brings up the following "official" account. About a year ago a native settlement was discovered in the Javan Highlands. It looked as though it had lain undisturbed for several hundred years, perhaps as much as several thousand. Much of it had been reclaimed by the jungle. The site, situated on a high plateau like Machu Picchu, seemed different from most settlements of the time. An excavation was established and Stannard got involved nine months ago, arriving a month later. As the dig progressed it appeared that the civilisation that built it was certainly more advanced than any other tribe. Permanent stone foundations and the odd wall was unearthed as were tools, pottery shards, and broken pieces of sculpture. All evidence that a thriving culture had lived and possibly worshipped there. Then, three months later a fantastical discovery was made close by to the settlement. Concealed by what appeared to be a rock slide and jungle foliage was a network of caves. Investigation later concluded that the caves which were a product of volcanic activity had been expanded upon and excavated into an underground town carved on many levels. The massive warren-like excavation could house several thousand people. The discovered bore holes were used for ventilation or had been sunk down into a vast subterranean water table. It was speculated that much of the complex was held over for religious duties and/or storage for it was there that many an artefact was found.

It was about then when the trouble began. The dig had apparently stumbled into the hiding place belonging to rebel forces opposed to the Government. With their discovery the insurgents lashed out and massacred many of the excavation workers before a raid by Jakartan Commandos was made which ended with the deaths of 36 terrorists and the seizure of weapons, explosives and raw grade opium. Six commandos lost their lives in the attack. The dig was immediately terminated and the entire area sealed by the Government in order to conduct further search and destroy missions.

That's the official line, but what really happened was: as the expedition explored the extensive caverns they came across a tunnel that had apparently been deliberately collapsed or sealed up. They excavated the passage way and explored beyond and just as coincidence has it there was an alien nest close by full of eggs. As if that wasn't enough there was a couple of aliens as well. You can guess what happened next and it all ended with the raid by Jakartan Commandos, the closure of the dig and the lock-down of the mountainous site.

Finding out who was on the expedition can easily be done through whatever channel. A simple way of finding these names is to access the expedition website. This'll give names and brief biographies of each of the 15 main archaeologists involved, a timeline and regular updates of finds, and activities with photos, transcripts of live webchats and the like. All is normal as you'd expect from such a site with nothing leaping out in the form of a clue, except that it has not been updated since the massacre occurred.

Contacting other members of the expedition

Of the 15 archaeological members listed (3 American, 2 South American, 6 Oriental 1 British 2 French 1 Canadian), seven are listed as being killed by the rebels. Four more (excluding Stannard) died shortly after returning home from the expedition. Official reasons of death is either heart attack, burst appendix or another health related illness brought on due to parasitic infection. In three of the bodies a parasite was found attached to the heart, lung or wherever. The identification of the parasite has yet been unsuccessful. Any character who reads the National Geographic or similar periodicals may be aware of these facts as each scientist was remembered in an obituary.

The three remaining survivors (one Canadian, one American, and one French), refuse to talk about Jakarta. They are well aware what happened. Fortunately they are safe and free from infection. If the players visit the American who lives in New York they require a **FAST TALK** or **PERSUADE** check for him to reveal more. He'll give an account on how they unblocked a passage way and found in the tunnels beyond a cave full of goo and small maggot-like eggs or something. And that's when they attacked. Those things. I couldn't believe it. Creatures totally unknown to nature. We ran but most of us didn't make it. They were killed by those things. They came from nowhere. Black as night. I saw Jackson, the British guy, chopped in two at the waist. He had a kid on the way. His account becomes more sketchy as he tells it. The players see that his

mind isn't here, but rather he's reliving the nightmare. The rest of us got outta there and kept on running through the jungle. The next thing I know I was in hospital. It was two weeks later and heard that the dig was over and Jakartan Commandos went in and destroyed the site. I was lucky. I don't know anything else. Please go.

Javan legends and lore

Anybody who expresses an interest in Indonesian myths, legends or lore can hit the books or the local library or talk to an expert on the subject. The Internet may even dredge up information. Depending on what specific information the player wants, research can take as little as half an hour to several hours. Essentially this can be found: The mythology of Indonesia is largely similar to Indian mythology and can be read in the epic tales Mahabarata and the Bhatarayuda. Some native tribes do adhere to occult practices rich with shamanistic practices, witchcraft, voodoo, and sacrifice (not human though, or in very rare circumstances), but this is generally frowned upon in civilised towns and cities - the practice of which is punishable by imprisonment or death.

As the search unfolds a character might pick up a 1926 copy of Nicholas H. Gutteridge's book, Primal Mythology of Indonesian Tribes. Those making a **R/W ENGLISH** roll learn that tribal occult is rife with ghosts and demons and realms in which they live. One legend pertains to an infernal realm deep within our planet where a great race of demons live (an equivalence to Hell you might say), and it is also said that on occasion a demon has found its way to the surface where it lays waste to the people. For that reason it is forbidden to enter caves and tunnels and it became tribal duty to seal these entrances for ever. Certain tribes people still observe this practice. Legend speaks of several tribes being utterly decimated by a demon almost 1000 years ago.

Oral tradition describes the demons as immense crab-like creatures with numerous many angled limbs, standing nearly 10 feet in height. Its colour is as black as pure onyx with a head that is sightless and faceless save for its mouth. The demons are covered in sharp spines and ridges that can easily slice a man in two.

Assorted Events

The keeper must set the events to coincide with his/her timeline. See the timeline for pointers as to what can happen. Make stuff up yourself if you want. Plan your events. Know where and when they occur.

Talking to the sewer workers.

The concerns of the sewer workers soon appear in the local press or news broadcasts. These may interest the players and they might want to talk to some of the sewer workers. Detective Weaver is interested, and so far he's the only one who isn't utterly discounting their claims. The sewer workers will talk to him since he has a legitimate reason for questioning them, but they will be sceptical of our players' motives, but if the players are sincere and can convince them (**FAST TALK** or **PERSUADE**) that they also believe in what's in the sewer, then perhaps they might find out a bit more information. Everyone will be spooked to some extent. One or two may even have hit the bottle for comfort, and nobody's willing to enter the sewers as a guide: "Fuck that shit man", comes one reply.

Tantalising information is all that can be obtained at the moment. Give vague descriptions of the monster - which may or may not tally with what somebody else says. "It was big and black. Like nothing I've ever seen before", says one. "It wasn't no flushed pet alligator, I can tell you", says another. "It's not of this earth". "It was all over in an instant, there we were talking about last-night's ball game, then whoosh, it grabbed Harry and dragged him under. We tried to help but there was no trace. All we found was his hard hat and some of his blood". "I didn't see it, but I could smell/hear it." "Yeah, I saw it. It was eating something. I didn't stick around". "It was a black blur of teeth and claws".

The players can learn the locations of the sightings and plot them on a plan of the sewers. Sightings come from everywhere, but by far the densest area is just off Bloomfield Place & Clay Street. D'you think it means something?

Talking to the police

As events progress, players may want to do their own investigation. All in all there's not much to learn, other than who gets attacked and where it happened. Without proper contacts or reasons, there's no reason why the police would divulge information beyond public notifications to the players. This is also true if the players try to talk to the pathologist who performs the post-mortems on Stannard, the homeless person and whoever else winds up on his slab in the morgue. There is one detective (Detective Ernest Weaver) whom the keeper can throw in and use as much or as little as he / she feels.

Detective Weaver

At first he's antagonistic towards the players for whatever reason, but he can become an ally. He has the knack of turning up places whenever the keeper wants. If the players happen to be there also then so much the better. With Weaver as an enemy, he'll have no second thoughts in arresting the players for breaking and entering, contaminating a crime scene, or busting 'em for a broken tail light.

This career cop was once a powerful man, but now though age he is beginning to sag and fill out, but his attitude hasn't changed one bit. He has white closely cropped army style hair, and has a facial scar running from his left temple, down his cheek and across his chin and jaw. He's not soft spoken. Abrasive. Direct, and always to the point. Firm but fair. Nothing personal. This no nonsense detective hates things getting in the way when on a case. He's a cop who never goes off duty. He just needs to look at somebody and he'll know if they're hiding something, up to something, or just downright dirty. If he sees something / somebody not to his liking he's very likely to act on impulse, and this attitude has caused trouble in the past.

Should Weaver take a liking to the players, he might divulge a little bit more information. He might say that for some reason he does believe the sewer workers when they say there's something in the sewers, but he can't act on it using departmental resources. They won't allow it, so for now he's limited to his own private investigation. He might also reveal that he's been down the sewers, and the only thing he found was a bit of strip of skin hanging from a broken pipe. He carefully produces it for anyone wishing to take a closer look at it. The slough of pliable rubbery skin, light brown in colour, measures 2" by 5". It is as rough as shark skin. Rougher even, and anyone handling it without gloves has their **LUCK** chance to avoid taking one point of damage from its abrasive surface.

Should Weaver think the players may be of use to him, he may enlist their help for a more thorough search of the sewers. With him as an ally, he might be able to procure some additional hardware in the way of armour or shotguns. But not assault weapons or explosives. Weaver has an **80% CREDIT RATING**, and can almost certainly get some stuff for himself. For each additional person he has to outfit, he loses 15 percent. So, for a party of four he'd lose 60%. He only has one chance to get the equipment, but if he calls in favours he can get another chance.

Maps

The following map can double as a street map of Newark, as well as the sewers beneath. On the keeper version only major events has been marked. Use your judgement to determine exactly where other things occur.



The Sewers

Eventually the players must venture down into the sewers to continue their search. They'll probably go through a manhole that is close to the many strange occurrences. The manhole cover is easy to lift providing a lifting tool is used. The ladder rungs which lead down into the murky depths are slippery and the characters require a **DEXx5** or **CLIMB** roll to get down safely otherwise they fall for 1d6 damage. This can be reduced should a **JUMP** roll be succeeded. The sewers beneath are dank and smells of rot and decay. The decomposing waste serves as a food source for the thousands of rats who dwell here. Black greasy glistening water flows down the seven feet high tunnels.

Preparing

You don't want to simply delve into the labyrinthine underworld without preparation. Obtaining the sewer maps can be done by visiting the Office of Public Works or City Hall. From the charts players discover that there are dozens of miles of sewers underlying the city. For simplicity, assume the sewers has the exact same layout as the city map. Some of the older sewers date back to the late 1880s, and through urban modernisation some tunnels have been re-routed, bricked up or rebuilt. Some sections even appear to be

unused. For convenience, assume there is a manhole every 800 metres. It might be an idea to invest in some fisherman's waders and flashlights before entry.

Some areas of the sewers have dingy grime-encrusted lights about which flies buzz. These areas are generally at cross-sections where electrical junction boxes, pipe fittings and other industrial cabling are to be found. The water in the sewer ranges from ankle to chest deep in parts. For the most part, searching the sewers will be tedious. Have your players search about for as long as you want without success then slowly begin to up the suspense as they get lost or closer. At intervals, players may find signs telling them where they are in relation to the world above. Use dramatic licence to create the required atmosphere; echoing wet slaps, splashes, weird gurgles, hisses and other noises. Shadows move, the discovery of a half eaten dog, a human arm, footprints - human or otherwise. A monstrous ear-splitting screech. Because of the enclosed space and the echoes created, noise may be distorted or reverberated oddly, thus making tracking, or judging distance by sound very difficult.

Combat in the sewers

Firing guns in enclosed spaces is a bad idea. Sound is amplified and you might go deaf temporarily. Any time a gun is fired roll a **CONx5** to check for deafness which lasts 5d20 rounds. Half or quarter all **LISTEN** rolls during this time. Explosions are far worse and may even cause structural collapse. Gas leaks are quite normal in the sewer, as are the build up of chemically explosive toilet cleaners and the like, so an incendiary device might flatten an entire street, but this is left to the individual keeper to decide upon.

Sewer Events

These events are just some of the things the keeper can throw in to add a little more excitement. You can roll the event or pick at random. The keeper is free to make others up, like finding half eaten body parts (human or otherwise), slime trails, or just lying there, somebody finds a flashlight. It is switched on, but the light is dim due to failing batteries...

Alien faecal matter

A dry crumbly, ellipsoid pellet is found. It measures six inches from point to point, and two around its widest part. Bits of bone and hair can be found in it. It is odourless. Flies appear to be kept at bay.

Armour Plating

At a junction where two passages meet is a large black piece of monster hide. Part of the wall has been broken off and the characters can see deep gouges and scoring, by both something sharp and by acid. It looks as though it was used as a scratching post. The moulded skin is hard, almost like armour and has a few razor-like ridges on it. It measures 8" by 11" by a ¼" thick. Anyone handling it without gloves has their **LUCK** chance to avoid taking 1d4 of damage from one of the ridges.

Rat swarm

Disturbed by light, sound, or whatever, a couple of hundred rats swarm down the tunnel towards the characters. As the rats swarm past some begin to climb up trouser leggings and get under clothing. Those failing a **CONx7** check suffer 1d3 damage from claw or bite wounds. A sanity check is required with a loss of 0/1d3.

A Glimpse of the thing.

As the players get within ten feet of a four-way cross section a black shape darts from one tunnel down the other directly opposite. Since the view was fleeting no real description is available. The unexpectedness of it all, as well as the sudden adrenaline rush causes 1/1d4 sanity loss. Anyone who can make a **DEXx1** check can fire at it before it disappears from sight.

A loose tile/brick falls from ceiling

A random character runs a 50/50 chance of being hit with said tile or brick. It causes 1d3 damage. Should've worn a hard hat.

Weird hissing sound

From somewhere here or there a strange slow and rhythmic inhalation/exhalation sound is heard on a **LISTEN** check. It sounds close to some, distant to others. Did anyone else see that shadow move? This could be a good time to briefly introduce the monster as it attempts to grab one person and drag him/her way. Perhaps it's just an audible illusion.

Broken Light

The characters come across a broken light and a **SPOT HIDDEN** check reveals that it may have been deliberately broken. In fact several lights here appear to have been deliberately smashed. What's it all mean?

Human Scream

The piercing and agonised scream of a human is heard reverberating around the tunnel. Its source cannot be properly determined. The suffering of the victim lasts three to four seconds. The scream reminds the characters what may be in store for them and so causes 1d3/1d6 sanity loss. Anyone who loses 5 or more sanity really has the desire to leave the sewers. What remains of the victim may be found later.

A rat falls from an outlet above

A random character runs a 50/50 chance of being hit with a rat which causes 1d4 sanity loss. The rat does not attack, it just bounces to the ground and scurries off. As the character jumps to the unexpected event he/she may cause a similar loss of sanity to the other characters.

A hobo's home

The investigators notice that a few feet of the tunnel wall has been removed and placed neatly to the side. They also see manhole close by, which leads up to a cul-de-sac behind a restaurant. Behind the hole is a tunnel, it's mostly dry with a little seepage. This section of the sewer 'belongs' to a solitary hobo. His home consists of a vast collection of junk of no particular worth - all scavenged from dumpsters. The stench of rot and decay grows as the players enter, and laying on the worm infested mattress is a corpse. Several rats gnaw on it. A **CONx3** check is required to stand the smell otherwise the character is repulsed.

The body is in an advanced state of putrefaction. He's been here several weeks. The mottled green/black skin is blistered, and hangs loose. Adipocere deposits are beginning to build up around the body. (This is a naturally occurring greyish cheesy substance which forms when bodies are left in cool damp areas.) It is infested with maggots. Greasy decomposition fluid and barely recognisable semi-fluid, semi-solid abdominal organs pool on the mattress and floor. Seeing the body is horrific and causes 1d2/1d4+1 sanity loss to those unaccustomed to viewing bodies in this kind of state. The actual cause of death is indeterminate without a proper inspection, but no observable gunshot, stab or violent causes are seen. Most likely he died of tuberculosis.

The corpse is dressed in a grubby pair of Nike trainers, frayed denim jeans, a red Chicago Bulls t-shirt, a green ex-military jacket which is covered in peace signs, cannabis leaf patches and anti-establishment slogans. He also wears a bandanna. Looking at the corpse the characters see that the man, who was probably in his late 50s early 60s at the time of his death has a chain embedded into the left side of his face and jaw. Surgically implanted by the looks of it. It takes a **KNOW** roll to understand what this means. The guy was probably a Vietnam veteran, and this type of surgical procedure was used in certain horrific facial injuries.

Moving the corpse to search him is tricky. The epidermis is loose and tears easily, like a skin on a custard. Without due care an arm might come away in hand (Sanity check with a loss of 1/1d6). He has nothing to offer save for a couple of ounces of marijuana which may be ruined.

Detective Weaver

As the players approach a four way junction they may hear the sounds of footfalls from one of the tunnels. Just then Detective Weaver emerges wearing a yellow hard-hat with flashlight attachment. He's armed with a 12g pump. A Glock 17 serves as a back up and nestles in his hip holster. He's looking for the thing to see what exactly it is and to kill it. He knows nothing more than what the players know or can find out. As everyone stands there shooting the breeze, the thing may make an appearance from one of the tunnels. It's moving at an extraordinary speed and by the time anyone hears/sees it, it is almost on top of them. Maybe everyone has unwittingly got too close to its lair. Its target is random. Allow one round of shooting before melee begins. If the thing is reduced to quarter hits, it attempts to flee. With its acidic blood oozing everywhere it will be pretty easy to follow as it corrodes the floor. In an attempt to save its young it lures the characters away from its lair. Four **TRACK** rolls trail it to a dead end where it waits, nursing its wounds. Trapped. This time it fights to the end. If the players decide that's it and go home after killing the thing; let them. If they believe it has a nest somewhere and look for it they'll eventually find it.

The Lair

Finally, as the players draw near to the lair of the thing, they find the temperature to noticeably rise as does the humidity. A greeny-yellow slimy mucus begins to coat everything and gets thicker and thicker making remaining upright a little more tricky. All movement is reduced to 5 for the duration they're in it, and any sudden movement requires a **DEXx5** check to remain standing. With goo getting into guns they will suffer an additional 5% misfire chance - so weapons that normally misfire on a 98 will jam on a 92+. The goo also emits a nasty smell that bites into the olfactory senses like harsh vinegar, but hardy investigators can overcome it. Prolonged exposure might cause some respiratory problems with a build up of phlegm that has to be coughed out.

Unless the thing has been killed already it can be found here tending her many thousands of tiny bluish and strangely luminescent maggot-like eggs. It's only at night when the thing leaves to go foraging outside for suitable food. The thing is generally back a few hours before sun up. It is left to the individual keeper to have the thing present when the players first enter the lair or have it out prowling the sewers.

In amidst the goo are as many as eight bodies in various states of decomposition and consumption. They also appear to have the densest concentration of eggs. Anybody getting too close to the eggs runs the risk of becoming a target as one or more eggs latch on to the bare skin of a character like a leech before it slowly begins to burrow in through the flesh. Through natural chemical secretions the character might not feel a thing as it happens. The larva will travel through the body to take up residence in the intestine where it feeds like a tape worm. Slowly it gestates until maturity, which causes no pain or suffering to the host, when upon it begins to eat its way out - which unfortunately *is* very painful..

To totally destroy the brood all the characters need do is spray the entire place down with the equivalent of 45 litres of gasoline and then throw in a match and retire.

Conclusion and its reward

The scenario comes to an end when either all the characters die, they defeat the monster and destroy its eggs, or leave - never to return. If left to its own devices the thing will continue to abduct people or animals to use as nourishment for its young. As it happens, the authorities will eventually figure out what is going on and will take proper action. SWAT units or the National Guard will be dispatched to take care of things - which ultimately is hushed up. A situation will be created in order to evacuate the area of all civilians. The old toxic spill ploy comes to mind. But maybe, just maybe there is somebody out there who is infected and incubating another horror, and perhaps it's one of our players.

Killing the monster is worth 1d10 sanity

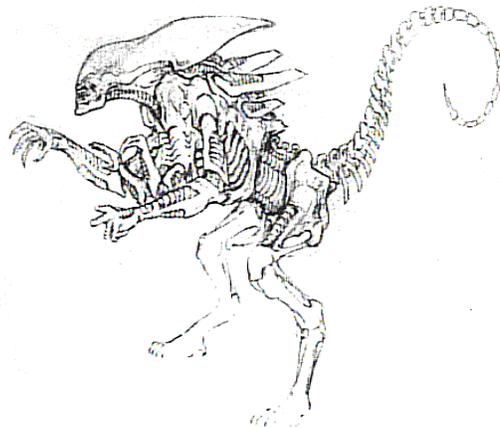
Destroying the nest and making sure there are no surviving eggs nets another 1d6.

Fighting alongside Detective Weaver bring its own reward in the guise of the odd favour here and there.

Statistics

The monster. Lesser Independent Race

By the time the players descend into the sewers and successfully track the thing to its lair, it will have metamorphosed into its true form. A bipedal entity standing 7 feet tall; singularly black in colour, with two powerful arms and clawed hands. Its head has no observable eyes with which to see, has a mouth dripping ichor. Its entirety is a monstrous slab of angular armoured plating tipped with jagged saw-toothed razor sharp ridges and spines, with a savage looking tail behind.



The thing exists solely to survive and to create more of its kind.

STR	CON	SIZ	INT	POW	DEX	MOVE	HITS
35	26	18	13	12	15	12	22

WEAPON	ATTK %	DAMAGE	Armour: 20 points shell., half on a critical Spells: None Sanity: 1d3/1d8
Claw/Grapple*	65	1d8+2d6db	
Bite	90	1d12+2d6db	
Tail whip	35	2d6	

Combat tactics

Claw/Grapple: Instead of clawing for damage, the monster may try to grapple a victim so that it can bite him/her next round.

Tail whip: The tail can be used in the same round as a bite or claw/grapple. It's primarily used to knock away combatants. A critical roll however impales the target as the saw-toothed tail rips through like a chainsaw.

Anybody unfortunate to be standing close to the thing when it takes damage is in for a surprise. Any **critical damage** results in a spray of bile yellow blood and/or stomach acids over a 3 feet area. Anyone within range has a **½LUCK** chance of escaping an horrific consequence. In **ALL** cases the use of first aid is quite useless. Proper medical treatment from a hospital is required. If players are wearing body armour they might be afforded some protection before the armour is ruined, so alter the result to reflect this.

ROLL RESULT

- The deluge of acid completely engulfs the head, neck and upper torso of the unlucky character. He/she screams in agony as the flesh and bone melts into a dripping mess of molten goo. Death, unfortunately is not instant, but soon. Player loses 3 hits per round until dead. CONx1 to remain conscious during this agonising time. Anyone conscious loses 90% from all skills and must make a POWx1 roll to accomplish any task. Anyone who sees this loses 1d8 sanity.
- The character winces in agony as a spurt of acid splashes across an arm raising blisters and welts. 1 point of damage is taken for the next 3 rounds. Phew that was lucky.
- The surge of acid catches the character's neck, jaw and side of face. The acid quickly eats into the flesh, tendons and bone. A gurgling effort of a scream is all the character can do before the jaw falls free to one side. Still choking, the character stumbles and falls forward head first into the floor with a wet crack. Dead. Seeing this causes 1d8 sanity loss.
- The pain is unbearable as the jet of acid coats the characters right side causing painful burns. Fortunately it's not that bad. Character loses 1 hit for the next 3 rounds..
- The character twists to avoid the acid, but they weren't quick enough as it splashes against their ribs, back and hip. Acrid fumes from the melting flesh waft up as the character doubles over in a choking fit. 1 point of damage is taken for the next 6 rounds. Due to the pain the character suffers a

-35 to all rolls and movement is reduced by 2 for the next 6+1d6 months..

- 6 The feeble squirt of acid just barely catches the character on the thigh and causes 1 point of damage for the next 3 rounds.
- 7 The character grits his/her teeth to stop from screaming as the soft flesh, cartilage and bone of the knees and lower legs tun to jelly. 2 points of damage is taken over the next 3 rounds. No movement is permissible other than a slow hobble, crawl, or dragging. CONx7 check or fall unconscious. Character can fight from ground at half chance. Movement is permanently reduced by 3. If the character survives he/she will be wheelchair bound for quite some time. Sanity loss 1d6.
- 8 The acid gushes towards the character's face and instinctively he/she raises their hands in defence. They cry out in extreme pain as they watch their hands and lower arms bubble, blister and begin to melt into stumps of fizzing goo. CONx5 to remain conscious. 2 points of damage is taken for the next 4 rounds. Hands are ruined beyond all recognition and are useless. Sanity loss 1d6.
- 9 Catching the character squarely in the chest, the acid begins to eat through revealing the ribs, muscle and what lies beneath. A CONx3 roll is required to remain conscious, during which 2 point of damage is taken over the next 5 rounds. Due to the excruciating pain all rolls are made at quarter chance until proper hospital attention is administered. Movement is reduced to one quarter normal.
- 10 The wave of acid hits the character across the face causing 1 point of damage for 6 rounds. APP is permanently reduced per point of damage. On a failed LUCK roll an eye is also destroyed, which reduces all sight-based skills by 35%. Until the pain subsides (3+1d6 hours) the player operates at a -25 disadvantage.

Detective Weaver

STR	CON	SIZ	INT	POW	DEX	MOVE	HITS
14	13	16	14	14	13	8	15

WEAPON	ATTK %	DAMAGE	Skills: Chemistry 35%, Climb 60%, Computer Use 25%, Credit Rating 80%, Dodge 53%, Drive Auto 70%, Jump 35%, Law 90%, Library Use 75%, Listen 60%, Locksmith 35%, Occult 20%, Spanish 100%, Psychoanalysis 15%, Psychology 65%, Sneak 45%, Spot Hidden 70%, Track 40%
fist/punch	80	+1d4db	
grapple	60	Varies	
club/night-stick	50	1d6	
handgun	70	1d10+2	
shotgun	60	4d6	

Equipment: Has all the resources you'd normally associate with a police detective.